

Tickhill & District Local History Society

A discussion with Ron Hill (our honorary member) and members of the Society – David Walters, Clare Brown, Philip Mottram, Pam Mills.

(Ron sadly passed away on 25th January 2008 just short of his 93rd birthday and soon after this interview).

Items in *[Blue Italics]* are additional information gained from Mr. Hill's family and a few notes by Betty Hill, Ron's wife are added at the end of the transcript.

Ron is going to talk about the National School in the 1920's and in particular the teachers. Ron over to you.

I came to Tickhill in 1920 from Maltby and went into the National School. I began by going down to the infant's school which in those days was run by three people. One of them, the headmistress, was Alice Smith. Not a very popular character, at least in my family. My mother tells me of the first time she met her. She took me down to see the headmistress to say that I was coming to school. The introductions were made and she said, oh! well then if Hill will come along tonight, meaning my father. My mother was so incensed at that she said "Yes Smith he will be coming and I'll bring him along" and that's how they got off on the wrong foot if you like.

That was Alice Smith, she came from Sheffield actually and wasn't really part of Tickhill. The other two teachers there were very much part of Tickhill. Hornshaw was their name and the family had been connected with the castle and the stud farm for at least two generations.

Were the two teachers related ?

Yes they were sisters.

Now, they were Miss Hornshaw and Miss Margery. Miss Hornshaw's name was Iva, she was the senior teacher and Miss Margery was obviously the younger sister, and they looked after the whole thing. Iva Hornshaw had to be called Miss Hornshaw and her sister Miss Margery. That was an important distinction in those days. It was a very good school, very practical in the way things were taught. For example, things like shop keeping and buying things and simple arithmetic. We had a very practical background. My Grandmother gave me a score of half farthings, you perhaps can't remember those, but they were 960 to the pound and I used them as counters when we were playing shop at school. Unfortunately I must have left them there because I haven't got them now. (laughter)

Then when I reached the age of almost 7 we transferred to what was called the National School where Tommy Dixon, a long serving headmaster, had just retired, and Ben Shaw came as the replacement head. It was a church school in those days and it was very surprising that Mr Shaw was appointed because

actually he was from a Wesleyan family. However he converted, and became Church of England.

I keep thinking of questions to ask, probably silly questions, am I allowed to ask ? What do you mean by a half farthing ? Is it a farthing cut in half ?

It was a coin, an actual coin called half a farthing. I think it said 'half a farthing' or it could have said 'half farthing'. They were 960 to the pound.

Never heard of it (laughter) Next question. Your teachers, were they in any way qualified ?

No, I'll talk about that later. I'll tell you how some of them came which is part of the story. My first teacher when I was about seven (7) was a very beautiful Welsh girl straight from college, called Miss Owen. She was a good teacher because subsequently I got on very well. What I remember most about her is that she taught us various hymns which were not in the school's repertoire particularly in the school there. One of them, her favourite was, 'Who is on the Lord's side'. She used to sing for us, and we all sang it together. *[It was from Golden Bells a Wesleyan hymn book which was used at Miss Goodwin's school when the chapel bought new on]*

Did you only sing hymns, or did you also sing traditional English songs like Cherry Ripe or whatever.

Yes, we did sing all those things, but I only remember the hymns from Miss Owen (we never knew her Christian name). We had a young passion for her (lots of laughter)

Laughter...Yes, that's why you did well at school.

Then I moved up into Miss Ellis's class.

What age ?

I'd be eight (8) then. Pattie Ellis was her name and occasionally called Pattie but not of course by the children. She was, if you like, one of those well integrated into the community. Her brother was Jim Ellis who married into my wife's family & Jim was the organist for years. His real name was Jesse but he was always called Jim. She was probably the most important teacher that I ever had. I had a long and expensive education all free of course and I was thinking the other day that the education that I got at Tickhill till I was eleven (11) was much more important than the grammar school or university or other things - the Air Force taught me a fair amount too. But those 5 teachers in the National School who had most influence and taught me more actually.

When you say, taught you more, , Do you mean more subjects, greater depth?

They taught me history, they taught me about Caravaggio they talked about art, It was a very good school indeed and the example I give is that I finished up as a classic scholar. That is still my main interest. That all stemmed from the fact I'm sure, that Miss Ellis used to buy the prizes for the class. She bought them herself and one was a very handsome copy of the Arabian Nights which cost 7/6d which was the standard price for a big book in those days. She saw the gleam in my eye but then she said 'No', this is the one which will suit you a lot better. It was a much cheaper book which I have still got called 'Kingsley's Heroes' which gave me a tremendous interest in Greek mythology and I really think that was what swayed me eventually into taking up classics. It was a seminal decision for me.

The Standard 4 teacher at that time was Fred Greenhough who taught me the Greek alphabet. The Greek alphabet and Kingsley's Heroes set my feet on the path, and there it was.

This was very advanced teaching for a small town school

No, I think that you will find that in the country parts of Yorkshire this was the kind of teaching that went on. The Education Acts had had that effect from 1870 until 1920, and the ethos of the school reflected that. Education wasn't regarded simply as a meal ticket to a good job. It was an all round education and you would be amazed how the old people, when I was a boy, would recite Gray or Shakespeare and they knew all about that sort of thing. It wasn't new to them and they grew up with it. It came partly from the background of the teachers.

So you are saying that this was general for all the children. It wasn't that you were picked out as someone with a special ability or a special ??

No, I wasn't.

And you would have had the school inspectors. Did the school inspectors come in ?

School inspectors? Never heard of them!

They never came in?

We never heard of them but they must have been round.

After Miss Ellis's class where she taught us well, I moved up into Miss Foulstone's class. She also was a Tickhill girl because I discovered by looking through the log book that she had been educated at the National School under Tommy Dixon. I imagine she was born, let me see, about 1880

Now, after Standard 3 we went into Standard 4 with Mr Greenhough Now neither Miss Ellis nor Miss Foulstone had ever been trained I'm sure of that and Fred Greenhough was in fact a pupil teacher. This was a well organised thing. A pupil teacher had a certain amount of training supervised by inspectors My mother-in-law remembered very well the day when Fred Greenhough, aged 18, shall we say, graduated to becoming a teacher, because Colin Dixon brought him round and said "from now on this is Mr Greenhough and he will be teaching you, and any child who dares to call him Fred will be caned!! (laughter)

That was his introduction, if you like, to the school. He was a brilliant teacher, and had a very wide knowledge of all sorts of things. He used to give us lists of famous paintings and names which were familiar to us and talk to us about them. His particular interest of course was music because he was the choirmaster. I didn't realise at the time, I might have forgiven him, he was a Wagnerian - very much, but I didn't know at the time thank heaven and it didn't mean much to me. Fred Greenhough, was a dedicated teacher. He used to take children about in the evening in little groups. He had a telescope and he would show us Orion's Belt and where the planets were. He would go around in the afternoons and weekends and tell the children about wild flowers. He was, if you like, a dedicated teacher. He was called away for Military Service in the 1st World War. He was in the artillery and he was very proud of that because he told us that he was a layer, a gun layer and only those with a good mathematical knowledge like him could become gun layers.

He was a fine man. He was killed accidentally one Sunday evening on Limestone Hill by someone on a bicycle which ran into him.

This was after the 1st World War was it?

Yes, it was. I think it was about 1928.

So he went right through the War & then got killed by a bicycle

Yes, he got killed by a bicycle.

The headmaster in the next class was Ben Shaw. His first introduction to Tickhill was that he won the half mile race in 1922 at the Tickhill Show. Then he came in 1923 I think to be headmaster here. He was incidentally a very religious man, people often were in those days. One of the sad stories is that his wife Brenda, a very handsome woman (I seem to remember these women by their looks, but there you are) but she died very young, in her 30's I believe. There was another girl in Tickhill Gwen Tomlinson who was engaged to Jack Burchby. She was dying when she was in her 20's and he said to her, when it was acknowledged that she was dying, would she please take a message from him to Brenda in heaven. Coming from his background, he was a very religious man. A sad story she was a very nice woman. *[Both Brenda and Gwen died from peritonitis.]*

Apart from these regular teachers who had come in via various paths we had two or three more pupil teachers en passant...passing by. One of them was Mary Green who was the daughter of Charlie Green the sexton, who lives in the cottage by the beech tree. Charlie Green was not merely an incomer. He came from Tottenham if you can believe it, but he married a Wardingley - a well known Tickhill family so that was alright. Mary was quite a capable artist and she became an art teacher somewhere, Wath I think, and she produced a very handsome book of poetry and anthology. Mary gave a copy to my first daughter which she still has. I can remember one lesson from her, when she came along to teach us English and someone read out the phrase 'mincing steps' She said "what are mincing steps?" and so of course I put my hand up and she made us come out and walk with mincing steps! A really practical education, that was

Mary. She and her brother, Billy Green the undertaker, quarrelled in childhood and they never spoke after she grew up. Funny thing.

Where in Tickhill did Billy live ?

With his father, Charlie. Charlie lived in the cottage by the beech tree and Billy lived there but Mary left home.

To get married

No, she never married. I think she taught at Wath. She was an art teacher.
[Charlie's grandson, Joe Green, and his wife live in the cottage now. It was a small cottage in Wardingley's time. Jonothan Wardley always wore a smock of traditional Yorkshire pattern and his unmarried sister wore a long white apron and sun bonnet]

Can I just slip back to your general days at school and say what was the situation regarding discipline because it's a big issue these days isn't it. Were you severely disciplined or were you free spirits ?

I was never caned but some boys were. It wasn't unusual but it didn't happen all the time. On the other hand in my mother-in-law's days (Mrs Rawson) it was not uncommon for the teacher to walk round with something like a wooden spoon and hit the children in the back, very hard between the shoulder blades. But on the whole discipline was very good for two reasons. One was that we were brought up that way and the other was that if we hadn't been well behaved our parents would have been advised immediately and that would have been enough.
[Miss Foulstone always had a thimble handy and threatened, and often carried out the threat, to give naughty children 'thimble pie' – the thimble on her finger was used on the child's knuckle.]

How many children were in your classes? Do you remember?

I would say about 35.

Did they only come from Tickhill ? There weren't any from any other village?

No, just one or two from outlying farms and that sort of thing.

There were none from for instance Stainton, Loversall or any of the other outlying villages?

No. they had their own schools.
I got some information out of the school logbook. In 1911 there were 25 children in Standard One, 36 children in Standard Two, 42 in Standard Three, 52 in Standard Four, no that cannot be right - yes it is because there were a total of 103 in the bottom three classes and there were 98 in the top classes - Four, Five, Six and Seven. That was the size of the school and the teachers were Patti Ellis, Annie Greenhough, who came in temporarily to help, Clara (called Clarrie) Foulstone and Fred Greenhough.

On the 8th February 1911 there was a botany lesson for the first class, on the snowdrop. They had a drawing lesson in the afternoon.

Where did this information come from because this is prior to your school days. Where is the source of this information?

It's the log book which you can find in the Balby archives.

Painting the parts of the flower followed and then there was a composition lesson - like writing an essay on the snowdrop. Here's an example (shows an example composition) Now, 10 Standard 6 children were allowed to go home at 3.30 pm. They were going to revise about 1000 lines of poetry and also work out stocks and shares. They were doing stocks and shares in those days. The teacher and one or two boys cleaned all the school windows – now, there's a little thought for you.

Now this is important economically: in May a boy who sprained his ankle was brought to school in a wheelbarrow so as not to lose an attendance. The economic importance of that is that there was a capitation fee and children who stayed on were earning more money for the head teacher. Mr Dixon often noted that people who had been away from home on holiday had attended school at the place they had gone to and when they came back he got the credit for it. I could never understand why this was put in so carefully until the penny dropped. And there you are.

[Mr. Dixon was also paid 7/6d p.a. for each child who reached Standard 7 (not all did) Science had to be taught to earn the money and Mr. Greenhough taught it]

What was the top age at the National School? The top age at the national school was then 14?

Yes 14. but there were children who went on from there. The first girl or child who went on to university was Queenie Guest.

[Queenie Guest went to teacher training college. There were also Emmie and Douglas Guest who was killed in the Great War.]

Do you know the house which is called Roger Basket's house which is opposite Church Lane? The big house just off the market place? That was the house of Roger Basket who was a Tickhill character and Queenie Guest was there. I only mention that because Queenie sounds like an odd name for that period. Her name was actually Alexandra Victoria Guest.

People of course, make fun of the old National School because the windows were about 4' 6" from the floor and you couldn't see out which was an extremely good thing. In fact when you were at school you had your head down and you didn't want to see birds flying by or trees or sheep. You were there to learn and these rather forbidding walls, that are so unpopular in modern theory, were accepted by us children and they had a great advantage because they certainly helped concentration. There was nothing else to do except listen to the teacher and get down to it.

We had two playgrounds. The one nearer to the church was the girls' playground and the other the boys' and believe me you never went into the wrong playground.

On fear of death !

No, on fear of Miss Fulstone! (lots of laughter here)

We didn't have boy friends and girlfriends in those days, I don't think the expression 'boyfriend & girlfriend' was invented but we did have 'sweethearts' which was quite an innocent sort of thing. I got into trouble once over my sweetheart, who incidentally married Betty's brother so she became my sister-in-law once removed you might say. Jessie was a very small, pretty, dark haired girl and in those days I was very tall for my age. That was the year 1922/3 when they brought the maypole back. That was one of Ben Shaw's ideas and so we had to dance round the maypole. We danced round in couples & Miss Ellis decided she would have us graded by height. I was given a girl who I didn't like at all and I refused to dance the maypole with her because I wanted Jessie. However I was told that I had to, of course. It was quite out of character for me, but I simply pulled the ribbons off the maypole and the practice had to be postponed because I wouldn't dance!

The poor girl probably felt much slighted !

Anyway, we did have sweethearts then because I had one and I must have been all of nine (9)

When you first started at school, what did you use for writing equipment ?

We had exercise books, though it was only shortly before that the slates were done away with because Tommy Dixon was possibly slightly sadistic because he used to make girls stand with a pile of slates on their head. Sometimes they would faint with it but that was in the 19th century, before my time. That sort of thing was remembered.

The exercise books that you started with, did they have just lines in a row or did they have lines for the small letters and lines for the big letters?

No they didn't have lines for that, they were simply exercise books, but what they did have on the back were tables of bushels & quarts and other things we had to know about.

[At Miss Goodwin's school, the books had lines for the big letters to start with]

And did you use pen and ink ?

Yes, we had pen and ink. We had ink wells and we had an inkwell monitor. One of the children was appointed to put the inkwells into the holes in the desk and make sure they were filled.

Did you have a desk each or were there two to a desk ?

I think actually we had benches with two people on

That was in the National School?

Yes, that was in the National School

I can remember being inkwell monitor. It was a very popular job for boys because you could get your hands dirty officially.

There were some interesting examples of discipline. The nurse used to come to the school periodically for a medical inspection and Charlie Place who I remember well, was one of the boys who stained his hands brown with walnut juice and was caned for it. About the same time there was a report that there had been some vandalism at the school and a reward of a sovereign was offered to get hold of the culprit. I never remember at all anything like that in my school days, but apparently it said in the log book that the vandalism was so unexpected and surprising that the headmaster offered a sovereign to find the culprit. I don't know whether they found him or not.

When the nurse came, what kind of inspection did she carry out ?

The parting in the hair, the teeth and the general health as well.

Rickets was also prevalent at that time, but probably not quite so bad in rural areas

It probably wasn't bad in Tickhill because the people fed so well.

[One boy at least had it so badly that he had to have his leg in irons. His father had lost a leg in the war and couldn't work. Mrs. Woodcock of R.... House kept cows and sold milk from the door and she gave young George a can of milk free every day]

And you had lunch at school ?

No we went home.

You went home for an hour. And what time did you start school in the morning?

Nine as I remember and we finished at twelve. Then one o'clock and finished at four o'clock.

One of the best things I remember and Betty too - she went to Miss Goodwin's school, but she didn't go to the National School. One of our pleasantest memories of course, is going to school, walking there in groups but even more coming home. Coming home from school was one of the happiest times of the day.

[There were four blacksmiths and a bakery to visit and the inscriptions on the graves to look at]

One of my favourite occupations was running round the church and the gutter around the outside wall. I remember in this gutter were these pebbles and a sort of mound on it. But it turns out that when my father-in-law was restoring the church in 1912 they found a corpse - a skeleton, (a medieval one) outside the church so they carefully took it back. As you walk round the church now, on the south side you will find, (by the old priest's door which is blocked off), you will find this swelling and this is where the skeleton is buried.

Coming back to the school, can you tell us a bit about what went on in the playgrounds.

One thing is that on the 29th May which is Oak Apple Day, which is the anniversary of the restoration of Charles II, we used to wear oak leaves and those boys who didn't were lashed with nettles by the others.

[Oak leaves were in short supply in Tickhill because much of it was Crown land and all oak trees belonged to the crown, so people didn't let them grow. They went for more walnut trees]

Of course you wore short trousers didn't you ?

Oh Yes we wore short trousers.

Was the lashing with nettles that sanctioned by authority or was it just the children's own retribution?

Well, in those days one didn't question things like authority. It happened and it went on. I am quite sure that the teachers were cognisant of it but as far as they were concerned it was a playground activity.

What about things like marbles and conkers?

Oh yes, we played marbles and conkers regularly.

Did you have organised sport or physical education ?

No, we did not in the National School. No we didn't not at all

Did you have text books in your lessons, were there text books ?

Yes, we did, and what is rather surprising, looking back is that we had a very useful school library. One of the titles there which always puzzled me was 'Fighting with French' which I took to mean fighting against the French as you might say. But it was actually a General French in the 1st World War and the author was fighting with the British expeditionary force under the general. It took me years before I worked that one out. One of the things I do remember in that library was a good copy of Victor Hugo's 'Toilers of the Sea' with very dreadful illustrations. Octopuses and things like that. I devoured that book, we could take them home and I remember reading that with great interest. I used to read a lot in those days and it was quite a useful little library for things like that.

Apart from the three R's were history, geography and things like that taught ?

Yes we were taught history and geography. And Mr Dixon gave a current affairs lessons. Among other things that came up were the Irish question and the loss of the R38 airship and things like that.

Your geography lessons, were they confined to this country, all the rivers etc.,

I can't remember really but it was mainly this country. Things like the modern social geography didn't exist but we knew all about the Empire.

And you would celebrate Empire Day I suppose.

Oh yes we certainly had Empire day, Yes.

One of the things I can remember – this probably sounds unbelievable nowadays - there was one boy in the school (I would be 10 years of age at the time), there was one boy who couldn't read. One of the very unkind things that I remember from school was that the headmaster was so angry with him because he couldn't read he said "Just go off & make mud pies" and the boy was known as 'mud pie' after that. He was unusual because he was the only boy who couldn't read, it sounds unbelievable now doesn't it.

If Tickhill only had one boy who couldn't read that was pretty good.

Apart from the ordinary reading and writing there was a very good literary education there because children had to go home and learn a parable or a miracle - the headmaster would say that 12 parables & 5 miracles had to be learned. They also had a great chance of Shakespeare which they knew by heart and things like Gray's Elegy. Again, when I was a boy it was quite common to hear the ordinary farm labourer or any working man quoting from King Lear or things like that because it was drilled into children. If you get the log book from the school and see the things that they learned you can understand why. There wasn't much else to do anyway, there wasn't television or radio and there wasn't so many light books as there are now. There wasn't much competition. The school had connections or one or two people in the village, with a man called Harrison Slater who used to go around certainly in Yorkshire reading and reciting – he would take the library twice a year and people would go along and listen to him. In addition Mr Shaw fancied himself as a Dickens actor so there were a lot of times when there would be sketches and things based on Dickens. Mr Greenhough was another who took part in them and there was this very very strong literary background and influence in the place.

Did you perform plays and such in the school as part of the curriculum or school activities ?

No

No Nativity play or anything like that ?

No I don't remember anything like that at all.

Amongst the children, was there any sense of class distinction ? Did some come from middle class working families, poor labouring families, and did this show?

One of the things I remember and this may sound like rose tinted spectacles or idealist, looking back, but in Tickhill there were people better off than others. Seniors were the shop keepers or semi-professional people, and the rest, known as the hoi-polloi. Although some people were better off than others nobody was better than anybody else. For example, cricket was my passion when I was young and one of the roadmen, a man called Jack Spencer was a very fine off spinner. He had been picked out just before the War to go to Headingley (Bramall Lane in those days). But it was suggested that the invitation was lost by the cricket club, and he didn't go, but he was a very good chap. Apart from the league cricket we used to have the Thursday cricket which was mainly high class amateur stuff. We used to play people like the Craven gentlemen once per year, plus many more teams. I remember on one occasion Cecil Atkinson Clarke from the castle (he had captained Eton two years running at cricket) Roy Kilner from Yorkshire used to come and tutor him in the castle in the 1920's/1930's. In one Thursday match he was playing for Tickhill and so was Ogden who was Norman Yardley's captain at St Peter's, York. These two public school captains played under him if you like. And so it went on, although some people were better off than others in status, nobody seemed better than anyone else.

Fred Greenhough the teacher, who's real name was Frederick George Greenhough most unusually, had a brother who was George Frederick Greenhough. They got it the wrong way round because George Frederick should have been the musician, but he wasn't, he was the roadman and Frederick George was the teacher and choirmaster. Now George was as well thought of and as well respected as Fred who was the teacher. Incidentally Fred had a daughter Cissie *[She may have been called Catherine but she was called Cissie the name her brother called her when she was born]* who had one of the most beautiful voices I have ever heard. I mean that - I can remember for example, she sang, as a sort of anthem, Parry's 'My Soul There is a Country' and the impression she made and the way she sang it, and the quality of the voice, I heard the same thing at Birmingham Symphony Hall two years ago and I couldn't help thinking how much better Cissie would have sung it. She really did have the most wonderful lyrical soprano voice. You wouldn't really expect to find somebody singing 'My Soul There is a Country' by Parry in the 1930's because it was a fairly modern composition then.

Tickhill & District Local History Society

THE GAS WORKS IN TICKHILL

1872 Prospectus of the Tickhill Gaslight Coal & Coke Company.

**Under the immediate sanction of the Rt.Honourable The Earl of Scarborough.
Lessee & Lord of the Manor of Tickhill.**

If I could interject here:

Have you ever wondered why the Millstone Hotel (the big one) is there at all because it is so out of place with everything else? The reason is that in 1911 they decided to exploit the coal seam and build a colliery in Tickhill. And because of that Mappins thought that they would get in quick & they built this very large pub The Millstone. Then Lord Scarborough said "I am not having a colliery in Tickhill" so it was then put in Maltby. If you think that is far fetched for this feudal power, my wifes family have connections with Burley House & the Marquis of Exeter & when they were building the main line north it was supposed to go through Stamford, like the north road. The Marquis said "I am not having a railway in Stamford" so the railway went through Peterborough instead. That's the kind of example of this benevolent despotism.

Anyway, that was just an interjection.

Lord Scarborough's

Provisional directors:-

George Marriott of Sunderland House

Henry Shaw- gentleman (provided the money for the library later on)

Michael Hartshorn - Farmer (I knew his son)

Tom Lane - Grocer & Baker (quite a character - I remember these people)

John Beat

They had a local solicitor & local bankers & everything else.

That was in 1872

The promoters propose to purchase from the proprietor of the present Gasworks such portions of his plant as may be available at valuation. A capital of £2000 will be amply sufficient. It is proposed the dividend not exceed 6% & should there be at any time an excess of the profit of the company providing such dividend & a certain proportion to be set aside for a reserved renewal fund a reduction to the price of gas should be made to the consumer. Which savours rather of the Joseph Chamberlain municipal socialism

Tom Lane (I remember him well) came to Tickhill, at least his father did, as a child with his mother, a widow, I think from Chesterfield.

I've got a note here about Bert Pike I've told you that about 8/9 bodies there and they were supposed to be laid out on the site of the old gasworks and that would be between 1848/1857 but if you're interested in the cholera outbreak you can find out about it from the web!! You'll find something about the South Yorkshire epidemic. They used to call it the Asiatic Fever.

Well that was really fascinating & all I can say on behalf of the society & us is thank you so much.

When I lived in Castlegate (it's been pulled down now the house which was next to the library) our next door neighbour was Sooty Middleton who obviously was a chimney sweep. He told me that the first job he ever had when he was 12 (he left school at 12) was to help to lay down the cricket pitch in Sunderland Street. Before that time they used to play in Water Lane I never discovered where, & there were two vicars, brothers and they were the ones who instigated the move so if anyone is interested in the date of which the cricket pitch was laid out Sooty Middleton is in the register.

One of the things I had forgotten was the enormous number of nicknames there were in the village. Sooty Middleton obviously because he was a chimney sweep, but such things as a friend of mine was called Thompson and he was known as dropper Thompson (don't ask me why) and an older road man was called Boba Thompson (I don't know why). Then there were some native Hills (not in-comers like us) Horace Hill – his name was called Spink, Walter Hill was called Dabber. The Ainley's had nicknames and one of them was called Bonk Ainley. I can't think why. The number of nicknames in Tickhill is incredible.