

BOLTON REMEMBERS THE WAR

Transcript of interview with Edith Kay née Curtis (EK) • War Worker

Interviewed by Ken Beevers (K) 01.12.2005

K: If I could begin by asking you your name?

EK: My name is Edith Kay.

K: And what was your maiden name Edith?

EK: My maiden name was Curtis.

K: And where were you born?

EK: Born in Bolton.

K: Whereabouts?

EK: Astley Bridge, actually.

K: And when?

EK: 1922.

K: And did you have any brothers or sisters?

EK: I did. I had two brothers and a half brother.

K: And what did your Mother and Father do?

EK: Well, very shortly after I was born, the family moved to Hampson's Farm and my Father was a farmer from then on and my Mother was a farmer's wife.

K: Hampson's Farm, whereabouts was that?

EK: Well, part of our land was Longworth Clough, which was getting towards Egerton really, not far from the paper mill - Charles Turner's paper mill, that was in the valley a bit higher up towards Belmont. Our land was, a lot of it, not all of it, but most of it was Longworth Clough, that was in the back of the farm, at the front of the farm, there was quite a few meadows, all had names like, Big Meadow, Park Meadow, Three Cornered Meadow, all the meadows had different names. But those were the meadows we mowed for hay. Longworth Clough at the back was rough. It was all trees and bracken and not fit for any use really, it was just a big valley.

K: That was a sort of walk-through, wasn't it to Belmont?

EK: Yes, you could get there, yes.

K: Where did you go to school?

EK: I went to school at St Paul's, Astley Bridge. We went every day, down. Mostly my Father took us. He was taking the milk out on the milk float at that time, and we'd go down with him and get to school on a milk float. But there was a single decker bus going from Belmont at that time, but to save a penny bus fare, we went on what we called the milk float.

K: And did you go to that school until you left?

EK: Yes, I did, I was fourteen when I left.

K: And what did you do then?

EK: Well, I had a friend that worked at the paper mill, and I thought ooh I'd love to work at the paper mill. I thought that was going to be very, very nice, though my Mother wanted me to stay at home and help her in the house, or generally around the place. But no, I pleaded and pleaded. I wanted to go and work with my friend, and I went to work with my friend, eventually, at the paper mill. And that was sorting paper. Until we was a bit older and the War came and a lot of what we did sorting then. I suppose there was a shortage of pulp. There was bags and bags of old books came, and sheets and sheets of the very, very old letters and things from companies, sent to be made into pulp and re-used again. But they were quite interesting, because, for all we was sorting this stuff out... some medical things. I remember at one time, I actually put them in the pulp myself, was relating to, I think it was Stevenson, that built the Rocket, I'm not sure the name, but, at the time, there was envelopes turning up with Penny Blacks on and people used to tear the stamps off and keep them. But there was one relating to railways, and roads being built, which should have been kept, but they just went the way of all the rest. At one time I got Stephenson's signature, I tore it off a letter, I had it lying around for a long time and of course

these bits of paper they get missed and... So that was history, and I knew it was history, but I thought, well here we are, we've got a job to do, get rid of all this stuff, it's got to go for pulp.

K: Being as I work in the archives, Bolton archives, this is awful to hear (laughs) but I suppose, it's happened.

EK: It's happened, and it's gone. And I've thought of it so many times, and I've never really told anyone. I thought, I knew, with going to school and knowing history, and about these things that went on many years ago, it was history. But all I got out of that, I tore a signature off a letter. There was a lot of correspondence relating to that, but it just went in to be re-pulped.

K: It's probably to do with that first railway that was from Bolton to Leigh.

EK: Yeah, yeah, it would be.

K: And Stephenson was involved.

EK: I didn't keep any of it, I knew it was of historical value in a way, but maybe I didn't and probably no-one else would know about what went on. But when I was taught at St Paul's School, Astley Bridge, it was a very good school, and we were taught about such a lot of interesting things and I just remember them. But there was ever so many medical books too, very, very, old ones, which would have been of value today, I suppose, but all this stuff just went to be pulped.

K: I mean, obviously, that was the nature of the place, but this stuff would probably be because of the need for recycling paper, would it? The fact that there had been appeals?

EK: Yes, yes, people were clearing offices out, because they needed it, because I don't know where the pulp came from, Canada, maybe and they just wanted all these papers and people were tossing a hundred years of paper out of their offices.

K: Oh, that's very interesting...

EK: Well, you see, normally, they were just dealing in new paper, but the War - things changed, as they did everywhere.

K: Do you remember when War broke out?

EK: Oh yes, we had a radio, and it came over on the radio. It was frightening, really, but, even then, didn't realise what it would mean at all. I hadn't been through a War but my Mother had, and she was quite alarmed. You know, remembering the First World War. I was just courting at the time, but my husband couldn't get away quick enough. It was the thing to do, all the boys were going, his friends were going, and we had to go. The boys, the young men, they had to go, it's a thing. I don't know if a War happened again they'd be as keen, because they didn't know as much (laughs) then, and of course, they were always saying 'Oh well, it won't last all that long', you know, you've heard that.

K: And did you stay working at the paper mill?

EK: Yes, I had my daughter, my eldest daughter, after he'd gone away. After he'd gone away for training. We had been married and he went to Blackpool to be trained. And they used to train on the beach. That's where they did their training at Blackpool and then he was sent in an anti-aircraft crew, whatever you call it, they went to Birmingham, protecting those massive things, the gas and electric, you know, all the power around Birmingham. He was there a long time, when he went to North Africa.

K: So when did you marry, which year?

EK: 1942.

K: Did you have a reception?

EK: Oh yes, of a kind... there was about twelve people there, my Mother's brothers and that. And living where I did, you could apply to Bromley Cross, where the council was at that time, lived in Turton area, and, you were allowed... If you were having a wedding reception, they would send you one or two things, you could have a bit of butter and, I've never, ever forgot, they allowed us two ounces of cheese, for there must have been, around fourteen people at the tea. And I thought, what do you do with two ounces of cheese? What do you do with two ounces of cheese? (laughs) But it was very minute what you were allowed, but...

K: So the council provided this extra..?

EK: Well, it was on top of the rations. But mind you, living on a farm we weren't too bad, we'd got fowl and we got rabbit, if we wanted rabbit we could just out... my brother would just go out and shoot one. And my Mother used to say sometimes, 'Go and get me a rabbit. We'll have rabbit for tea... go and get me a rabbit' and we had a gun and he used to go out and ten minutes he was

in... There used to be a lot of rabbits about, ten minutes he was back with a rabbit and it was skinned and stuck in the pot. (laughs) And of course we had hens and eggs, we were better off than most, but anyhow, we got the cheese.

K: And where was your reception?

EK: At Hampson's Farm, we had it at the house, yeah.

K: Did you have a honeymoon, at all?

EK: Yeah! Blackpool, for about four or five days, that was about the only place to go (laughs) at that time. Blackpool was *the* place, you didn't go any distance, at all, yes.

K: So that was a Wartime wedding.

EK: That was a Wartime wedding, yes. Short and sweet. Stayed in a boarding house there.

K: And then he was away again afterwards?

EK: Yes, yes, he went away again, and then he was overseas for quite a long time.

K: Did you have a gas mask?

EK: Yes, I did. And I remember going into town one Saturday afternoon and we had to take our gas masks with us all the time. And in the town centre, they were having something, you had to wear your gas mask. It's a pity really, that no-one's taken photographs of that. If you were in the town centre, you had to walk about with your gas mask on, well yes, you had to do it, it was probably a trial.

K: Was this the beginning of the War?

EK: It must have been, it must have been.

K: You didn't have to do that later on, did you?

EK: No, no. You carried it, you always carried your gas mask in a little box. But that particular day, if you were going into the town centre, you had to put your gas mask on. It would have been good to have a photograph of it.

K: It's possible that there is one, in the Evening News or in the...

EK: Yeah, there could be. (laughs)

K: So that would be the beginning of the War?

EK: (laughs) yes, you'd have a job to recognise your friends, wouldn't you? (laughs) All look alike. (laughs)

K: Yes, it would be quite a sight, wouldn't it, walking around the town and everybody wearing one of those. Everybody equal.

EK: Yes.

K: What was the blackout like?

EK: Dreadful, horrible.

K: Were you still living at Hampson's ..?

EK: We was living in Hampson's Farm. He fell out with my brother, he was going with a girl up Belmont, and they fell out, and the following day he went and volunteered for the RAF, and he was the person that my Father relied on, on the farm. But it must have been a big thing this thing. And, of course, afterwards it meant my Father couldn't cope alone and you couldn't get help, and we bought a house down Astley Bridge and moved down Astley Bridge. We had a big sale, you know, farm things, you know, advertised it and all the farmers came round and bought whatever you were selling, cheap I suppose, and they got things, second hand things, and cows and pigs or anything there. He cleared everything with this sale and we went living down Astley Bridge. My Father got a job as a gardener, and he was a gardener at Wilkinson Hospital from then on, so he got some work and...

K: And you were married by then... or..?

EK: Oh, I had a little girl then, yes.

K: So did you still live with your Father?

EK: Yes, yes, I think most people did when they were married, at that time. They didn't go off and get a house, unless they were very fortunate.

K: Do you remember any air raids?

EK: There were air raids every night, but they were mostly over Manchester. You could see the city lit up, but there were fires every night, I should say, the fires there. Same with Liverpool, it was all lit up every night, oh yes. There were a few bombs in Bolton, but I did mention being out with my boyfriend, coming back, we were coming down Longworth Lane, and a plane going over and he dropped some bombs. Now it wasn't near any factories or anything that did munitions, he just dropped some bombs.

K: You landed in the ditch, didn't you, I think?

EK: Yes, I'll never forget that. But that's the nearest I got to a bomb coming down, but the others were all over towards Manchester. Manchester was in a dreadful state, continual bombing there, so...

K: We were talking about the blackout, when I asked you where you were living, because, obviously, a bit remote there weren't you?

EK: Yes, mostly on the farm, yes, you had to have your blackout material, loads of blackout material. It was cotton, like a cotton twill, but evidently, you couldn't see through it, very important that. And there was one thing, I've never mentioned before, but my brother lived at Rivington, at one of the lodges where the bungalow is, and we used to go over there sometimes, and what there was, on the moors, at the back of Belmont, quite a big area, and it was marked out like, like a factory. In the dark, there was lights, as if it were street lights, and it was the moors, but it was marked out for aircraft and I think it was in case Euxton, was it Euxton? If they were making for Euxton, to get the bombers to drop the bombs on this moorland, because, you see, they were lit up like faint street lights, and lights. You know there's things in the Bolton Evening News, but never, ever mentioned that, and that was there for quite a long time. If you went by in the day-time, you could see all these poles, all these wires, yeah, so that was something people don't know about really. It probably covered a fairish area but, because, there was a lot of moorland between Belmont and Rivington, a lot of moorland there, yes.

K: That was just a trick really, but an elaborate one.

EK: Yes, what do they call it? Decoy, it was.

K: Decoy, and was it ever bombed, as far as you know.

EK: No, it wasn't, not to my knowledge.

K: But at least they thought of that and...

EK: Yes, it was a good move. If there'd had been any craters up there, I wouldn't have known, I didn't live near there, just went to my brother's, that lived at Rivington.

K: And I've got to ask about food, but you've mentioned that you didn't really have any problems when you were on the farm.

EK: On the farm, no problem, but once you've left, you just got the rations, which were not good.

K: Was there anything you particularly hated about Wartime food?

EK: Yes, I used to go and queue up in the morning at the greengrocer's and in the winter and' all that, and it was raining, it was horrible, stood there, waiting of the greengrocer, the grocer opening the door, and he never would open the door, 'til nine o'clock. If there was fifty people stood outside he wouldn't open the door and get on with serving you. And I used to go and get potatoes and come to dinnertime and start on the potatoes and they were all rotten, absolutely rotten, couldn't use them. That happened so many times. They could just sell rotten potatoes. People had been queuing up in the wind and the rain, and they'd get two or three pound of bad potatoes. Another thing that happened at the time, that's never been mentioned, which was pretty bad. You could get eggs, and you'd open them and they was rotten, they were stinking, they were rotten. Now where they'd come from, I don't know, they'd been around a long, long time since the hen had laid it, I'll tell you that! I remember after my brother was killed, the one that was killed in Burma, and he had a fiancé that lived in Devon, I think, she came up, and she was in bed and I said 'Oh, I'll bring your breakfast up' and I did her some toast, and the egg, and she was just having boiled egg on toast, and when she just hit it, opened it, it was bad, it was black. Now that was a mystery, where they were coming from, I don't know, but people were selling bad eggs.

K: This shop that you used...

EK: It was the Co-op.

K: The Co-op, so...

EK: They wouldn't know, they'd just be buying them from somewhere else. Something else I remember, which was, more or less a secret, at that time. I used to go to the butcher's at a certain time, and as soon as he opened, I'd be in and there was also a man there, that worked at Holden's Mill. Now Holden's Mill, I don't know if it was in cotton, or something like that at the same time. Now the owner of that mill lived just at the back of where I was living in Hill Cot Road, in a detached house, and there was the owner and his wife, and I think it was a daughter. Now, every Friday, that man sent a man from the works to get his meat. Now the butcher knew the man was coming from the mill and was shopping for this family, and the meat he got, you wouldn't believe how much he got. He got chops and God knows what, did this man, and I knew there was only three people living in that family, but he was the mill owner you see. And every week I used to see, I used to go, and used to see this, and I knew it was all wrong, and the butcher himself knew it was all wrong, because the butcher himself had been the Mayor of Bolton at one time. I don't think he was at that time. And then it came my turn, and you were allowed one shilling's worth of meat, per person... per adult, there was just me and my Father, and I'd got the baby, I don't know whether she had an allowance or not, and if there was any liver, or anything like that, that was off the ration. Now you might have got a bit of that, but that's the meat I got during the week and yet this fellow was coming and taking a bit pile of meat. But it's a case of who you know, isn't it?

K: It is, well, other people have said similar things about shopkeepers.

EK: It was well known, under the counter, there's always stuff under the counter. But, unfortunately, once we left the farm, I was away from all that, so I had to suffer with everybody else. Oh, but it wasn't right, you know.

K: No, because rationing was supposed to make people equal.

EK: Aye, yeah, yeah. But some people are more equal...

K: Yes, they've got money or they...

EK: And another thing, I had an Aunt, and she lived on a dairy farm, at Eagley Bank actually, not name any names. And now and again you went to the greengrocer's and they'd got some oranges in and if you had a child, you'd get one orange. And I remember going up to my Aunts, and she was very friendly with the greengrocer, the one that got the oranges, very friendly. She probably took milk there and all that. And one day I went up there, and in her hall, was a case of oranges. She'd no children. I don't know if they were on the children's books or not - quite possible. There was a full case of oranges in her hall. All that went on. That was wrong. I don't think we ever had bananas, I couldn't remember. Because, you see, the important thing was to get armaments into the country, not bananas. But anyway the oranges did come every now and again and I suppose you had to show your book and you'd get it ticked off. But I was quite annoyed when I saw the case of oranges. And sometimes she used to say 'Would you like some meat? I can't stir for meat in this house' she'd say! (laughs) But she knew the same butcher as the other one...

K: Yes, so who you know...

EK: Who you know, and it's all the time, under the counter, so if you was just an ordinary mortal, you just didn't get anything from under the counter.

K: If you weren't a 'special friend'.

EK: Yes, yes, that's it, 'friends'. And another time, I remember when we were on the farm, my Mother was running out of soap, she must have been, and she said 'Well, if you go down Astley Bridge' which I did 'will you see if you can get me any soap'. And I went in a little corner shop on Belmont Road, this was, and I said 'Can you let me have some soap please?' but I don't think it was rationed at that time, and they looked at me, this person in the shop looked at me. She didn't know me of course, and she said 'No, I have no soap' but she would be a person that sold soap and had she known my face, she'd have let me have some soap, but I didn't get any soap to take home (laughs) We actually lived about two miles, about two to three mile away from Astley Bridge shops, so that was life! (laughs)

K: Did you miss bananas?

EK: No, it was a case of you accepted what was there, accepted it, what could you do? (laughs) Couldn't do another thing, could you?

K: And presumably, your child, you got rations...

EK: Oh, I'll tell you what we had for the children - bottles of orange, like squash, concentrated orange. That was very good, very good for the children and also cod liver oil. Got those two, don't think we got anything else on the children's books. But...

K: Did you have dried milk?

EK: Dried milk for the babies, yes, National Dried Milk, yes that's what the babies had. There was nothing else, so if your baby couldn't drink it, it was just too bad. But I was brought up... I tried to breast feed my baby, then just went on to cow's milk, but diluted it with water, so it was like just cow's milk diluted with water, you know? But that's probably going back to Victorian times. They probably just did that. Because she knew of it, and I didn't have the dried milk, there wasn't any then, I don't know.

K: Was the orange juice from the Americans?

EK: Quite possibly, yeah, because they did have oranges there didn't they?

K: Yes, and they also did something called 'lease-lend' I think orange juice was part of it.

EK: Yes, with ammunition and aircraft and a lot of things, yes, so that was that. Half cow's milk, she survived, well she's sixty today. (laughs)

K: Today? (laughs)

EK: Not today, but she's around that now (laughs) You know it's amazing how they throw their hands up in horror today, if you'd told them anything like that. And also to get babies off milk, it was always bread and milk. Bread and milk, a bit of sugar on it, but that was OK. But that's what my Mother brought her children up on and they were OK, no problems, no problems with them, so that was that.

K: Did you grow any food, vegetables or anything.

EK: No, nothing, we just had the animals. The hens and the pigs and the cows and we had horses there but I mean they weren't for food. So we were into dairy farming, ducks, you know, all that type of thing.

K: Did you do anything for the War effort? Like recycling, obviously you worked at... you knew all about the paper recycling.

EK: Oh well, I left that when I had my baby, I left there. No, there was nothing that I can think of... Oh, I tell you what there was, they used to bring a Spitfire and stick it in the middle of the Town Hall Square, and ask everybody to buy the Savings Certificates and all that, to the value of that plane. And that's what people did, that had any money at all, they would buy some savings certificates.

K: It amazes me that they raised so much money through that.

EK: It was amazing, wasn't it?

K: Where did people have the money to..?

EK: Well, I don't know, maybe some people just did two or three.

K: Because, usually, the amount they wanted was usually doubled.

EK: Yes, I know that one collection they did was aluminium and even if you'd a good teapot, or anything, a pan or anything you'd take it down.

K: Where did you take it to?

EK: Well, it was somewhere in town, evidently, I don't know. But there was a lot collected, that was for aeroplanes, I'm sure, aeroplanes, don't think they'd use it for anything else. And then there's Warship Weeks, people I know, of my age would remember this, and you'd put money if you could, Warship Week, yes, anything. My income was very small at that... it was... before I had the baby, it was twenty four shillings, and when I had the baby it were a bit more, I think it went round thirty or just over thirty shillings a week. But I was lucky, as I was living with my Mother, although I had to give my Mother a pound a week out of that. She said I must pay for my keep, I had to give my Mother a pound a week out of that, so I didn't have much left, but you know, I managed. I bought wool and knitted the baby coats, but everything was so cheap, like, you'd probably get wool and it would only be pence for a ball of wool, you know, you could just knit a baby coat very, very cheaply. But everybody was doing make-mend, cut old clothes up and make something new. It was good though, and people, like I say, if they'd got a coat - but they didn't throw much away, I must say - they'd give it to you and you'd turn it and the inside was always like new, but the outside was worn, yeah. It was good.

K: You mentioned things that people could make and...

EK: Yes, it was really good. People were so proud of what they did, yeah.

K: Do you remember Christmas at all, and birthdays, were they difficult times?

EK: Birthdays... well on the farm we'd be alright at Christmas, birthdays... Christmas I don't remember anything about Christmas. After leaving the farm, I don't remember any of the Christmases there. I just don't remember any. We may have had an allowance of dried fruit, to make a Christmas cake, something like that, but I don't remember that though, no. And then the Ministry of Food used to issue leaflets, to make different things with, you know, how to help you making your rations, your margarine go a bit further. We used to have the leaflets coming out.

K: Do you want to describe what it was like seeing your husband off at the Station.

EK: Terrible. I don't want to talk about it. It was awful.

K: No.

EK: You see, tears are coming in my eyes now.

K: Yes, I'm sorry.

EK: It's awful, it was so sad, you know, very sad. And you came away from that Station so deflated It was awful. I'll not talk about that... it happened... but it was awful.

K: Yes, you mentioned tanks and things going by.

EK: Oh yes, going down Belmont Road, yeah. They went down every day.

K: Where were they going to?

EK: Well, I guessed, because you never knew anything, you know, everything was secret. I presumed they were going to Liverpool, to go on the ships, to go to North Africa and places like that. But all kinds of different... Some very big tanks, very noisy, every day really, I mean, I lived on the farm, and it was about a mile away from the road, but we always knew when the tanks were coming down, because you couldn't miss them, yeah, couldn't miss them. There must have been hundreds and thousands gone down that road. You know, nobody tells you anything, so you've got to kind of think 'Now, where did they come from? Where were they going? It was just a guess, yes, so I just guessed.

K: Could you just repeat about what you said about when there was an air raid and you were on a bus?

EK: Oh, yeah, (laughs) terrible... This is when I went living in Astley Bridge, it was in the blackout, to start off with, and then, sirens went and the bus stopped immediately, immediately. It was terrible. You'd think the driver might have been waiting for a nice air raid to have a rest. I just don't know, but didn't move an inch once the... But that must have been their instructions, 'You don't move' but it wasn't like Bolton was being bombarded, they weren't, you know, they had a few bombs but not many.

K: You didn't get off and go and find your nearest shelter?

EK: Oh no, no. I think maybe we didn't expect any bombs coming down in Bolton. No we'd never find one in the dark. Not unless there was an Air Raid Warden about. But in the dark, the dark was the dark, it was as black as ink really, unless you'd get the moon, but I don't remember many moonlit nights, but there must have been some. No, it was just like ink, you just sat there, waited.

K: Did you have a shelter at home?

EK: When we moved into the house at Hill Cot Road there was an Anderson shelter in the garden, but we never, ever went in it... never, it was just there. It was there after the War for a long, long time and eventually they just came and took them out. They'd have been good if we'd been in a bombardment area. They'd have been good to go in. It's not like when you hear the stories about London, where they were in every night.

K: Do you remember when VE Day? Do you remember when..?

EK: Oh, yes, I do.

K: What did you ..?

EK: It was so sad, we didn't do anything, stayed in, oh it was so sad - for me.

K: Because you were on your own?

EK: Well, I was with my Father, but, I mean, my brother had been killed. I can't talk about it really. You know, after all these years, you'd think 'Oh, well it's gone, it was in the past...' but it still comes back.

K: It wasn't a celebration for you really, was it?

EK: No, not at all, no celebration, no.

K: Or VJ Day?

EK: Nothing. No celebrations in our family, and, I mean, our family's just one of thousands, thousands and thousands...

K: He was killed just before the end of the War?

EK: Yes, March 6th 1945. At the end, yes. We'd had one or two letters before ...my brother, the one that joined the RAF was being married at that time, and my brother that was at Burma said 'Have a drink at the wedding for me, I'll be seeing you before long' he'd been killed. At the wedding we didn't know. After we'd been notified, there were some letters came and I was so jubilant to see them, but you see, they'd been written before he was killed, I said 'Oh, it's a mistake' for years, you know, you can't take it in.

K: Your husband had been away, when he came back, he'd been away such a while, he didn't...

EK: Four to five years, I think, altogether. He did have a month's leave from was it North Africa, or Italy? I'm not too sure, it might have been Italy. He had a month's leave. They had a draw and eventually it came his turn and he got home. So that was amazing, amazing. (laughs)

K: You mentioned you wrote to him every other day.

EK: Yes, I did, yeah, I did. I don't know what I wrote about. It was easy for me to write, I could sit down and fill a foolscap, with just like conversation. Not that there was wonderful things happening, there wasn't, it was just like... I don't know if you could write easily. I could just sit down and write a letter so easily and it was easy to do. And I wrote to my brother in Burma once in the week. So I spent a fairish time writing letters, yeah, so...

K: But he found it difficult when he came back, your husband, didn't he?

EK: Well, yes, it's a lot of adjusting to do, not many jobs. He wasn't a skilled man, oh no. It was so difficult. There was so many men coming on the job market, you see, all at once. You had to take anything you could get. Oh no, he wasn't happy, and, you know, all the time they're thinking about coming home, and then, they'd get home... they missed their friends. You know, for all it was being away for years and years, they had a lot of friends and fun, I think. Men together have fun, don't they?

K: Is there anything else you'd want to talk about, I've not mentioned?

EK: I wanted to get that in about the Station, you know.

K: Yes, well, I was trying to give you an opening for that... and you did say you didn't want to talk about it. If you'll just read it in a conversational way, if you can.

EK: Yes, (reading) "Now and again, standing on Trinity Street Station, I do today, I don't go on the Station very much, but I think what of the scenes, of the hundreds of Army, Navy, Air Force, people all crowded together with all the girlfriends and that. I remember, sixty or more years ago going down to see my husband off after being on leave, maybe forty-eight hours, or even - that dreaded embarkation leave. The Station was a mass of uniforms - Navy, Army, Air Force, along with girlfriends and young wives. The soldiers had their kit bags and rifles, and when the train came in, it was a quick goodbye before the boys boarded, and that was all most of them were - boys. Just boys of eighteen and early twenties. As the train started to move away, it seemed a thousand arms filled every window, each one waving to their special girlfriend. Gradually it moved out of sight, and the people left on the Station platform sadly turned away and slowly made their way up the stairs to Trinity Street. The Station platform was deserted once again. Some of these boys never, sadly, saw their home town again, after that telegram was delivered to their homes. My husband was away for five years, I didn't see him again after three years. And of all the years he was overseas I wrote to him every other day on a sheet of foolscap that was shrunk down and made into an Aerogramme before being sent overseas. My brother sadly made it to the end of the War but was killed at the end in Burma." And that's just a memory of Trinity Street Station. It's a pity there's not a plaque on the Station, or something to remind people of that scene, there's nothing. because people today, they've no idea of the scene that

was on the Station, and it is history now, and it would be good for something to be on the Station just to make people think of how it was. Just a thought.

K: I wonder if there's a photo in the paper. I mean, there are quite a lot of War photographs in the Evening News, but I wonder if anyone did go and take one down the Station. I mean it's something they traditionally did at Bolton Holidays. They'd have, you know, a picture of hundreds of people waiting for their trains and where they were going. So I'll try and see if I can find you such a thing.

EK: Yes, see if you can find something.

K: I mean we were talking about this yesterday, a lot of stations do have War memorials to the men from the railways who worked. I don't think there's one at Bolton.

EK: But I don't really mean a memorial... For people to read, and say, a memory of Wartime platforms, something like that, just to jog people's memories. Because they don't know, they don't know. And it's like a historic scene, when you think about scenes like that, that went on, hundreds and thousands of people, some going to their deaths and some not.

K: It's worth a thousand words, just that picture, I can...

EK: Yeah, yeah.

K: I will see what I can find in the paper.

EK: Yeah, you see if you can find a photograph, and for them to put up in the Station.

K: I can't imagine them doing it, but you never know, do you? Especially at the sixty years, I mean I know it's more than that now.

EK: It's history isn't it? Well it was just like a centipede really. It's a wonder the train didn't go over, because there were so many people leaned out and all these arms, arms - there seemed like there were hundreds, just like a centipede. Just on one side, you know, of course.

K: And this would be a regular happening, wouldn't it?

EK: Oh yes, oh yes, regular... Oh yes.

K: Because leaves were staggered all the time.

EK: Absolutely. Do you think we've done what...?

K: Yes, unless there's anything else you want to talk about, I think that's fine. Ok, so thank you very much Edith.

EK: (laughs) You're welcome!

ENDS