

Friern Barnet & District Local History Society

INTERVIEW BETWEEN PERCY REBOUL AND THELMA HARRIS AT 1 HEMINGTON AVENUE, FRIERN BARNET N11 ON 14 AUGUST 1985

- PR Miss Harris tells me she was born on 10 February 1914 and has lived in the area and, indeed, as has her mother, since she was born. So can we start off, Miss Harris – were you born in this house?
- TH Yes I was born in the bedroom where I sleep up here.
- PR And had you any brothers and sisters?
- TH One sister. Her name is Eileen. She lives here as well. She was born two and a half years before me.
- PR I see. So you're the younger of two children. I'd like to say something, first of all, about your mother and father. Were they both local people?
- TH My mother was. She was born in Holly Park Road.
- PR What year would that be because those houses in Holly Park Road don't look all that old.....?
- TH The story was that great grandfather lived in Bawtry Road, which was near the Standard Telephones and they used to have to come by train, the LNER, to New Southgate station and walk up what is now Bethune Park up to Bawtry Road. On one day they were caught in a thunderstorm and they sheltered in an unfinished house – 12 Holly Park Road – and while they were sheltering they looked over it and fell in love with the area and the house which became their home so my mother and her sister were born there but the brother was already born elsewhere.
- PR I see. So you're really going back generations of Whetstone and Friern Barnet people. I think you must, in that sense, be almost the oldest in terms of generations, that I've met. Did you say great grandparents?
- TH Grandfather. I don't know a lot about it him.
- PR What was his name?
- TH Secker, which was my grandmother's name.
- PR And he actually lived in Bawtry Road. What did he do for a living, do you know?

- TH He was something to do with the railway but he was an elderly gentleman in the days I'm talking about. Of course, I wasn't born.
- PR I see. This is what your mother has told you, so would have been when it was the Great Northern Railway. And your grandparents then, what were their names?
- TH My grandmother was Mrs. Secker. Alfred and Elizabeth Secker who lived at 12 Holly Park Road and my other grandmother also lived in Friern Barnet in my childhood. In Friern Barnet Road. She lived to be 96. Both grandmothers lived to be 96.
- PR What were your other grandparents? The Harrises?
- TH I only know the sort of part where my grandmother had Harris's Crescent Laundry established in 1895 in Station Road, New Southgate.
- PR Is it still going?
- TH No. We sold in 1952. We were 3 generations in it.
- PR So you were in the laundry?
- TH Yes, part of the time. We both were but only because dad died and we were plunged in at the deep end. My sister was there already because, being a little older, she was in the office and then when Dad died we were plunged in at the deep end. Mother wasn't in the business.
- PR I see. Do you have any memories of Holly Park Road?
- TH I do as a child because of Grandma living there. My mother was one of three. Her brother, her sister and herself and they went to a private school at the house right next to the clinic. The house has got the front door round the corner. A large house next to the clinic and they paid 4d. a week for their schooling and they had to pay for their books as well. Well, with 3 children at 4d. a week, that was a whole shilling, which was quite a lot. In terms of today it sounds so funny but it was because not every child even had shoes on their feet. But Holly Park was a very nice, smart road. Three storey houses and people would live in those houses and they weren't let out. They had the lot and an area, in some cases, where the servants would be.
- PR So they were well-to-do?
- TH Our family were middle class but not well-to-do but they lived in the smaller houses which were new towards the end of Holly Park Road. The established houses were there and they built these new houses. A little bit more modern and just the two storey houses.
- PR This would have been way before Holly Park School and so on was built, would it not?

- TH The old Holly Park School, I should think, was built soon after these new houses but the St. John's school was a church school and later on my mother went to St. John's School at the end of Holly Park Road. You go through a little alleyway where there's a Scout and Guide headquarters. Philmore Court is actually built on it.
- PR Yes. Have you any other memories of your grandparents that you would like to tell me about?
- TH Many. Yes.
- PR Tell me about some of the ones perhaps connected with their work.
- TH Well my grandfather who I didn't know – he died before I was born – was the Station Master of Kings Cross Station. He used to wear a top hat and the lot.
- PR Distinguished indeed! So they come from generations of railway...
- TH No, I don't think so. My grandmother was in the clock trade. She was all to do with clocks and they had the apprentices in their house where they lived in London.
- PR What part of London? Clerkenwell? Did she ever talk to you about clocks?
- TH Oh a lot. Yes, she was the only daughter that worked for her Father and she used to have to get up and open the door to the apprentices and my grandfather invented the Hunter spring which was the way the fob watch was in the pocket and it sprung open. I think he was the inventor of what they call the Hunter spring.
- PR Yes, the Hunter and half-Hunter. Well, well. Very often I think many of them were Huguenots, weren't they? Or people from France. They were people who'd been persecuted.
- TH No.
- PR Yours weren't at all?
- TH No.
- PR I think many of them were in Clerkenwell. They fled from France from the religious persecutions.
- TH No. No.
- PR Is there anything else. Did he ever tell you about royalty coming to King's Cross Station or notable people coming there?

- TH No. I was never with him, you see, because I wasn't born. I don't recall anything being handed down.
- PR Well let's come back to your own Mother and Father. What did your Father do for a living?
- TH Well my Father was born in Wood Green I think. But anyway he was in school in Wood Green and he trained as a draughtsman. That was his father's line. He was very gifted to do this but Grandma was on her own and she started up this laundry business and was doing very well and she persuaded my Father to go in with her in the laundry trade. So he gave up being a draughtsman and went into the laundry trade. This was the one that started in New Southgate and then Dad bought a factory which had been a Piano factory and they'd had a fire and he bought this as a freehold next to Standard Telephones. The building is still there and he turned it into his more modern and up-to-date laundry with steam and all the modern machinery.
- PR This is next to the Standard Telephones, Brunswick Park Road?
- TH That's right. Brunswick Avenue.
- PR Brunswick Avenue. That's right. So they were obviously very busy people running a successful.....
- TH Yes, well it would have been more successful but the First World War came along and of course they took all Dad's men so he had to turn to doing things himself to keep it going.
- PR I'll come back to the business of the laundry because that really is a fascinating one. I would like to just talk a little bit about you as a family. Were you a close family?
- TH Yes. I think I would say a disciplined home. Yes we were very close. I was extremely close to my Mother and of course I was only 20 when my Father died. But we were great buddies. I'd be out in the garden with Dad and I've always done the garden and I've continued to do it for the 50 years since. I was out with Dad in the fresh air and Dad did a lot for the hospital fete and going in for the vegetables and all the horticultural side with his allotment which later became our garden. He had the land on the side as an allotment and then Dad bought the piece.
- PR Yes but can I come back to your really early memories. Your first memories of the house in which you were born. I mean we're talking about 1914. I don't think you'll have any memories of the First World War but....
- TH Yes, I have. Another interesting bit was that we had the same neighbours for many years, Mr. and Mrs. Folks, and in the FirstWorld War they turned the cellars at the back into a sort of dug-out and I remember clearly being taken from my bed, obviously half asleep and in the haste of getting me through the gate I was bumped on the gate and I was crying a lot. I can remember that

night and I can remember the night when Mum was calling Dad in when the Zeppelin came down at Potters Bar. Something came down at Potters Bar in flames.

PR Yes, that's right, the Zeppelin. Did you actually see the flames?

TH Well no. I was hugged in my Mother's arms. Mum called Dad in because she was fearful. She didn't know how near it was but I remember the calling and the ladies were calling the men in but they were watching the sight. I remember the sort of light and they turned me round because the little red lamp was shining in my eyes. I quite clearly remember being in that dug-out. I was only 4 when it was over.

PR When you say dug-out, was it literally a kind of slit trench?

TH Under the veranda, the conservatory. And then, in the Second World War, the same neighbours with their grandchild, we made a double one and we slept under there. The same people with another war in the same place, sandbagged up. I little bit more comfortable.

PR A little bit more lively?

TH A little bit more.

PR Can I come back to the house. How was it lit, for example?

TH By gas till 1945. We were one of the last people to have electric in the road because my Father lost the sight of one eye through a detached retina and he didn't believe in electricity. He thought he's only got one eye and he must preserve it at all costs.

PR He thought it was bad for the eyesight?

TH Yes. So we had good gas lighting and black ceilings all my childhood.

PR Do you remember the gas mantles and fittings?

TH Oh, yes. I used to know how to put them on and everything. You knew not to tighten the little screws too tightly otherwise when expansion came with the heat they would snap.

PR I'd forgotten that. But what about water?

TH We had three-quarter inch pipes leading in, which were quite a lot.

PR These were lead pipes presumably?

TH Yes, and we had brass taps which were cleaned every week.

- PR Did you have hot water? By that I mean did you have piped hot water and a tank?
- TH Yes, we had a back boiler behind the kitchen range.
- PR What sort of kitchen range was it?
- TH Well, it was a black one with a coal fire and an oven at the side and then a steel topped fender round it.
- PR Was all the cooking done on that?
- TH No, we had a gas stove as well but Mother liked cooking on it and she was economical so when the fire was going she would cook quite a lot of the food in it but it was not so reliable as the oven, the stove, because you always cooked a little bit closer – she had to turn everything round – nearer the fire always cooked browner.
- PR Was she a good manager of the house?
- TH Excellent and a marvellous cook. She lived for the home. She lived for us and that was her place in the home and she always did the needlework and the cooking.
- PR Did you have any servants at all?
- TH We had a Mrs. Davis who worked for us for 30 years. She used to come every Friday and she was paid a half-a-crown and all day she had her keep. She had lunch and a dinner and tea and she was fed all day and that was a day out for her. She had a drunken husband and it was like a real day out to come to us to do housework. We were very fond of her.
- PR What about your washing and things?
- TH Well we didn't do any because we had a laundry you see. That was the funniest thing. In 1952 we had to find somewhere to put a line up because we'd never had one.
- PR The houses in those days would have been generally solid fires. Was the house, compared with today, for example, cold?
- TH No. Dad didn't believe in having any heat in the bedrooms and we were quickly hustled to bed and that was it. But we never had any form of heat in the bedrooms at all.
- PR Did you have gas lighting in the bedrooms though?
- TH We would have done but there was a little light on the landing left for us all the time so you could see your way up this winding stairway and there was no

switching on so we weren't allowed to light as little girls so that was left on so we could go to the bathroom or anything.

PR I wonder if I could just go through a sort of fairly typical day in the Harris household. What time did you all get up?

TH Well Mother got up first. Dad wasn't a good getter-upper so Mum would get up I should think possibly half past 7 – quarter to eight and she would make a cup of tea for Dad and call him and then she'd make our breakfast – egg & bacon.

PR What they call an English breakfast – a good substantial.....

TH Yes. Bacon and tomatoes – things grown in the garden when possible but it was that sort of thing with bacon and grilled Kipper or something. Always something substantial and then there'd be bread and butter. We did have toast but it wasn't just always toast There was plenty of home-made jam and marmalade and lemon curd and things like that.

PR And then what? Off to school?

TH Off to school. There were no packed lunches. We came home to dinner and we called it dinner midday and Dad joined us later on. He walked home from Brunswick to here for his dinner.

PR Yes, and your mother would be concerned with providing?

TH Yes. Providing.

PR Because these are fairly big houses. It would have been a full time job, would it?

TH Well she loved it. It was just a way of life. Dad didn't wish her to go into business. But during the war she did help Dad a little bit with the books.

PR That's the First World War?

TH Yes, when they took his staff away she did help with the books because he would get behind otherwise.

PR You've got happy memories of childhood?

TH Oh yes, I have particularly. Very happy.

PR What about high days and holidays?

TH We celebrated Christmas with the family. We had the two grannies and two old aunts, my grandmother's sister, came. They came to stay and slept here and my other grandmother lived locally and she would bring uncle – my

father's bachelor brother – he'd come too. It was always here. Grandma's for Christmas Day and here for Boxing Day.

PR So you always celebrated that in a traditional way? But you were saying that, other than that, um.....

TH No, holidays were difficult, dad being in business for himself. I had one holiday when I was 5 and mother got pneumonia; another when I was 10 with Dad and Mum that time. I was 14 when I went with Grandma and that was my three childhood holidays. I didn't go the sea any other time.

PR You were talking there about actually going away from home and having a holiday. Do you remember those holidays at all?

TH Oh yes, ever so plainly. We stayed in a boarding house.

PR Sometimes people who are very close to their home were a bit uncomfortable when they were away.

TH Well this was a bit unfortunate, the Clacton one when I was little where I needed a little bit of discipline, a little bit of help from mother and she was ill. So that was Clacton, a Mrs. Haggard and it was a boarding house – just a house. I was 5. I remember that.

PR Let's get you back to this age of 5 because I'd like to say something about the way you were schooled and what you remember. When did you first go to school?

TH When I was not quite 5 because my birthday is in February and I went to school in September and I went to Friern Barnet Girls Grammar School in Torrington Park, now no longer there, and I had been one day in the previous term to have my school photograph taken with all the others knowing I was going to join the school and I bumped my head because the seat used to come up when you got up and I didn't know it was there and fell down inbetween and bumped my head. That was the day. Then the first day at school the teacher had us two little children, Beryl Lucking and myself, and she said "that's your peg, and that's your peg". Well I didn't know what my name looked like written in hand- writing, only what mother had shown me – her writing - and we had to change our shoes. At the time I went to change my shoes I looked up but didn't know which was mine so I waited for Beryl to put her clothes on – I'm, always reminding her of this – to put her clothes on the peg so that I could put mine next to hers and I can remember that as plainly as anything.

PR Who was the Head Teacher at that school?

TH I've forgotten her name.

PR No matter. Can you remember any of the teachers' names?

- TH Miss Peplow (Peplow?) was the Head Teacher and Mrs. Mason was another teacher.
- PR How was the school constructed? How many forms were there?
- TH We were in the attic, which was an absolute death trap when you think of it now. Wooden stairs right up into the loft. All the loft was the babies' room and you came down, there was a second form and a third form and it did have a sixth form and they used to do different exams then. They did Oxford and things like that.
- PR What was the age structure? I mean from 5 to ...?
- TH Right through. The girls were 19 and 20. They were really adult. Buns and grown up. The girl that played the hymns and the march she had a bun and she was quite 19
- PR How many children would you estimate?
- TH The school never held more than 80 but we still meet every year.
- PR A select band, was it? Did you have a school uniform?
- TH Oh yes.
- PR Did it have a school badge, for example?
- TH Yes. We had a bunch of Buttercups and there was a story about that. The boys' grammar school had an Eagle and they, in those days, were green and yellow and then they became black and white and a school called Tollington opened up in Muswell Hill and they opened just before our school and chose the Eagle for their crests and as the Rector's favourite flower was the Buttercup we had a bunch of Buttercups. Well every Ascension Day, we went to St. John's church every week anyway, but on Ascension Day we went on Thursday and our school girls would take Buttercups from the fields round here and the whole church was decorated with Buttercups and that went on as a tradition right up to about two Rectors ago.
- PR That's a nice story. I like that. What sort of education did they give? Was it religious based?
- TH Yes, I would say it was. A very good, sound education. The Head Mistress in my childhood, when a little tiny child, well you had your form teacher and you remember her more than the Head.
- ..
- PR Did she do all the teaching rather than having different specialists?
- TH In the babies' bit. And we called it Transition – there was Preparatory and Transition and they were all held in the loft and then we went down for the other classes. By that time that Head Mistress had changed to be Miss

Mountford and Miss Mountford kept the Old Girls Association going and she died at over 80 and we still meet and the school's been closed 56 years and we still meet every year for lunch in town. Some of them are very, very old and I'm the youngest, with my friend. We're the two youngest and I'm 71. There's nothing to follow on.

PR That is incredible but was it the kind of school that bred that?

TH I think it was and on one of the occasions we had a gathering in this district and the Head used to come up from Sevenoaks and stay with one of the ex-pupils and she said "If I failed in many things I did teach you how to make a friend" and we'd just pick up the threads as if we were still at school. It's most amazing.

PR May I ask you, because I'm desperate to get confirmation. I go to old school rallies and so on and the amazing thing is that no-one ever really seems to change. They look just as they did.

TH We seem to know each other so well. If you spent say, three, four or six years with somebody every day, 5 days a week you really know them and it wasn't a changing area. I mean people came here and settled so the girls came in at 5 and were probably still there at 14.

PR So you had this undivided loyalty right through which is rather unusual.

TH We went to the church with the boys' grammar school but weren't allowed to speak to them so one sat one side of the church and the other sat the other and if we were seen talking to them we'd get into trouble.

PR Was there any kind of formal relationship between the two schools other than that day? You didn't have a dance? You had no contact with them at all?

TH No. The Rector of this parish is automatically the Warden to the school and he had our school and it was opened and then he was very generous – the children from St. John's school that were promising – he let them come as scholarship children. No fees paid and we didn't know who they were, naturally, but they were children whose parents couldn't have afforded the fees and he overstepped the mark and the school went broke. Too many that didn't pay and he was very insistent that all the teachers had qualifications and one very good teacher was given the sack because she didn't have letters after her name. Miss Cooper her name was. She was one of the best teachers. She was a delightful teacher and she opened her own school in Woodside Park with her sister afterwards.

PR Do you remember that incident rankling at the time? Did you feel an injustice had been.....

TH I did feel it was very unjust, as a child, and my parents did because they knew what a good teacher she was and how she could talk to the parents and how she seemed a natural person and she seemed to be able to put the lessons over.

And then what we got afterwards, these teachers with the letters after their names, well they couldn't teach, many of them.

PR Yes, children seem to have an instinctive understanding of what a good teacher and bad teacher is all about. Whether they're right or not.....?.

TH Not always right. I mean some of them made you work harder but I think children are prepared to work if they understand what they're supposed to be working about.

PR What do you think of the school?

TH I think that we had discipline.

PR May I ask about that then?

TH Well we had funny ways. She had what they called Stamp Edgings and that was strips of the edging that came off stamps, the borders, and they were put up on a board and proportionately to how many children there were in the class, there were so many up. You had so many points and if you lost a stamp edging it was like going to prison. You'd do anything to keep that intact the whole term. If you stepped out of line one of these was torn off and your name was put on it and it was stuck somewhere else against the side.

PR This was the ultimate humiliation but did it work?

TH Yes, I think it worked but it didn't make you a perfect little girl.

PR What about any other methods of punishment?

TH Well I think the best bit of punishment which I loved, two bits really. First of all, if you were talking in class the teacher would turn you out and if another one talked in class she'd turn that one out. Well there were three of us and we worked it so we did talk so we could get out and have a bit of fun in the cloakroom while the lesson was going on. Now this was a period of just a term where you'd get a pal. That was one and another disgrace we had was we had to get our clothes on and stand in front of all the school for the prayers and the hymn before we went home. If you wanted to get home early and get out quickly, there was always a scramble in the cloakroom so if you could do something to be naughty you could get your coat on and get out first. So that's all the effect it had on me. None whatsoever!

PR So you always had a morning, an afternoon, and an evening prayer?

TH Yes we always had prayers and a hymn and I played the hymns at the end because I was the only girl that could play the piano.

PR Where did you learn music?

- TH Miss Chamberlain who lived at 21 Beaconsfield Road. We used to walk along there. The idea of discipline was that we didn't play up, we were quite good. We didn't write on walls or anything like that but that little bit of naughty talking, which is only childlike, that was punished and the punishments were so amusing to me as a child that I thought it was hilarious. Mother used to say "We're going to aunty's. Hurry home from school". I said "I'll have to talk just before the end of the class" and it was sort of laughed at even at home because it had no shame for me to stand there with my clothes on in front of everybody. I couldn't see that it was punishment. I thought it was good.
- PR Did you do languages and so on?
- TH Yes. We had to learn French and of course English and later on I had Latin.
- PR Did you do homework?
- TH Yes.
- PR Were they strict about homework?
- TH Yes. It was part of life. It was expected. As soon as you got home you were asked if you'd got homework.
- PR Did any of the girls eventually become famous?
- TH The Head Mistress, Miss Mountford, had three things in mind. If you became a nurse, a missionary or something of that sort, or a teacher and if you wanted to be one of those three things you were a favourite but if your father was something in, like we had a laundry, she wasn't interested. You wore a sort of mark. You were different. And we knew.
- PR That was the way then. So there isn't any girl that I would recognise as a national figure?
- TH No, I don't think we could say that but many did very well.
- PR They went to university?
- TH Yes, all this sort of thing. We've got school photographs and we could name them and say they've done very very well. Thinking back there wasn't much opportunity for girls. If they didn't become a teacher.....many were teachers, Rodean and schools like that.
- PR When was the school opened?
- TH In 1902, I think.
- PR So it didn't last all that long as school go. It went bust.

- TH Yes but it did become Frys Hill School and I stayed on. I was 11 years old then but my sister had left by then.
- PR And when you did leave school what was the intention then? Were you going to go into the family business?
- TH Yes, we had no choice. Mother wanted us to go into a bank and we knew... This girl I started school with, Beryl Lucking, her father was the Bank Manager at Barclays Bank which was opposite St. John's school which is now the British Legion. That used to be called Barclays Bank. That was where they lived and that was the bank and my mother said to my father "Shall we speak to Mr. Lucking to see if he can get Eileen into the bank?" He said "No question, those girls will have to carry on my business". He hadn't got a son, you see. So we had no choice but Dad didn't know he was going to die and we were in a bit early.
- PR This is the right time now. I'd love to talk about the business which I find a most fascinating aspect of life. I think one's work is, in a way, is important. So tell me do you remember anything about your first day there?
- TH Well I do because my Father went into hospital on the Friday and I had to go in on the Monday.
- PR What year are we talking about?
- TH I was 21. The last thing my Father did was to take me to the Chamber of Commerce dinner for a treat for my 21st. He was the Chairman of the local Chamber of Commerce and he wasn't well then but he made it and I remember that very well for a treat for my 21st
- PR You look to me as the sort of person that keeps old programmes and things. Do you remember the programme? Who was the guest of honour?
- TH I don't know that. I was just a treat to me.
- PR Let's talk about the laundry at Brunswick now. You joined that at the age of 21.
- TH I'd been to Pitmans College in between and taken a secretarial course.
- PR So the intention was that you should look after the....?
- TH That I would go into the business.
- PR The paperwork, as we say, the bookkeeping.
- TH Yes.
- PR How many people did it employ?

- TH About 40.
- PR So he was quite a big employer?
- TH Oh yes. And it varied. In the wartime we carried on right through and we had what staff we could get. That would be full, I mean it was sometimes running at about 32 or 3.
- PR You touched upon the fact that you had fairly modern machinery, as laundries go. Did you have a kind of area that you covered?
- TH Yes, we covered a large area. We went out as far as Golders Green and Pinner and we went the other way, Wood Green, Harringay, Palmers Green. We had vans but Dad had a horse and cart to start with when I was a child. Every Sunday Dad used to go across to water and feed the horse because, you see, it was left at the firm.
- PR Did he have an ostler, or whatever they were called – a horse keeper?
- TH Yes, Mr. Keach was the man who had the horse and when Dad had a van – Mr. Keach only had one arm and my Father wouldn't sack Mr. Keach. He kept the horse and cart while he'd got Mr. Keach and he had a van but he still, for the local work, kept the horse and cart going.
- PR You mentioned Pinner. That's an enormous way away.
- TH It is a long way but then that was wartime.
- PR Did you specialise in anything?
- TH Yes. We had a very high class work and of course the fashion became to get it down for cheaper so Dad went in for what they called the Float Iron and he was the first in the field with a Float Iron and that was a six roller machine and he had an extra piece on the building made and quite a large extension made on the old factory to accommodate this great big machine and all the workings that go with it and the new hydros and the big washing machines and he was assured that his existing boiler was going to be sufficient but once all the machinery was set going there wasn't sufficient power to carry everything. We in the meantime the Advance Laundry had stepped in on this cheaper work and they'd got established and got theirs going and where Dad was still struggling he got the business and then he couldn't get the work done and there was nobody to turn to to have it done for you so he had a very bad patch and in the meantime he lost his business. If you say to somebody you're going to have the work back in a few days and you can't get it done, you lose the business so that's why we had to go out further because we tried and tested and we know that we had to prove ourselves over the second time. Once he had a new boiler established – Dad never kept a diary but he did keep a diary about the days when the boiler was coming in because he was let down so many times. He bought the boiler and they didn't deliver it and he was waiting and his work was all piling up. It was the frustration but once he'd got

everything he'd got enough machinery but then he hadn't got enough work. But there were generations, really generations, in some cases worked for us. I meet the staff now.

PR Can you give me some of the names, just off the top of your head?

TH Mrs. Haggard is still around and Ivy Brett's still around and Gracie Carter - a lame girl - she has a locked foot and a paralysed hand - she worked in our office all her working life. She's still around. I could name many.

PR Laundry is one of these things that is a complete mystery to me. The van collects the dirty linen or whatever. What happens then?

TH Well it's unloaded. According to the.... whether it was a book or whether it was a card or whether it was a special card, they would be sorted into 3 lots by the driver. Put in 3 piles, heaps.

PR That was the driver's work, was it.

TH Yes, to put it in the right place.

PR How would he know which was which?

TH Because people were encouraged, if you could persuade them, to put their label on the outside.

PR They had their own number which identified them?

TH Yes. If they didn't put their label on the inside they put it on one side for us to sort out to see where to put it. People helped us by putting the label on the outside but if they put it on the inside then we had to undo it to find it then do it up again.

PR I see. So you got, you were saying, three...

TH And then it would be sorted in its right departments, bestwork...

PR What's bestwork?

TH Very finest work you could do. (*inaudible, sounds like golf rings*), stiff collars, stiff shirts, everything at tip top and then the next was the Presto finish - however big your bundle for a shilling you got the finish so it was a Float Iron with a finish.

PR What is a Float Iron - is that a sort of gigantic roller?

TH Well originally everything was supposed to go through the rollers but then later on the shirts looked so rough that we started to do, for the same money, those shirts on presses. Instead of putting them through the rollers we used to do them on the presses.

PR And what about the third bundle?

TH Well, then there was cleaning. We used to be agents for cleaning as well.

PR What I would call Dry Cleaning?

TH Yes. Agents only. We'd put it out. Then it was checked and it went through into various like dog kennels (well, that's what they look like, a bit). A lot of 25 bundles would go into three kennels we had. A man opened the door the other side and then you would throw it up into what department it was to be – or the girl would. Towels and sheets were washed together, tea towels were treated specially and so everything had its own way and the woollens and hand wash went somewhere else. And then that all opened the other side and that went on to the washhouse.

PR What was the washhouse?

TH An enormous place really. Big machines and big driers. Big drums.

PR What sort of, in your early days, they wouldn't have used....

..

TH We generated our own electricity. Everything was DC so if you wanted something repaired you had problems in the war.

PR What did you actually use to wash? Was it soap?

TH We used to buy it by the ton.

PR Soap powder?

TH Yes, a suitable mixture that was right for the machines for white work then you had different for flannels and woollen work.

PR There were no detergents then, I understand.

TH Well not quite the same but....

PR But in a powder.

TH Yes, but then we had a hand washer. A woman would wash socks and all the hand washing.

PR How were they dried?

TH Well they went in a hydro and that was spun like now, a spin dryer only it was a great big hydro. And then they were put through the machines or taken up into the drying room. If it was blankets they would be put up in the drying room on clips and it was like a big room with heat.

- PR Steam heat? It must have been a hell of an atmosphere.
- TH It was wonderful. Everything was so clean. Everybody looks upon laundries – nothing could be cleaner. It was all clean. Everything scrubbed on a Monday. Every bowl was absolutely spotless. It had to be because if you touch anything it just had to be perfect.
- PR But what about the final finishing? There were some things that were ironed by hand?
- TH Yes. I did that in the war a lot myself. They called the women up for embarkation leave and I perhaps would do days on end on an ironing board and presses.
- PR Of course that's real hard graft, isn't it?
- TH You just took it in your stride. You brought your office work home to do in the dug-out in the night. The next door neighbours had the light so they provided the light because we'd only got gas.
- PR It was really hard work though, wasn't it?
- TH It was hard work but there were no Unions and no strikes and everybody helped each other.
- PR They were a good bunch of people. You regard them with great affection.
- TH Oh yes, I do. Great, super people.
- PR What was the reaction when you had to close, then?
- TH They were in tears. I had to keep it under my hat and I went into the mess room. I said I'd got something special to say and they all came up to the mess room, the men as well as the women, and I told them and they were in tears but we did promise everybody a job and we did get everybody a job but they didn't all take them. We broke up because we couldn't sell it as a running concern and it was sold to Standard Telephones, the building was. The figure was laughable, freehold, £9,000 in 1952 – a great big factory.
- PR What happened to all the machinery and stuff?
- TH That was sold separately. It was taken away difference places. We gave the customers away to the British Laundry Research at Hendon and after the first week they nearly buckled because they'd never had so much work in their lives. You see we were doing it fortnightly so you draw it all together. We used to collect Monday and deliver Thursday or Friday, Tuesday Thursday and Wednesday Saturday morning and then, once the war came, you collected and delivered, because of the petrol, on the same day then eventually you had to collect once a fortnight so can put all that together, it was a lot of customers and they were just were snowed under.

- PR That must have been quite a traumatic time for you. Can we go back now. I would like to get some of your impressions about the Friern Barnet in the early days. This would, of course, have been before the Town Hall was built. Do you remember the old house that was there?
- TH Yes, clearly. I'm glad you asked me about that because that's what I am so interested in as I'm making a film of Friern Barnet but I wasn't doing film in my childhood. I wish I was.
- PR You're making a film?
- TH Yes. I started in 1939 of all the changes in Friern Barnet but I can go back so much further in memory but I've now films. The Town Hall was a white building with a sort of castle-like top.
- PR What is called a crenellated top.
- TH Yes and there were very nice lawns very nicely kept and when my mother went to the few shops along Queens Parade - that was all there was, the other shops in Woodhouse weren't built - she would leave us with our bat and ball just to play there and people were allowed to sit or children could play with ball, while she went to the shops.
- PR Of course that was still a Town Hall.
- TH Friern Barnet Urban District Council, on the corner of Friern Barnet Road and Friern Lane. Now I can clearly remember Friern Lane being renamed because the conversation (I would be about 10 or 11) sitting at the table and my parents talking about there would be a lot of muddles because the postman would deliver Friern Barnet Road to Friern Barnet Lane. It had been called Friern Lane before. Now recently in the paper a local person said it was just another way of calling it but it was clearly renamed when I was about 11 and I remember the conversation quite clearly, how my parents thought there's be muddles because they're both long roads with the same numbers.
- PR The street lighting then was gas?
- TH Gas. There was a gas lamp opposite here and there was also what they called a stink pipe for the road, big fat thing that went up and they put a light on it and it would shine.
- PR And what about public transport? Did you ever go into town in those early days?
- TH Not very much but when my father bought this house this road was a new and fairly modern road and Dad didn't need to go to town because he was a local trader and so it didn't affect him but a lot of the houses were not selling. In fact the builder went bankrupt because they wouldn't sell but as soon as they extended the trams from New Southgate Station to the Orange Tree and

further on to Woodhouse Road then they went very quickly but by that time the son went building this road. They got halfway along, and this was an unmade road, just gravel and that sort of thing.

- PR What year were these houses built?
- TH 1904 and the family came into it in 1909. They're all different and they had a shipload of tiles when they built these. They were some of the first houses ever to have tiles. There are tiles everywhere.
- PR You mean floor tiles?
- TH And wall tiles. The larder, for instance, has got white tiles from floor to ceiling and in the porch you will notice them.
- PR Were they English.
- TH No from Sweden. Somewhere quite a long way away but it was a shipload he had.
- PR I'm glad to get that because in a hundred year's time when they come to dig this place and they find these tiles they will be wondering where they came from. Now we know.
- TH Yes, outside and inside. The front path was black and white which we not haven't got but many bits of it we still have. In the hall is mosaic underneath the carpet.
- PR Yes, that's typical of those. So as far tile laying went, was there any transport along there?
- TH No. When my mother was a child there was a watersplash, they'd go through with their horses and chariots...
- PR Where would that be?
- TH Just by Buxted Road and that very water ran through the bottom of our garden in the form of a brook right until Dad died when I was 21.
- PR Would that be the one that runs through Friary Park?
- TH It is the same. Dad always reckoned it was a tributary of the River Lea.
- PR I think it is.
- TH And they culverted it along the gardens of Hatley Close when they built Hatley Close and we were left without the water.
- PR Pity. So if you wanted to get to Whetstone, for example, you just walked?

- TH That's right.
- PR There was nothing running up Oakleigh Road? The odd buses?
- TH There might have been some buses. There were buses in 1932 and before that there were buses in Oakleigh Road because I went to school on them. They were private. There was the Princes, The Generals and another bus and they used to try and get to the Standard to get the customers. They used to pass each other so they could get there to get the customer because they wanted the trade because they were all private buses.
- PR Yes, of course the Standard then was a big employer.
- TH Called Western Electric.
- PR Was that good for business being next to a gigantic.....I mean if you'd been running a fish and chip shop you'd have been millionaires.
- TH We actually used to have what we called "Call Fors" and so during the war time that weren't at home to see the laundry man were glad to bring their trade into us so we opened Saturday morning in the cold, very cold because we generated our own heat, so we had to have a little bit of outside electric to try and heat that great big place on a Saturday morning for the Call Fors.
- PR What about entertainment in the twenties and thirties as far as you as a family....? Were you a cinema-goers for example?
- TH I was very different from my sister. That's why I think perhaps it's interesting that you take my life because although we're sisters we're very different. We don't do very much together, although we live together in this house separately we go our own ways and do our own things because we enjoy different interests. As a child I was very contented to be at home with the garden and my hobbies with art and handcrafts and needlework. My mother would go with us shopping. We'd together shopping but my mother had everything delivered and she'd have a little basket and she'd have perhaps a hand of bananas and a bit of elastic and a few Asprins, something like that and she'd say "You feel this basket, how heavy it is". Now today women get great big stacks of stuff and lug into the car and lug it into the house. Mother didn't do any of those things.
- PR No. It was all personal service.
- TH It was all delivered. Everything was delivered. So we had the baker call every day. The milkmen called – two milkmen we had, Brinklers the milkman from Waterfall Road. That was a home for backward or gentlemen's sons. A farm where they produced very rich milk and it was called Brinklers.
- PR Down Waterfall Lane? I've never heard of that.

- TH Yes and they used to come in a cart with like sides on it and they had bottles when I remember it and a man used to step in at the back.
- PR Was it signposted Brinklers?
- TH Yes.
- PR And what about the bakers?
- TH We had Alf Cook's .
- PR Alf Cook's from the top of Friern Barnet Lane?
- TH No. From New Southgate.
- PR Oh, that's a coincidence.
- TH I think I'm telling you right. The most interesting thing was, when I was a schoolgirl a very short little man used to come with the bread and he's now in my Luncheon Club 80 years of age. I didn't see him for 50 or 60 years in between. He was about 21 when he delivered the bread but being a very short man, when I saw him I said "I know you, don't I?" and I was posting a letter and he's lived in Muswell Hill all the time and he said yes, he remembered my mother and delivering at 1 Hemington Avenue and he still does.
- PR Amazing. He's the sort of man I ought really to be talking to.
- TH It was hard. He used to come up from New Southgate with a barrow. He was only very short, probably 4ft.10" and he had this barrow and he used to push it and he used to bring a very large basket, enormous basket, to the front door with all sorts of loaves for mother to choose. You know, the Long Tins and the Cottage Loaves and all the different loaves. The small loaves as well and brown. Mostly white. And then he's push that to all these houses, all Beaconsfield and Parkhurst and Carlton, up one and down the other pushing this barrow and then he'd have to go back and get more and come again. And he did these roads as well. And this is a mile and a quarter away.
- PR Yes, 6 days a week.
- TH Yes. And then on Hot Cross Bun Day he would come at 7 o'clock in the morning and do all the buns before he did the bread. Do the whole round with buns only. We'd order them 7 for 6d. overnight. We had a shillings worth. There were quite a lot of us and then mother started making her own.
- PR Did you never go to the cinema?
- TH The first cinema I ever went to was to see Harold Lloyd (this is locally) when the Coronation Cinema opened – on the opening day my Father was invited, being Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, and he took us along and we

went to see Harold Lloyd in the Coronation which was a brand new small cinema.

PR Well that's a marvellous thing because the Coronation Cinema has always fascinated me. You were actually there on the opening day. Can you remember what year it was roughly?

TH I wish I could. I think I was about 11.

PR You haven't by any chance got a picture of the Coronation. I've scoured the Earth looking for one of the Coronation Cinema.

TH No. I could almost sketch it. Mrs. May was the lady in the desk and she was a sweet lady. She was rather plump and her hair a bit frizzy and a round, smiling face and I always felt that she was a tonic. She always had a smile. We went a few times afterwards and I always thought that I would take my pattern from her because that smile cost nothing and I'm sure that that memory of that Mrs. May in that shop, when I had my own shop later on, sort of put me in good stead because I always felt that she was so pleasant. Mother used to say "Oh, that lady's lovely smile". She only sold a sixpenny ticket. She could have thought "ugh". She needn't have done it. It was just her.

PR But you never went back to the Coronation?

TH I did go a few times. We used to go for sixpence when there was a programme we wanted to see. The only previous films I'd seen.....my uncle took us to some war films. He thought it would be education and I thought all cinema-going was very sad and so I didn't go. I never went as a girl at all.

PR Do you remember the opening of the Gaumont, for example?

TH Yes, I remember that and I remember the old Gaumont, the old Grand Hall opposite. You remember that, do you? We went there a few times but we weren't cinema-goers, no. Well I think a little of it was that you couldn't just go. We weren't allowed out to play. We were taken wherever we went.

PR But you did mention that you were musical. Were you a musical family?

TH I'm not a gifted musician but I like music and I went to music lessons and I used my music but I'm too nervous to be a pianist, much too nervous.

PR But did you play at Christmas and high days and holidays?

TH Oh yes, we had to – under pressure a bit.

PR Did you Father or Mother play at all?

TH My Father used to sing and my grandmother played the piano and my Father's brother, who also was local, he had a nice bass voice and the other brother, a

single man who lived with my grandmother, he sang comic songs and that was all Christmas time.

PR Can you remember any of the songs your Father would sing?

TH I may have got some of the music but all ballads

PR Had he got a good voice?

TH I think he'd got quite a good what was called a baritone. My mother could play his accompaniment but she was too nervous, like me, to play out so my uncle would accompany Dad. My uncle was a very good pianist – that's my mother's sister's husband.

PR What about the pubs in the area?

TH We didn't go to them. My Mother used to go once a year with a jug to get a half pint of old ale for the pudding and she used to go in like a thief and look round to see if anybody was looking as though somebody might think she was a quiet drinker. That was the only way you could get it.

PR Where did she get it from?

TH The *Orange Tree*.

PR Do you remember who ran the *Orange Tree* then?

TH Harrises – our namesake. My Father called himself a teetotaler because he never had any whisky or spirits and he didn't have any beer. He wasn't a man who would go into a Public House but he'd invite a friend in for a sherry or a port or a Martini and people never came in for coffee. Friends of his would come in for that sort of drink. He smoked a lot really, having the little tobacconists. He opened his office as a little tobacconists so he wouldn't have all his eggs in one basket because the laundry wasn't doing that much. He'd got two girls to educate and so he opened this little tobacconists which is till there.

PR Where was that?

TH Next to the gate of Standard Telephones and it was opened in 1924 as a pure tobacconists. They sold tobacco loose or in a packet, walking sticks, cigars and pouches and pipes and nothing else.

PR An extraordinary mixture.

TH Now Dad had to close at 6 o'clock. That was the shopkeepers losing time but if you were a confectioners you could keep open until 7. Well Standard Telephones worked till 6 in those days and they were out about quarter past but dad didn't want to break the law so he took on a few Cadburys lines so he could be classed in with the confectionery but just carried a few Cadburys bars.

When wartime came of course the cigarettes were rationed and we came unstuck to open it full time so we took in other things to make up the balance because of the rationing of the cigarettes and when we closed the laundry in 1952 I then, thinking what I would do for the future, the Accountant suggested I took on the shop. So I said to Mum “Well I’ll take it on for a year to put it on a sound financial basis with a view of selling it”. And I fell in love with it and from then onwards I put my own money into it and altered it and made it my life.

PR Did you really enjoy that? You’re smiling as you say that.

TH I loved it. I used to open at 7 and I didn’t do the coming home. People were running for their buses and they didn’t want to know so I didn’t do the late opening. I tried it but it wasn’t worth it. So I used to go and visit my great-aunt after work every day at the shop. She lived to be 96 – Mother’s grandmother’s sister – and I used to go there and get her shopping and make a cup of tea and she just liked the company and I used to walk home that way to see her in The Homestead. She lived in New Southgate in The Homestead because she was a daughter of the trade. She was a daughter of our original trade, the Clock & Watchmakers but because she hadn’t married she was entitled to go there and have a flat and have a pension but my grandmother who did work there, she worked for her father, because she married out of the trade she couldn’t get a flat and she couldn’t get a pension, although she was a widow.

PR Astonishing isn’t it. What do you miss from those old days mostly?

TH I don’t know. I think I’ve lived a very placid and pretty sheltered life but I’ve always been connected with the Church.

PR I was going to ask you, finally, about that. Whether you were a churchgoer.

TH Yes, I’ve always been connected with St. John & St. James. Having never moved I’ve gone right through from baptism.

PR Do you mean St. James at.....

TH By Friary Park. My Mother was married there and I was baptised at St. John’s by Mr. Thawley in 1914 and I’ve got a certificate. I’ve been going to one or other of the two churches, because it’s one parish, ever since. I’ve had 7 Rectors. I taught in the Sunday School for 29 years. When I became 11 I started to go to Sunday School. Previous to that I hadn’t been to Sunday School because we were taught the Christian faith at school. Then I met a lady who asked me if I’d like to join the Sunday School and said I would like to and my parents were willing. Then I became a teacher.

PR One of the big changes has been precisely this – there isn’t the accent on churchgoing that there used to be when we were young.

- TH No, we used to have to learn all the collects and we also have to write the collect out when the Rector came every week and I know all the collects to this day except the ones in the holidays. I know them off by heart.
- PR Isn't it astonishing how they've stayed with you. You know all Hymns Ancient & Modern too I don't doubt?
- TH Yes, I think so. And the service is more difficult now because we've got the new service book. I do know it. I knew it word perfect, what we had.
- PR But do you have the same affection for it though?
- TH That's a very very difficult question to answer. I haven't lost my faith.
- PR No, it's not a question of losing faith is it. It's a question of what you feel comfortable with, I suppose.
- TH Yes, well I think it would be easier to leave that out of my interview really**
- PR Yes, O.K.
- TH Because I'd like to stay as if I... I mean, I still go and I have the same reasons for going but with different Rectors it opens up another chapter.
- PR Of course it does, yes. No, I didn't really mean it in that sense but I just happen to have been teathed and sang in the choir Hymns Ancient and Modern and to me there can't be any other hymn book that will ever replace it. I just can't get used to the ..
- TH Some of the new ones? I like some of the new ones, I must admit. They're "go-ey" tunes. Yes, I like them. I think the words are very nice and I think that they've begun to take a hold but, having taken Guides for 40 years, and that was another part of my voluntary life – I wanted to be a teacher and of course I was plunged into the laundry. My mother was a schoolteacher part of her working life, before she was married.
- PR Where did she teach?
- TH She taught at St. John's Primary School, Friern Barnet. So I taught voluntarily by being in the Sunday School and Guides. I've always loved the thoughts of teaching and passing any knowledge I have on and sharing it with people. I just love that.
- PR I wonder if you knew my dear friend, Hubert Matthews who was a great friend of mine?
- TH I do. I was talking to him last week.

- PR How is he? I haven't seen him for ages. Now, in talking about the change-over, another of the profound changes is the population of Finchley and Friern Barnet. When you were talking about your schooldays was there a coloured face to be seen anywhere?
- TH No. The first coloured face I saw was when I was in my Father's receiving shop and a man came in with onions and a man also came in with a turban trying to sell me something and I was terrified – I was really terrified. But I did know a little of people from overseas because I had been a Sunday School teacher, a missionary worker. You did get to know but you felt that they belonged there and we belonged here.
- PR Have you been able to accept that kind of change? I mean it is difficult.
- TH Oh I love the people from overseas as long as they're the people that love our country for what it is and don't try and make us do what they do. What they do in their home is their affair but I think they should keep our laws and live our way if they come and join our country. That's the only thing. Some of my greatest friends are people from overseas.
- PR Have you had anything to do, for example, with the Friern Hospital?
- TH Yes, on the fringe but mainly we took our show – the Guides and Scouts used to do a very large entertainment with 120 in the case. We called it "Evening Stars" and we took the show into Friern Hospital to entertain them with all the children.
- PR Tell me about that. That sounds interesting.
- TH Extraordinary. We didn't take the Cubs and the Brownies so we dubbed in some of their words and made it fit and put in little bits extra but basically we took it all, band, scenery. We had to change under the stage, the girls and the boys had somewhere else and when they wanted to go to the toilet, in those days all the corridors were locked at intervals so you had to go along and get it all unlocked.
- PR What year are we talking about?
- TH I should think 1936 probably.
- PR So you put on a really big sort of "Gang Show"?
- TH Oh yes. We did it for 14 years, into the war as well.
- PR How did they receive it?
- TH Well they laughed in different places. It was so funny. The things that we put on at the Friern Barnet Church Hall here – we put it on for five times. We did it on Thursday to elderly people and the Friday, Saturday afternoon and Saturday evening and then we did it at the hospital and they laughed – things

we thought were funny they didn't and they laughed at other places. There were patients, nurses, doctors and orderlies and anyone could come.

PR You were mentioning the Friern Barnet hall over there?

TH Yes. I was at the opening of that Friern Barnet Church Hall.

PR It was the church hall where they used to hold the dances and things? Do you remember some of the things they did during the war?

TH Oh yes. I know quite a bit about that. I used to play Badminton before the war in that hall and there was quite a story that went with that. The hall was still in debt, paying back to the bank the interest and was trying to raise money all the time to get the debt off, so much every year, and it was a bit of a White Elephant from the word Go. And then the steeple fell off St. James' church in a gale and £7,500 was the repair job which meant that the parish had got that on top of the debt. So we formed a Badminton Club to help to pay. At least we'd take all the dates that weren't let and pay them a nominal fee so we started a Badminton Club. Well then, when the war came they made it a Rest Centre and so we were turned out. We couldn't play and afterwards it became a British Restaurant and then when the popularity of that wavered a bit they put that over in Priory Hall. I was the chief organiser of the Mrs. Mopp. All the cleaning materials were on ration so one lady had a car and she picked up various ones of us with our own buckets and flannels and scrubbing brushes and we cleaned that church hall right through, the floor and everything, after the British Restaurant which was absolutely filthy, and got it clean ready to hand over to the new caretaker. It hadn't been so clean.

PR We just touched upon Woodhouse School and, indeed St. James's School and you mentioned Mr. Yaxley (*sp?*). Did you know Yaxley at all?

TH Yes. He had a son as well.

PR You were saying about the Woodhouse school uniform.

TH Yes. I remember the school opening and our school was green and yellow and we had nice Shantung blouses and it was quite neat and smart with a white Panama hat with green binding and a grey blazer with green binding with the school crest and this school had a very vivid blue uniform. Royal blue. It had a gym slip and a blazer and a hat with a sort of bobble thing and it was almost gaudy by comparison with other schools but it sobered down after a few years. They had it toned down a little bit and that was the main school, just the one building in those days. We would walk to Finchley with Mother for the shops, that would be our walk. She'd meet us from school, walk up Torrington Park and come back along Woodhouse Road. That would be a walk, we'd just pick up a little bit of shopping, perhaps visit Boots the Chemist or.... but it wouldn't be really shopping as we know it today. Or she might have to buy some stockings or something like that and she would go to Finchley, more for the walk than anything.

- PR So, in a way, your whole environment has been in this area?
- TH Oh yes.
- PR Finally, are there any other things you'd like to mention about any aspect of your...
- TH Well I think that one of the interesting things was that this road was built and Goldsmith was built, partly and when I turned out of our turning there were Holly hedges and fields either side of the road and we passed two houses only, which we called the sandpaper houses because the one and only houses that had rough cast on them. One's still standing today. And then we went up the green bank to Torrington Park and there were two big houses on the corner and then there was a nursing home and then our school and then Friary Park and that was it. All the rest was fields. So went to school when there was just a lane. Friern Barnet was like that in those days.
- PR Do you look back with affection on those days?
- TH Very, yes. I was a happy child at school. I didn't really like the Head Teacher because she had favourites and I wasn't one. I was conscious I wasn't one, but apart from that, when we were older and we met her at the Old Girls' Association I understood. She became a friend. I liked school and I was a happy child but I accepted a lot and I think children don't accept things now. If Mother said something I accepted it. If Mother thought I should wear my mac because it was going to rain, I put my mac on. You didn't set up opposition. You had to put your wellies on if it was raining. It was not a case of "I don't want to", you did it. But we weren't bullied, we were gently told what to do.
- PR Are you suggesting that in this year of Grace 1985 that there is a singular lack of discipline?
- TH Yes. Less direction more than discipline. No direction. There's too much "please yourself" and "do as you like" and I think that if parents have children, and it's their responsibility, I think it's up to them to bring their child up how they want their child brought up. Not to be influenced by outside. If they want to have certain things for their child I think they've got a right to do so and they gear the child towards that way of thinking because that's what they want for their child. They only want the best for their child and they don't want the child to be too influenced from outside. They want to be the guiding hand.
- PR Well I think on that rather nice bit of homespun philosophy I think we'll end and thank you very much indeed Miss Harris.