

Evelyn Edwards, Vicarage Road, Rhydymwyn

Rhydymwyn

Air Inspection Department (AID) Testing

Say your name and what you did there.

Oh, yes. Evelyn Edwards. I worked for the Air Ministry Inspection Department.

What did you actually do there, your function?

At every stage from when the empty bombs came into the factory, they were inspected throughout. We had a stamp, we were called viewers and we had a stamp so that we had to pass each empty shells, which had to be cleaned. Ladies would be sitting round steel tables and they would be cleaning them up because they had had rust where they'd been standing, I suppose.

Was that right down the far end of the site?

No, this was in the K buildings at this end.

Okay.

So, all the rust had to be cleaned, so they had steel brushes and clean them and then they'd have to be passed and you had to put your stamp on. You each had your own number so at the end of the journey if anything was wrong, well they could come back to that, you know. Then from there they went into the cubicles with the gas and they were filled. There were sort of clocks and they worked within a tolerance and it had to be in between that tolerance.

The container was weighed was it?

Well, it came on a conveyer belt through and the men would be there filling them with these machines. Yes, it was weighted. It had to be within a certain tolerance.

What was the filling machine like? Was it just a simple pipe and a tap or was it more involved than that?

I think it was just a pipe. I can't really recall that.

Obviously, the tin was on a weighing machine?

Well, it was more than a tin. Those were proper hard, thick sort of bomb cases, you know.

Oh, right, but the thing that was filled was on a weighing type machine that you filled it between the tolerances?

Yes and they came out at the end and if they were all right, well, you'd reject it if it wasn't in that tolerance. Then you had to take them off and put them onto trolleys, but they were all steel and they couldn't have put things like gas in case of spills, because it would have eaten in, so they were already strong what they put them all on and they went from there to be bonded and they would be there for so long, depending on the size and things, some for 24 hours, some longer. There again, they would have to be checked again and you'd have your stamp go on again. There was quite a few of us and it wouldn't always be the same one checking that particular one, as you can imagine.

Were you in the cubicles checking?

Oh, no, we weren't. We sat outside. We had a chair and sat outside.

Were you in protective clothing?

Oh, very much so. I should have mentioned that first probably. When we arrived, you went into the changing rooms and you left your clothes there. You each had your own locker number and you left your own clothes there and then you put on all these, because of going into those areas, you had to have sort of woolly thick vests and very thick woollen slacks and tops. You'd collect your gas mask and everything and also protective clothing to go over that wool, that woolly suit, very thick....

Rubbery stuff?

Sort of, yes. They went over, you know, and you had to have wellingtons to go into these areas. We always had to be equipped with those, because we didn't know where we'd be sent on this particular shift. We could be in what we called the clean side where you didn't really need all these protective things, only if you were in the back of the cubicle.

Did you know before you changed where you were going?

No, you had to go prepared.

So, if you were sent to the clean, did you go in all the stuff?

Oh, we wouldn't have the oilskins, oilskins they called them.

You'd take those off, would you?

We'd only have those in our bags with us, you know. We were issued those with our gas masks.

You wouldn't put that on to walk wherever you were going? You'd wait until you got there?

Not outside, only if we were going to work in the areas where there was gas. That was when we would put those on.

In the Tunnels

So, what other functions did you do or what could you have done on your shift?

Then they'd be taken out of bond to see if there was none of them that were leaking and things and then they'd go on their journey. Every week, on a Friday, they used to get the convoy ready on the railway, (of course, there was a railway siding which came in) and they would get it all ready and there'd still have to be one of our people there, or two depending on how busy they were, checking that they were all going in, right until they left the site. It usually went in the middle of the night, or in the early hours of the next morning.

So, it was dark, so people couldn't see what was going on?

That's right, in the dark. Well, you know, I think people knew what was going on probably. They knew when that train was going, they knew what it was because it was going in the night or very early in the morning.

What other things did you do within this...?

Some thing were stored in the tunnels and we'd have to go there, which I hated, because there was lots of bats in there and they'd say to you if you got bats in your hair you'd have to have your hair cut off.

These are the tunnels into the cliffs? Because there was also covered walkways in between the big buildings, wasn't there?

Yes.

Which, again, we were told yesterday, women didn't like going into. When you went into the big tunnels, what did you do in there?

There again, there would be checking on that there was perhaps no leaks on things that were stored in there. There was all these massive tanks with all the gas and things in.

I got the impression that the tunnels were more for bulk storage than storage shells?

Yes.

But some shells went in there?

Oh, definitely, yes.

Was that just because there wasn't room in the other sheds?

I haven't a clue. I wouldn't know anything about that. We did have to go in there. The bulk things, they came in on massive, like you see big milk tanks and petrol but bigger than those almost, by convoy from Runcorn. I suppose somebody's told you all about that. Then, of course, the chemist would be coming several times during a shift to take samples of what these people were doing.

Just to make sure?

I suppose, I don't know. I don't really know anything about that.

ON The Clean Side

On the clean side, what would you be doing on there?

Well, as I say, the preparation of cleaning the bombs, checking them, that sort of thing.

So, you had a job there and you weren't solely working on the dirty side, because we spoke to someone yesterday who was an inspector and she was in the filling cubicle and that was her sole job. She didn't go anywhere else.

What did she inspect for?

She was watching. You know when you were outside looking at the rest, she was inside watching the person fill the canister.

I don't think anyone was in, only the men were in. It wasn't big enough anyway.

She said she looked over the shop, her recollection. She gave me the impression that that was her function; she was an inspector, whereas your job was more varied?

Yes, it was inspection, but you weren't just working in there. I don't think health wise that you would continually work in there, because we only went for so long and then we'd be relieved.

How long, when you were doing a check?

Well, I can't remember. We wouldn't do a whole shift really. We would do so long...

What, 2 or 3 hours?

Well, it depending on how many there were in reserve to take you off this and somebody else comes. While they were doing that, there had to be somebody continually there at the cubicle. There was two men working in there and I couldn't see, really....Was she working in the K buildings, this lady?

Yes, she was wasn't she?

It sounded like she was working for the Air Ministry. I can't remember her name now. She recalls an instance where the light and the power had gone off. I don't know if that was in the building as a whole or if it was just in the cubicle, but she said she donned her gas mask and put a gas mask on the man working in the cubicle because he seemed to have tripped over something in the dark and she sort of pulled him out of the place. I don't know if that was a one off incident or whether that sort of thing....

I haven't got her first name, but she's Mrs Ashley.

But that wasn't her maiden name.

No, she's married twice. She lives at New Brighton, near the Beaufort.

When she worked here she worked...is there a village or community or settlement, about three miles up the hill from here...Panty?

Pantymwyn?

Maybe. She lived there initially when she first started working at the factory, before she got married. But anyway.....

Well, as I say, they weren't very big these and the chair for the inspector or viewer, whatever she liked to call herself, was outside. You sat there but you really were supposed to go in there.

Spillages

Were there any spills, to your knowledge, while they were filling the containers?

Well, there would be odd spills, yes.

Did much happen?

Yes, I suppose, from time to time. There was always a lot of bleach and things there, you know.

When a spill happened, from your recollection, what happened?

Oh, they would close the cubicle down if there was a spill.

The people would come out, I would take it?

Well, yes, the decontamination people would come along then and they'd be decontaminated, you know. There was always a lot of bleach round about always at hand, you know, in buckets.

Were there any scares in the building, of things going wrong, things breaking?

Scares?

Problems? Disruptions?

Like all places where there is machinery, there was the off times when, I suppose, they did go wrong. Perhaps a cubicle wasn't open because there was something the matter with it. I suppose the maintenance people had to come in then.

Did you wear your mask at all times, when you was in the area?

Oh, no, but you always had to have it with you.

So, what was the reason for the mask?

I suppose, it was in case there was any big spills or anything. If there was a spill, obviously, we came out from in there, you know. You didn't wear them all the time but you always had to have them there with you. You carried it on your shoulder and that was it.

SECRECY

I find it surprising that it was a large factory, a great number of people worked there and were bussed in from all over the place and yet no one talked about the place.

Well, you were sworn to secrecy.

Coming back to that, did they make a great play or did just say sign this piece of paper, or did they really hammer it home to you?

Oh, it was hammered home, very much so.

Was it? What did they say to you?

They'd say that we were working in a very secure....all the security and everything had to be perfect on it really.

They kept on in saying that it's secret and you're not supposed to talk about it?

Nobody ever did.

No, I know. It's amazing.

Nobody would. I went out and nobody would say what are you doing there or anything. I couldn't tell them.

I take it they didn't tell you what it was for or what it was?

Oh, we knew it was gas and we knew it was going in these bombs.

But that's all you knew. You didn't know what sort of gas, what it would do, whether it was really dangerous or a bit dangerous?

Oh, no, it was very dangerous.

So, they told you that?

Yes. When you came out from there, you had to have either a bath or a shower, before you went you had to go into what they called the 'dirty' side of the changing rooms, leave all your clothes there and then go and have a bath or a shower and then pick up your clean clothes in the locker at the other side.

So you had to have a full wash?

Well, you were supposed to.

Everyone did, I suppose?

Well, I think they complied with the rules, because there was ladies there looking after all the clothes. There would be a very big laundry service

because there would be all these things that people would want clean ones, those that would go into those areas. Some only just wore, say the ladies cleaning the bombs of rust and different things, they would only be in sort of cotton....

Dungarees?

That sort of thing, yes, only they were sort of khaki coloured.

But, they didn't go and have a shower and stuff at the end of the shift?

I wouldn't know about that, because we were...

In a different side? You didn't mix as such?

Yes.

Coming back, you took the protective clothing off. That went to a laundry did it?

I assume because we had clean things.

You had clean every day?

More or less, I think every day.

Including the oilskins?

Yes, they were decontaminated.

What about your wellies. Were they clean every day or were they the same ones?

Well, you had your number on them and you were supposed to be getting your own back all the time.

Can you remember your number?

I can't, no.

So, you don't know if the wellies when you took them off at the end of your shift, were clean the next day or the next shift, or if you had a new pair?

Oh, they weren't span (?) new. I don't think so.

In theory, every day new sets of clothes and you assumed that it went...well, we know there was laundry buildings on site....

That's right, yes.

So, it was quite a major operation, wasn't it, not just making the mustard but the canteens, the changing rooms, the showers, the laundries....

Yes, we had our own sort of mess room, you know, of course they called them the ICI workers and we had our own office like a mess room on site there.

Of course, that was a dirty mess room because you went there in your protective clothes?

That's right. You didn't have to change every time. You'd take your oilskins off obviously.

What... leave them outside somewhere, before you went in? There must have been a room to put them?

There wasn't a room to put them in.

Once you take them off, you've contaminated your other clothes, haven't you?

Well, I suppose, yes. I can't recall. There wasn't another room to put them in, definitely. Perhaps we left them in the hallways going in.

Just hung them on a peg, sort of thing?

I can't really remember that. It's such a long time ago.

A great social thing

Was there a great social thing with the factory? Did people mix much or was it because they were bussed, once their shift was over, you never saw them again?

Well, yes. You see a lot of them weren't local. They were from Chester, Rhyl, Prestatyn, everywhere you know. Opposite those red houses, all that area there, it would be full of busses at every shift. Of course, a lot of people came by rail and they would walk up in the mornings from the train station and also in the evening, when they were leaving.

It was a busy place, wasn't it?

Yes. Some came on bicycles, because there wasn't so many cars.

One, there weren't as many cars and two, you couldn't get the petrol.

That's right. That's it. So, people would reserve that, if they did have a car and the petrol, for doing their own thing.

Did you do different shifts?

Yes.

Was it all one week you did a certain shift and the next week you moved?

Yes. One week it would be 7-1 and then 1-9 and then a night shift 9-7 in the morning and it was an ongoing thing. Some only worked days all the time, but most of them were on shifts.

Was the pay better there than elsewhere?

Well, as I say, we were quite well paid from the Air Ministry. We didn't get our salary from the ICI, it all came from Manchester. We had it here, but it was through there, you know.

No, ICI didn't employ anyone did they? It was all government employees, weren't they?

Oh, yes, government but, as I say, ours or anything to do with us, our head was Manchester. There was also these people in the Preston...was it Preston or Runcorn? Did they have a factory there?

Springfield?

Springfield. That's right. So, there were these people operating there. At one period, some of them did come here for a while, some of their viewers or inspectors, some of the women came.

There was a lot of women as well as men, was there a lot of canoodling or getting together or wasn't there much time for that sort of thing?

Well, no. We really only had our breaks, you know. Perhaps maybe people had different departments, they'd have a little get together at the Antelope Hotel, or something like that, you know.

But, there was no socialising, as such, on site?

Not really, no.

I guess it was frowned upon, was it?

I don't know. Things do go on everywhere don't they?

I'm trying to find out because it seems the prime place for that. So, there were no social clubs or sports clubs or stuff like that?

No. ENSA used to come, now and again, and there'd be a concert, usually on a Friday at lunchtime in the canteen. That was in the main canteen I'm talking about now, where you could go and buy food. There was these other little mess rooms, where you could make...there was a cooker you could heat anything up and there was tea and coffee and these sort of things. When the ENSA came, that was in the main canteen where you could buy cooked food.

In other words, coming back to when you had your break for lunchtime, if you hadn't brought anything to eat, you couldn't buy anything, because you were in your dirty clothes, weren't you? You couldn't go to the main canteen?

We'd take our protective things off, our oilskins, if we'd been in the dirty area obviously.

Oh, so if you wanted to go to the main canteen, you could go there in your lunch break, taking all your protective clothing off?

Yes.

You'd have time, would you?

Oh, it would be your oilskins mostly, providing you hadn't been anywhere where it was leaking or anything. You just took that off and that was it.

That was accepted?

Yes.

So quite a few people, I suppose, went down to the main canteen to eat?

That's right, yes. Of course, they would come up, because there was the other end where they did the smoke bombs. I don't know anything about that. They had in their own people for inspection for the Army, at the far end, but I don't think about that whatsoever.

Air Raids

Any air raids happen here? Any bombs dropped?

Not actually here, no. I think the nearest bomb was in Sealand, because there was a bomb dropped there in the early part of the War, you know. They say that they was very well camouflaged, because it was in the valley anyway and it was said that the camouflage was wonderful.

We were told that if you looked down from above, you couldn't see it?

No, not really. You see, all the buildings, on the tops, they were all camouflaged well.

When it was going as a factory, there wasn't much trees planted was there?

Oh, no.

It was just total concrete, I suppose?

Concrete mostly, everywhere.

Was it a noisy place, when it was working?

Not really. I found the awful noise, when I first went there, I thought I'd never get used to this, was when they'd throw the bombs onto these tin tables, where the ladies were going to clean them. I thought, I shall never, ever get used to this, having never been in a factory before. But, you do, eventually. It's like everything, you get used to it.

Was it a smelly place, whilst you were walking around the roads, or just normal?

Oh, no, unless there had been a spill or something then there might be sort of.

So, when it was working normally, you couldn't smell anything at all?

Not really, no. They had their own first aid. There was always a nursing sister on hand.....

First aid room?

Yes and there was a sister there in charge and there's be other orderlies.

The woman yesterday said, you could tell if someone had been injured at the factory because their dressings had a funny smell? Did you notice that?

Yes, they did have a smell. If they had to have anything on, there was that smell.

I suppose that could have been all to do with the fact that there were blisters and they were using some form of ointment?

Possibly.

What Made you work there in the first place?

I don't know. We're just surmising. What made you go there to work, in the first place?

Well, I had to. You were directed. They didn't want to go, believe me.

It was for the country's War effort and you were a certain age?

Well, you were a certain age...

You go and work there...

Well, I was married, but even when you married, if you hadn't got a family, you had to go and do something. I hadn't got a family. I'd only been married about twelve months then.

That's when you lived in the red house opposite?

Oh, no, I didn't live there then. I lived on the way to Mold, halfway along...it's down a country lane anyway, so you might only have noticed the end of it.

You were there until it stopped production, were you?

Not until the end of it, by any means, but when they stopped production and the War finished and we weren't needed, that was the....and we were sort of made redundant, you know.

So, you were dismissed before they started decommissioning?

Oh, yes.

You weren't there during that period?

Oh, no.

Were you living in the village then?

No, still in the same place.

Because that would trace us to see if anyone could see any difference. I suppose you didn't notice what it was like before they started and what it was like when it finished?

Oh, yes, I know what it was like before it started.

Did you see a difference?

Oh, a big difference. Do you mean, like it was all a beautiful meadow?

The Factory

Oh, no. They built the factory and it was working and then they didn't need the mustard any more, so they said we'll stop production and we'll decommission. From your memory of walking into the factory, when it was in production, and when you were walking by after it had finished, did it look much different?

Well it didn't from outside, not really.

You couldn't tell?

Not really, no. I wouldn't say you could see anything from the road. Nearest the road, they were the offices, first the surgeon and the first aid part and then there was a small fire brigade and things and they used to have all their things hanging up and all that sort of thing. So, all this end, it was the offices.

It screened what was going on?

It did quite a lot. You could sort of see people, walking about, you know. But, I don't know anything about what went on after.

How difficult was it to get on the site, when you got there for your shift? Did you have to show a pass?

You had a pass, yes. We didn't have to, the workers they had to clock on and things, but we only had to sign a book to our office and mess room. I'm not too sure at the end of it, whether we had a card to clock on, but I think that must have been our own office. Also, they had an office in the main block of buildings, the Air Ministry did. They had an office there. I think the man was, our head man was Mr Barnett. There was an office there and he had a secretary and things there.

So, it was fairly secure but low key as it were?

Oh, very low key.

They didn't want to let on did they?

No.

What year did you start at the factory?

It could have been at the end of 1942, I think.

Did you notice any change in the way the factory operated over the time? Did standards get more or less rigorous, did things change in the way they were done that you were aware of?

I can't really recall that.

You weren't aware of a changing emphasis to production at all costs to increasing emphasis on safety and that sort of thing?

I think they were always aware of safety. I do think that you were very fore warned about that.

Training

What was your training, to work in the factory? What training did they give you?

You were told what you had to do and you went along with somebody else who was already there, because there was people there doing this before I joined it. I only had to go, I think it went in age groups really, when you joined, younger people and then as time went on they insisted then that married women, if they hadn't got a family, you had to go.

Because, I was wondering, with the Air Ministry, were you given training in how to use the gas masks? Did you have the test glass phials of gas that they made you accustomed to what the materials were like and how to use the gas mask?

Oh, you were told how to use it. There was people to show you how to use it.

People didn't supply test kits of gas in order to....

Not to my knowledge.

...It wasn't something you had?

No.

Was all the training done on the site or did you ever travel to any other sites or factories or RAF places?

No, it was all done on site.

Can you remember any variation in the kinds of gas that was used or the kinds of munitions that were filled?

Well, they was all different sizes and things of bombs. In the end there was some very, very big ones. They were just starting and then the War ended and that was the end of the story with those. They didn't really fill many of those.

We heard about someone, the previous lady had a job similar to yours and said there was a very big bomb that she said had a gold plug on the end and they were told that that would be carried beneath the body of the aircraft and not in the bomb bay and if it was dropped it would have devastating consequences on wherever it was dropped on. Does that sound familiar to you?

It sounds familiar, this very big one. They never had to use that.

Was it just an individual thing or was there a number of them that size?

Well, they were just starting on them, those great big ones.

In laypersons terms, were they the length of a person?

I suppose they would be from here to about to that chair, I should think.

Eight or ten feet really? Eight to ten feet long?

Probably about eight, yes.

So that was a fairly big bomb. Do you remember this....This other lady, this gold plug had caught her eye and lodged in her memory, but that wasn't a feature of it that you can?

No, I can't remember a gold plug. I can remember bands and things round it.

Can you remember if things, other than mustard, were used as the filling for the munitions?

I don't think, really, that we knew much about the fillings, because it was the chemists that would see to all that side.

So, you wouldn't be aware if it was mustard or phosgene or TRH?

Well, I think we did sort of guess. We knew mustard, but we never...I don't suppose we were meant to dive into that sort of thing. I don't know.

From the Air Ministry side, you were concentrating on the bombs, you weren't inspecting the artillery shells that were being produced, because there was a lot of 25lb and 6 inch shells, weren't they. So that wasn't your side?

Yes, because there was all various sizes. Some were like canister type things.

I heard from someone that they produced glass bottles as well, like glass light bulbs, filled with tear agent at one time?

No, I don't think so.

I think there was an experimental filling of twenty and thirty millimetre aircraft shells, hispano shells, so they would have just been a few inches long.....That wasn't munition you came across?

I can't remember those, no.

The K Buildings & The Tunnels

You said you had the cubicles, but at the end of the line of cubicles, wasn't there a big building, heavily surrounded by the concrete where there was a big tank of agent, of mustard? Was it called the Incorporation Plant?

Yes. It would come on lines from somewhere, you know, obviously from them you were speaking of. I don't know.

Because there was about three rows of two or three cubicles, wasn't there?

Oh, there was quite a few cubicles.

And there was a big room at the end with a tank inside...it was an emergency wash room or maybe....At one end you had the fan house, for all the cubicles, the ventilation points?

Yes. There was usually a man looking after those.

And then at the other end of the cubicles, there was this big tank held. It was really just a big concrete enclosure, that was the opposite end from the row of cubicles and the fan house. You never went in there and saw the arrangement of the big mixing tanks?

No.

On the tunnels, you, obviously, went all the way into all four chambers?

We went into various chambers. I suspect I've been into them all at various times to work.

Were the chambers nearest the entrances where the munitions were held and then the ones furthest back where the bulk mustard was kept?

Yes, I would say, mostly we were at the entrance to it more. We seemed to have to go down it quite a way.

You say you didn't like the tunnels. Were they not well lit?

Oh, they were very, very well lit. It was like going through the Mersey tunnel lighting wise, all in the ceiling and everything. Oh, no, they were very well lit.

They weren't smelly, or cold, or hot?

No, because there was some sort of air conditioning, you know.

What was it you didn't like about them?

I was afraid of these bats, for one thing. It wasn't very pleasant, because it was like all rocks and it wasn't very pleasant. It was very big in there. These big tankers they'd just go down it, you know, to take whatever they were taking, because I can remember two or three times, twice a day, they would be bringing these convoys over from Runcorn, whether they were bringing the gas they were using and they used to go right down into it. You can tell it wasn't...it was very, very big. It wasn't just a thing you was walking in to and there was no room in there. It was very spacious.

There wasn't a culture of fear from working on the site from the nature of the materials that you were working? People didn't shy away from the factory and fearing it as a dangerous place and fearing for the workers, for their health?

Do you mean in the tunnels?

No, in the factory as a whole.

I don't think you really got used to working there. It was up to yourself to be as careful as you could. Nobody wanted to get that stuff on them if they possibly could and if you followed the regulations. There were accidents, obviously. These men were working in the cubicles. They were more at risk and that's why I can't understand why that lady said she went into them, because I can't see where there was room anyway for a start. Our chair, it was out there and you had your gas mask over the back of the chair, like that, with you and you'd be in your protective clothing and then you'd have a pin board and you'd be keeping a check on all these numbers and things.

Pay & Visitors

One thing that surprised us was that, I don't know if we got the wrong end of what she was saying, but she said that her first wage slip, from when she was working in the cubicle area, was £104 a week, which for us sounded like an awful lot for that time to have been paid.

Does it ring a bell with you?

I can't really recall.

Most people seem to remember being paid 12 and 6, so being paid that many pounds a week, or anything approaching it, seemed to be a great leap compared to the norm?

I can't really remember. They did say it was one of the more highly paid, not compared with the chemist and things like that, but it was one of the best paid. But, I can't remember getting anything like that. As I say, I can't say so I wouldn't like to condemn what she said.

Do you look back on the time there with fondness or was it a time that you were glad when it was over?

Well, I wouldn't say with fondness. When I first went there I hated it. It grew on me, as it does. I put up with it and I was glad of the money. My husband was in the forces and getting very little, so I was very glad of the money. But, I didn't want to go there from choice, I can assure you.

Someone also mentioned that Glen Miller's Band put on a performance there, at one stage. I don't know whether that's right or not. Can you recall?

I can't recall so I can't say whether it's wrong or right.

Can you remember any of the particular visitors or certain people that came round...the Royals?

The royalty, the late Queen, the Queen Mother, they paid a visit there.

Were you actually aware of them visiting or were you just told that they'd been and met the head of the service?

Oh, it was just before I went there, I think, in the early stages of it. I knew about them being there but I was never actually there at that point.

Were you aware of any American people coming round the site as well, other than British?

Can't remember, no. I know one of the girls that worked with me, she married an American. I don't know how she met him, actually.

But, you weren't involved with any official tours of American Forces?

I can't recall, no.

Last Thoughts

Is there anything else that strikes you about your time there?

Not really.

Thanks for the memories.

It was very interesting. Thank you.

But, I wouldn't want to disagree with this lady, but I really can't see how she was working inside the cubicles with these men.

Well, I mean, we're looking at sixty years ago. It's all best recollection rather than fact.

Yes, it's turned sixty years.

It's a long while.

It is yes.

I'd be surprised if Glen Miller actually went there as well.

That's why I mentioned it, because it was the first gentleman we saw....

I'm almost sure it was Glen Miller records, but the trouble is...

Or people playing Glen Miller music. It struck me at the time, that it was unlikely that Glen Miller's band...

But you see, we're all getting on. I'm 83 plus, you see, and your memory does go. Touch wood, I'm very lucky, but people's memories, as you get older, play up.

These are purely recollections and conversations and the reason I'm doing it, is because, if I don't do it, everyone will be gone and we'd have lost even the recollections.

That's right, yes.

Something is better than nothing.

There was another thing too. The waste it went out into the sea. There was a man that I knew, Mr Javerman(?), he's dead years ago, and there's a Glynne Wilby Jones, and they used to have to walk that track every day to see that there was no leaks or anything on the way. That was their sole job, walking

that, you know. That one man, Mr Glynne Wilby Jones, he's still alive and lives in Halkyn.

That was the gentleman we saw before lunch?

Yes, we saw him before lunch and he biked. He didn't walk, he biked the inspection.

He may of done.

He was looking for leaks on the exposed bits.

That's right, yes. That was, as I say, this one man and then this man that you speak of, that you say you've seen, he took over from this other chap.

I think it's fair to say, that given it was War time, they did do their best to see it was as safe as possible.

Oh, they did. Yes.

Given that they've got this bloke walking the line, they needn't have bothered, they could have just waited until someone told them. Perhaps I would say it because I'm government. It wasn't a cowboy outfit. They did their best.

Oh, they did, very much so, I think from all points of view, particularly the safety point of view, they really did work very hard on that, I must say.

And the records we got show that, by and large, it was a chemical works and it was uneventful. They got on, it produced what it was supposed to produce. Yes, there was spillages, yes there were leaks, but overall nothing to really get excited about.

No, because, you see, Okay, I've read different things, people who've had the thought that they've had cancer or something there. You see, there is young people having cancer now that have never been near a place like that and I walk miles every day, I've just done a ten mile walk for the church, which I do every year. I got £150, all round the loggerheads, which is ten miles.

The argument is, working at that site, in a dirty area; it hasn't done you any harm?

That's right, but having said that, I was lucky that I never did get any burns or anything.

The same could be said of the armed forces, that people went, shot their guns, got fired at and came home.

That's right. As I say, if you followed the security as near as possible, but say there was the odd thing that went wrong, leaks and so, but it happens in all

things, doesn't it? Really from the health point of view, I'm very, very lucky health wise. I'd been there right amongst it.

It must be the water round here?

I don't know.

End of the recording