



Edith's Story, Chapter 5

So could you tell me a little bit about – obviously you went through your schooling then you started work here didn't you. Could you tell me about your first job?

My only job [laughs]. Somebody on the refugee committee was a friend of the welfare person in Schofields and I always said, I told her I wanted to go into retail but only in Schofields. Why I don't know, I don't think I'd been more than twice to Schofields but I wanted to work there and she got in touch with the welfare woman and that's how I came into Schofields. I was one of the first 14 year olds to go into the shop. All the others had to go in the workshops. A friend of mine was in the workshop for quite a few years who I was at school with here and then she managed the bureau. Do you remember the bureau? Yes, well she worked there. All the girls that I went with to school in Leeds, we're still all friends. In fact we were all together yesterday at a diamond wedding. So we've kept friends. Most of the ones from school knew but a lot of the other ones didn't realise I came from Germany. "But you don't speak like a German person" [laughs].

How did you get your naturalisation?

Mr Schofield signed that. I've always got his signature. 'Cause he was a magistrate. One of the first years after the – before I was naturalised we had to have permission to leave to go to the coast and we wanted to go to Scarborough. And I had to have permission from the police to go to Scarborough, to leave Leeds. Yeah. The funny part was we'd been playing in the park, we'd been in the park and when we came from the park a mailman passed us and "Ooh that's my permission in there" and it was. I had no – we lived near the little park, near a small park and we used to go there. I did and, when I got back to the house it was, he'd delivered it personally, the mail he'd come specially with it. We were going away the next day and we couldn't go. The first time we'd been away on holiday, three girls.

And how did you meet your lovely Jack?

I met him when he was on leave from the army and when he came back I started – actually I was going out with somebody else at the time but I started going out with Jack and we were going out together for about two years before we got married.

And how long have you been married?

61 years in August. A lifetime, isn't it?

And you ran a business together didn't you?

Yes. For 50 years [laughs]. We worked together. I always say we worked together, slept together and we never argued.

I think it's wonderful that you made such a wonderful new life when you arrived here. With help obviously

With help yes, yes. As I say, we always say I was one of the lucky ones which is true. Not everybody was – I mean the family, believe me weren't wealthy or anything. He was working, he used to work day and night. Used to make clothes, coats at night. But I was accepted and treated no different. And I've been quite happy here. I went back to the continent for a year when I was poorly, I had pleurisy and they would have liked me to stay. I said "No I'm going back, my job's there" – they were keeping the job for me at Schofields, I was going back to work and I had a family here. I had a year. I spent it with the continental friends and family that I had. We've been back for holidays once or twice but we never had much time for holidays.

Grafters weren't you?

Now that we've got time for holidays we haven't got the money, haven't got the energy [laughs].