

Transcript of Olive Rippengal Audio Clip

I was in reserved employment for Strada Works Liverpool and we had a London office. I was in the London office but I had during the war – before the war began I had done the censorship exams offering to censor letters and blow me the Ger – the German was such an awful writing I only got a pair of German but I saw that the Italian, of which I knew none, was much easier. So I spent over an hour translating Italian. It was about the old 'papa' so I did that. I did the – and I got a good in Italian and then I thought to myself I might get good in Italian but I wouldn't be able to censor letters so and so I started learning Italian and went to the City Literary Institute and it was lovely walking through London in the quiet about eight o'clock in the evening to get to Victoria to get the train home. But the – that – see I was in reserved employment but – and they wanted us to go to Liverpool, I said, 'I can't go to Liverpool I haven't got the results for these exams yet'. Actually, I'd done the exams, I started learning Italian and in September because I didn't know any Italian but it was quite – it was nicely written and I – you could get was the old 'papa' was and so on and I did this and I don't want to take too long on this part. And I went in – I went into a Citizens Advice Bureau, what happened was we were all given the sack because the – if you didn't go to Liverpool you lost your job and so I was wandering around on the first Monday, one, two, three, 4th of September and I went in a Citizens Advice Bureau. I gave the lady full marks, she was very helpful, she didn't really know the stuff but she assured me that I'd get some job and she said, 'Go to Scotland Yard'. So off I went to Scotland Yard and my father always said if you didn't know what you were doing you walked in boldly and you pretended you did. So that's exactly what I did and I sat by the fire in Scotland Yard until in due course somebody came up to me and asked me what I was doing there and I said why I was there and they said, 'You don't come here. You go to the War Office'. So back I went to the War Office but I couldn't walk in the War Office the same as I did in Scotland Yard so I went in, they – they have a – a tall man guarding the door and what he said was, 'You go round the corner and turn left and left again and left again and you wait for an interview'. So I went in and they – the man I said I wanted to be a spy and the man looked across the room to the man on the other side and said, 'She's not like that redhead who came in last week'. No, I wasn't, I wouldn't have had a clue how to be a spy.