

Transcript of Audio Clip with Jean Gordon

I think the most memorable thing that I can remember was that my mother had been notified by the Admiralty that my father's ship, the HMS Cornwall, that he was on, had been sunk in the Indian Ocean and that there'd been a considerable loss of lives. But that a certain percentage, I can't tell you off hand now, had been rescued. But until they had news they couldn't give us any information. She had to, I went with her, every week we walked to the telephone box, which was outside the Town Hall in Chatham. She would put two old pennies in the machine and she had – then you got the operator and she had the telephone number for the Admiralty which was based in Bath in Somerset. She would – because it was only a small telephone box, she'd say to me wait outside and when she came out she would just be shaking her head. She just said, 'No news. No news'. This went on for six weeks until she came out of the telephone kiosk tears welling in her eyes, hugged me. But I knew that he was alright. It wasn't that he was dead because – then she was able to – she was choked. She was able to say, 'He's alright'. They'd been taken to South Africa.