

**Interviewee: Olive Rippengal**

**Interviewer: Malin Lundin**

**Date: 18.11.2010**

Interviewer: This is an interview with Olive Rippengal and interviewer is Malin Lundin and the date is the 19<sup>th</sup> – no, it's the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2010. Ok, Olive, would you be able to tell me your date of birth please?

Olive: March 1919.

Interviewer: Ok. So how old were you when the war broke out then?

Olive: 7.3.19. So I was –

Interviewer: So you must have been twenty when the war broke out.

Olive: I was twenty when the war started.

Interviewer: And where – where were you living at this point.

Olive: In this house.

Interviewer: In this house?

Olive: I lived in this house since 1927 but I've had access to the house. I was in India for three years.

Interviewer: Why were you in India?

Olive: I was a teacher there. I was a missionary.

Interviewer: Can you tell me a bit about that?

Olive: Well, I couldn't – they wouldn't take me. Nobody would take me. They wouldn't pass me medically. It was ridiculous.

Interviewer: So who were you living with in this house?

Olive: What?

Interviewer: Who were you living with in this house?

Olive: Well, why, my parents. This is my home since 1927 but I haven't lived here all the time. It's my family home.

Interviewer: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

Olive: My sister has died, yes.

Interviewer: Was she your older or your younger sister?

Olive: She was my older sister and she wasn't and she wasn't as bright as me which made it very difficult. She won a geography picture. She was very good at swimming, she – she – that's where she met her husband. She won the ladies half mile in the Thames and he won the mile in the Thames, they went home on the bus together and that was the beginning of it. We got our wedding pictures if you want them.

Interviewer: Ok. So – so what – what were you doing when the war broke out?

Olive: 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, 4<sup>th</sup> of September and I went in a Citizens Advice Bureau. I gave the lady full marks<sup>1</sup>, 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.

Interviewer: How come you wanted to be a spy?

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<sup>1</sup> 5 min

Olive: Well, doesn't everyone? Well, they needed spies, I got languages. No, so he said, could I do shorthand and typing and I said, 'Oh, yes'. So I filled a form out for shorthand and typing and in due course I got called by the controller of typists to go for a test. So I went for this test and, of course, it's – God overrules, you know, and if it hadn't been for God I shouldn't have had all these jobs. Well, it so happened that the person that filled in for the Secretary of State had worked on Sunday, I don't remember, I don't know I knew her name. So she wasn't there on Monday, the person who should be there on Monday was ill and couldn't come and I think the, you see, I done a test for the controller of typist and, you know, you – with a bit of luck the phone went and I could I write down the words for quite a time and she probably checked it and it was perfectly right and so I did the test and that was that and I expected to get an answer but I never got an answer. And I sat in the train, you can out this in your – thing if you want to. Have you got it? You gonna get it down?

Interviewer: We're recording it so we'll have it all on tape.

Olive: Good. So I sat in the train on the Monday morning when we'd lost our jobs and the argument was in my mind, if I turn to the right I can go back to my old job cos they would keep it for me. Or if I – or I could go to the War Office and the spirit of adventure said to Wally, go to the War Office. So I went to the War Office and I – I saw the controller typist and she was really at her wits end what to do. You lose three people for the Secretary of State and there was no one and normally there was a lady that worked at eleven o'clock in the morning and went on to seven o'clock at night and that was alright but it wasn't this day. The Secretary of State turned up at ten o'clock and I was in the same room as the permanent under-secretary's secretary and she said, 'Secretary of State! Secretary of State! Oh dear!'. I heard this bell go and I said can't you go so she said, 'No', and so I went in the room. It was a room as three times – three or four times the size of this room. Huge room. I hadn't got a bone in my leg and there he was up the far end and I walked across the room and I took – I knew I could take the letter<sup>2</sup> and then he – I didn't – he was talking to his – his Major and I didn't realise he was dictating and, anyway, the – once anyone disturb me I – I've lost me thread and so I – I lost it and the Secretary of State, Mr Hore-Belisha, he fell out with Winston Churchill, he – Winston, of course, was ten times Hore-Belisha. Hore-Belisha was a duke and they wouldn't let me go back to him so I – he said, 'I'll rephrase it'. Oh, that was good [laughs]. So he repeated it in a different way slightly and I did it and it was payday on the Thursday and I made sure that the controller typist knew what had happened. I didn't go and get my money, I thought it was more important to do his letter which I did and I don't know what the letter was about so I can't tell you. Oh, it's very interesting the Secretary of State's department. I – I had a lot of the – they got a new man in his department who didn't know very much. I had borrowed the controller's *Who's Who* and I remember this, there was a letter from Mr William Ebor. Who's William Ebor, I wrote it this way, I wrote it the other way and eventually it came back from the Chief Secretary, Archbishop of York! So there we are, we got that letter right and I stayed there the whole week. It was much better than, you see, you couldn't – you were squashed together in the typist room and so that was fine. Now, where do we go from there? So I did this for a

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<sup>2</sup> 10 min

week and I was meant to – I was – what happened was I saw the controller on the first Monday and the department Military Intelligence of Germany had rung her up, I know why, they'd had such mess in the room they couldn't have me there till they cleaned it up. I was looked after by the officers, they made my tea all the time. That was very good and I was working all the time, I had to do the Military Intelligence report for twelve o'clock every day and I worked for a Major Strong and the department. I was there from September 1939 until January 1941.

Interviewer: What was the best part of that job?

Olive: Oh, it was all very nice. The best part was having tea with the officers. There was a Mr Major Heathen-Armstrong who feed me with sweets. Well, yes, they – they wouldn't – they didn't like to charge me for my tea so I had never had to pay for me tea when I worked there.

Interviewer: Were there other women working there at the same time?

Olive: No. I was one – one in all those men, thirteen officers and twenty-five NCOs.

Interviewer: So where – where were you based? Whereabouts –?

Olive: In War Office, London. It was very easy to get to the job.

Interviewer: How did you get there?

Olive: I took – I used to walk on to the road here because it was no good going to the station, it was quarter hours walk to the station by the time you got there, there weren't any trains running. So I used to walk out on to the road – I presume – I don't remember whether I had breakfast in the air raid shelter or up here. I imagine I had it up here. I walked out on to the road and awaited a car. I might not<sup>3</sup> have got the first car but I got a car and they used to take me to London and one chap took me to London and got there at seven o'clock in the morning and why he was not trying to become a Roman Catholic.

Interviewer: How did you get back from work?

Olive: You jumped a car. You couldn't – you couldn't – no good to get a train. There weren't any trains. I only once slept in London and that was a day, it was well through the war, it was when the doodlebugs were there and my friend, Joan, I usually went with and then I met an old school friend. She worked for the Ministry of Labour, we weren't allowed to stop in the War Office we had get ourselves off home. I [laughs], you know, my friend was five years older than me, she – she was a full-time civil servant – is that one uncomfortable?

Interviewer: No, no, it's fine. I'm just not wanting to make too much noise. Go on.

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<sup>3</sup> 15 min

Olive: There's no one underneath. You don't want it on the recording I see. Well, anyway we went in the Montague House, which is opp – it's no longer there but it was opposite the Cenotaph. I suppose the Cenotaph was there because that was dedicated by George V after the First World War. Oh, I knew my history of London, I'm a pretty good historian, really. So we got ourselves beds in Montague House off we went up Whitehall there was no doodlebugs coming at that particular moment and we went to the corner house and ate and, of course, the corner was only just round the corner from the War Office and what happened, the siren went. My very stayed friend, older than me, seven years, you'd think her legs had got wings on them. She ran to the War Office, gone in, wouldn't come out and so Joan and I went on down Whitehall. Joan was quicker than me and got – when we got to Montague House they were shut up and they had barbed wire there and I began to wish myself somewhere but we somehow got in and I had really nice white sheets, nice – I don't know where I had breakfast but anyway so that was the first night that I ever spent in London. You see, if you lived in Beckenham you didn't need to live in London. What else do you want to know?

Interviewer: So tell me, you worked with the officers –

Olive: I can't –

Interviewer: What did you do after 1941?

Olive: I got taken out of that department and went to the Wings Commission, to Wing House, Piccadilly. That was further. Doing claim – actioning claims, I was only there about six months. The controller typist was very cross with me and –

Interviewer: Why did you leave?

Olive: I didn't leave them. They'd – I got moved and Colonel Cordrey, he used to – he used to like me better than his own girl and I had to do letters for him sometimes. I had to go to his house, there was awful fuss about it. I shouldn't have done. He didn't want to go – he didn't want to go to the War Office on a Sunday. So I had to get the train right the way up to London and right the way down to where he lived and I can't think where it was. And I did his letters and I came back again and I was told I – he – she – the – our Chief Typist should have told me but she didn't think it would happen and it did happen. Even though she got me this job with the brigadier, he was a colonel, Home Guard and Territorial Army, and I was working as personal assistant to the Home Guard and Territorial Army. I was disposing a surplus stores<sup>4</sup>, you ha – if you'd got a – you were supposed to have ten of something and you had twenty you had to declare them as surplus, so I had to deal with the surplus stores. What happened after that? Well, then they changed the person head of the department and the next person didn't like me much and so I – I got shifted. I got in to – I was then sending stores to Seack (??), you see, and this we were in – in the – we finished – we'd finished VE-Day but we were – we'd still VJ-Day to come up and – oh, I still had tea with the officers. I didn't pay for my tea, of course not. Well, what you must have is Dunkirk. My grandfather died at the time of Dunkirk. Now, had I gone

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<sup>4</sup> 20 min

to his funeral I'd got me week's holiday but I didn't go to his funeral so I didn't get a week's holiday. And what – how you did it – I didn't know I had to send coded messages to Dunkirk, I didn't know what was in the message and, you know, every little boat came – you haven't got this in your book. Every little rowboat was, you see, you couldn't get the peop – get the steamers up the boat – up the shore. So every little boat commandeered to go and get the men off and what they did was my messages got to them, presumably, and they got them in the little rowboats to the big ships and they put them all in the big ships just out of the shore and they stayed there all day because they wouldn't take them back in the day time and they took them back at night and they took them to Ramsgate or Broadstairs and we got them home. Well, we saved the army, you see, if we'd let Hitler take our army what could we have done? It was, of course, you were only just square peg in a hole. I didn't know what I was doing with the – I typed the thing but I didn't know what I was typing cos it was in code. Well, that went on for several days and weeks probably. It was amazing the way we did get the army out. I don't think you got that in your book anywhere, I read the book.

Interviewer: Yeah, no, I don't think we cover it widely in the book, no.

Olive: Well, you want to put it in. It's important. When you see – what they did was they asked for anyone with a small boat that could go up the – go up and then on the beach because you couldn't get the men to wade across to the big ships and so that's what we did.

Interviewer: What other kind of work did you do? What other tasks did you have?

Olive: I was then appointed personal – it was August 1940, I suppose, I was appointed personal assistant to the Deputy Director Home Guard and then they got rid of the Home Guard part and he was Home Guard and Territorial Army so I was his personal assistant for two and a half to three years. Very interesting, we got all the top documents, you see.

Interviewer: Were – were you allowed to handle the documents? Did you know what were in the documents?

Olive: Well, yeah, I couldn't read them if they weren't – they weren't<sup>5</sup> in English. They were in code. No, I could – I didn't have the time to read these documents. I used – we used to have to send in to the Prime Minister's office every year who we want to give the MBE to. They never gave me one.

Interviewer: So – so what happened when war ended? Did you stay in employment?

Olive: I got in to the Kings College. I – I applied, fortunately I was assistant to the head of our little department and he was away one day, cos he never passed things round, and he said anyone who had had their career interrupted through the war could apply. So I applied and I got them to accept me at Kings College, it all took – it was all done the wrong way around. This notice came out in the February and I couldn't get in – get in to University cos my father earned too much. He didn't earn all

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<sup>5</sup> 25 min

that much but he owned houses and so it looked as though he got more money than he had and he hadn't got the money to pay for me. But, anyway, eventually came through in the May that I would get this grant.

Interviewer: Was that of May 1946?

Olive: No, we're still in the war.

Interviewer: Is it forty-five then?

Olive: Yes, forty-five, yes. VE-Day had happened and I been seen by the chief lady at Kings College and so I – I – I got this pending that I was going to get – you had to get release from the war, you couldn't just walk out and they – they let me go to go to Kings College. Then I got – I had to learn Greek, I had to learn Hebrew, I helped by a Frederick Wood's wife, actually. She was very good, she got to know me and she said, 'You should make an intellectual study of the bible', I said, 'What do you mean?', and she said, 'Read the Greek'. Of course I didn't know any Greek at the time but I knew Latin. If I can know Latin I was good at language so – so I learnt Greek before I went to Kings College, because I had to learn Hebrew there. I couldn't start two new languages at the same time and I did special Hebrew. A matter of fact I was only the – we had three girls doing it and I was the only one of the three that passed. It was a lot of difficulty, they gave us the worst Old Testament paper they could think up and a lot of the first class scholars failed their degree, cos if you fail one subject you'd failed it. No, I was very fortunate, I got my degree. I couldn't have managed because my father was selling – was letting the top half of this house and moving to Pembury (??) once he got permission to do that. He'd retired by then, he retired early.

Interviewer: So what – what were you – what was your degree in?

Olive: Divinity! Bachelor of Divinity, I wouldn't look at BA. I would only look at divinity. I could have gone to Manchester but I didn't. I got to Kings College. It was much easier because I didn't pay much when I stayed at home. They – they were very good like that.

Interviewer: So how many years were you studying for?

Olive: Well, I was – I started at once while I was still working. I went to the London Bible College evening classes on a Monday, Thursday and then they started a Greek class so that was on the Friday. And I did learn my Greek before I went there<sup>6</sup> but I didn't learn Hebrew and Hebrew was quite difficult. I had to learn all these things, I did the – you had to do the inter BD the first year and I did it in Hebrew, Ancient History, Latin. I made – made sure – I got the idea that they were high church or peculiar and so I did all languages I could and I did get the inter BD and then I had the two years on the final BD with Hebrew special subject so I got a better chance to get the Old Testament and they all – they were dropping like ninepins half of the men. Cos they were all men, thirty-five and me, I had

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<sup>6</sup> 30 min

a woman to start with but she didn't stay there for very long and I enjoyed Kings. I was made secretary of faculty of theology. The men did it, not me. You can put that in I was secretary, the first woman secretary, of the faculty of theology.

Interviewer: So – so what did you do when you finished studying?

Olive: Got myself a job. It was terrible.

Interviewer: What job was that?

Olive: Well, I got a job in Walthamstow and the boys played me up like anything. But you needn't put that in.

Interviewer: So what job did you do?

Olive: I taught! Taught Holy Scripture, head of divinity, I was there three years and two terms until the head realised that if he wanted to get rid of me he better help me go to India and he did.

Interviewer: So you went to India after the war.

Olive: Yes. You couldn't go during the war. Well, you could have done. I did get interviewed for various jobs but I didn't – go. I was, why, I thought God had called me to go to India, you see, so I didn't look at anything else. I had boyfriends but I asked them each what would they go to India and they wouldn't. So I said, 'No, go, I'm not going'. So I didn't get married, I came home. I was on the shelf by then, I was thirty-nine when I got back from India.

Interviewer: So returning to – to the war, did you have a lot of air raids around this area, in Beckenham?

Olive: A great deal but I was normally in London and not here. I – I am surprisingly – you didn't know much about my – I didn't seem to suffer very much from the war. With the – with the doodlebugs you couldn't do anything. I was walking across – a – a – across the Horse Guards Parade one day and you could hear when they cut out. A – a – a doodlebug cut out and it was no good running anywhere cos you didn't know where it was going so I continued walking and it landed on Adastral House that was a terrible one because it was in middle of the lunch hour. Adastral House was at the bottom of Kingsway. I don't know if you know London, do you? Well, you know, K-K – India House down in – if you go down Kings Way from North London, you'll – you'll hit Kingsway. Now, in the end High Commission and I – you could – we could go in there – you had to go there for a – a pass to go to India. I got one alright. Well, that was the end of the war. I – I'd left the War Office then and I was studying for a BD degree.

Interviewer: So you have an air shelter in your garden still, did you use to – to use that during the war?

Olive: We used to sleep there every night. We used to sleep there<sup>7</sup> and my – you got his photo on the mantelpiece. You got a photo of three people, haven't you? My sister, my brother-in-law and little Cynthia, Cynthia has died after time (??). And he was stationed in Hucknall, when my grandfather died my grandmother thought she was going to die to but she didn't and she got little Cynthia to play with and Leslie got them somewhere to live in Hucknall for a time. So they went to Hucknall and – well, I was still here. My mother and father were still here, he wanted to enlarge the bungalow at Pembury (??) and until we got the Lon – no I was a very naughty girl. I used to sit outside in his car while he went in to get his permission to enlarge the bungalow and I used to pray that he didn't get his permission, cos I didn't want – I needed the house here. I never I let go and he did get his permission and he bought the extra rooms and they moved to Pembury (??), just kept this bottom of the house. But we, you see, it's reinforced concrete and you couldn't knock it down and, of course, it's full of water.

Interviewer: How was it when you had to sleep in there? Did you feel safe in the air raid shelter?

Olive: Oh, we felt as safe as houses. Yes.

Interviewer: Did you ever have – did you have any beds in there or did you sleep –?

Olive: Oh, yes. Little narrow beds, three narrow beds, mother in the middle, daddy one side and me the other. We slept there quite well.

Interviewer: You say you have water in it now, how was it when you actually had to stay there? Did you have water in then as well? Was it damp?

Olive: No, I don't think so. We didn't have it then.

Interviewer: How did you deal with other challenges on the home front? Say rationing and –

Olive: What?

Interviewer: How did you deal with the other challenges –

Olive: Well, I never – mother – we kept chickens so we got eggs. I've been increasing the gardens since I've been looking after things. Is there someone there?

Interviewer: So you had chickens in the garden?

Olive: No, we had – we had a – we had a – my father did carpentry as a hobby so he made a thing to keep the chickens in and we kept – we got the eggs so we got eggs. That was extra from rations. Well, you didn't worry, my – I didn't do it. Mother looked after the food, I didn't do it. I got enough to do with the War Office.

Interviewer: How – how did you feel about the blackout?

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<sup>7</sup> 35 min

Olive: I just walked in to a pillar [laughs]. I got out of [unclear] one day and I walked in to a pillar in the blackout and banged me nose.

Interviewer: Was that something that happened often that people bumped in to things?

Olive: Well, I didn't know it was – I didn't I thought it was a person I was walking in to and it wasn't. I, well, I got a friend on the other side of the road, I keep meaning to find out whether she's got the house she – she married and lived in Africa but she – she could be home now. I haven't had time to go and try and see.

Interviewer: What did you do for entertainment during the war?

Olive: Well, we never needed any entertainment, we got the war! I'd got – I bought some records from someone. You didn't have – we didn't get the television till after the war or not – I think some people may have done but we didn't.

Interviewer: Did you have a wireless?

Olive: I suppose so.<sup>8</sup>

Interviewer: Did you ever go to dances or go to the cinema?

Olive: To where?

Interviewer: Did you go to the dances?

Olive: Yes, I used to go to the cinema, Janet Gaynor or Greta Garbo. I didn't like Great Garbo, I liked Janet Gaynor but I like Marlene Dietrich. Down the bottom of the road here, where it's murals now, was a cinema. We didn't have far to go and you could go to Lewisham to a cinema. If you got the time but you hadn't got the time.

Interviewer: What – what kind of hours did you work?

Olive: Nine to six, six days a week. It was as bad as that at the beginning of the war.

Interviewer: How long did it take you to get in to work on a morning?

Olive: Oh, you had to do your best. I got – I was – had to get home when there was Fire of London. What happened, I met my friend, Margaret, on the train and our controller typist, they wouldn't take the trains passed Elmers End, how she got home I don't know. She got to get to Edington. Well, I – by – now I think of it now and know what other people went through I – I was really – had a very easy war because Beckenham had more bombs here and I was in London so I didn't know much about it. I came home one day and they'd had a – what do they call the thing? They had a – after the doodlebugs we had a long thing.

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<sup>8</sup> 40 min

Interviewer: The V2s?

Olive: The what?

Interviewer: The V2 rockets.

Olive: The V2s, yes, and I got here and my – both my parents were shattered and I went round to my sister's. My sister at that time had been evacuated to Leeds, I'd seen her and I rang up the War Office and I said, 'Will be a bit late this morning'. I've got to help my sister to evacuate.

Interviewer: Was this your older sister?

Olive: What?

Interviewer: Was this your older sister?

Olive: My older sister and she was looking after not only her daughter, who was five by then, but also I had carried a baby and it wasn't my baby. All the time, Doreen couldn't carry it as well as – she – she had little Leslie, who was about two and a half, and their things and we got to Euston in due course and we found out she was going to Leeds. Well, they – she went to Leeds and that was just when I was getting my – doing my exams and I went round to Doreen's house and that was quiet and I did all my studies there.

Interviewer: What year was this?

Olive: 1949. Oh, you had a long war. VE-day was 1945, I suppose.

Interviewer: So if you could summarise your experience of the war?

Olive: No, I couldn't. I've just told you all of it. You've got it on your tape.

Interviewer: We do. Did you feel like the – that the war changed you at all?

Olive: Well, it changed us all.

Interviewer: In what ways?

Olive: Well, I lost all the men I might have married. I never got one. I was working with officers, high grade officers.

Interviewer: Was there any – any men that you used to meet up with?

Olive: There were one and he got buried in Burma. He was one of our soldier clerks<sup>9</sup>. I had three possibles. Eric, his father died, and he was in – he was a private soldier. It didn't suit him very well because, of course, I was working with officers. But then I got my release from the war office and off I

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<sup>9</sup> 45 min

went. That was the end of it. That was the end of the war by – for here. But they'd got – they'd still got the war in Burma.

Interviewer: So – so you had Eric, he was one of the –

Olive: He was an ordinary man, I think he thought my father was a rich man, he'd follow his daughter. Didn't work very well.

Interviewer: Who else were – did you have – were you seeing during the war?

Olive: Well, I'd – I saw – as soon as I got my degree Stanley Wincock could be jolted by someone at Kings, jumped up and also Leslie Elwy, who was my friend's chuck-over. But I asked them both, I said, 'Are you interested in going to India' and they weren't and I wanted to go to India because I thought God wanted me to go so I wasn't interested.

Interviewer: Did you enjoy the work that you were doing during the war?

Olive: Oh, I always enjoy my work. I was personal assistant to a brigadier, very interesting. I had an old job to fight for the job because soldier clerks – oh, that's got cold. Have you had your coffee?

Interviewer: I had a bit of it, yes.

Olive: Well, drink some more.

Interviewer: Were you ever wanting to volunteer for one of the services?

Olive: I couldn't, they wouldn't let me out. They wouldn't let me out of the War Office. I did go for ATS but they – and I could have got a job but they wouldn't let me out of the War Office, you see, they need me where I was. Oh, you couldn't do what you liked during the war. I don't know –

Interviewer: Can you tell me a bit more about the – what happened in the local area here in Beckenham –?

Olive: I don't know what happened. I wasn't here. I was in the War Office. I wasn't looking at what was happening here.

Interviewer: Did you never have – did you have air raids in the evenings when you slept in the – the air raid shelter? Did you have air raids going on in the night?

Olive: Did I have air raids? Well, we were asleep. No, have you asked anyone else this question?

Interviewer: We ask them different questions.

Olive: What?

Interviewer: We ask them a bit different questions. It depends from person to person.

Olive: Well, I had to sleep. I – if I couldn't get my sleep I couldn't do my work.

Interviewer: I don't have any more questions now. Is there anything that you want to tell me that you feel like you haven't had a chance to tell me?

Olive: Well, I worked – I did this week's work for Hore-Belisha. I was personal assistant to a brigadier, but he got promoted so I – he – he was a colonel, you see, we had Lord Bridgeman you can put this down. Lord Bridgeman was head of the Home Guard and Territorial Army. He had a deputy director Home Guard and a deputy director Territorial Army and I worked for the Territorial Army chap and he got rid of the Home Guard chap and so I – I was first assistant to a brigadier, not a colonel, Home Guard and Territorial Army. It was – you had to have your fixed day and I did typing the letters. I'm not very lucid, I don't think<sup>10</sup>.

Interviewer: Well, thank you very much for taking the time to – to talk to me. I'm going to turn this little –

**End of Interview.**

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<sup>10</sup> 50 min