

AV 11

LAUNDRY

ETHEL BOWLES

TIME	TRANSCRIPT
00.00 – 00.14	You started at 8 o'clock, we had a ten-minute break in the morning and a hour's lunch break, and then a tea break in the afternoon, then we finished at 6 o'clock.
00.14 – 00.30	But on a Friday you had to complete the whole week's laundry. What had come in had to go out again. Sometimes I've worked until 10 o'clock Friday night.
00.30 – 01.02	<i>And how did they wash the clothes?</i> Great big machines, about 6 foot long. They had shutter doors on the front, it was all worked by hand, you know with levers and whatnot. And then they had great big hydros, where they used to – they were spinners, but we called them hydros – we used to put all this washing in 3 or 4 of these hydros to get all the water out. They were always slightly damp, so that they came out pressed very nicely, you know.
01.02 - 01.33	<i>How many ladies were there working in the...?</i> In the >unclear< laundry? Fifty? We were ever so busy. They had machines to do it all, what they called 'calendars,' that you fed sheets in them, and that ironed the sheets, you know, and they had girls at the bottom folding them all up and putting them in piles, and it was sorted into what they called the 'Packing Department' and all bundled up into parcels, and went out again.
01.33 – 01.41	<i>And how much were you paid a week, Ethel?</i> One pound six shillings a week. Yes.
01.41 – 01.47	<i>How much was your overtime?</i> Ninepence an hour or something – it was coppers.
01.47 – 01.56	<i>And did you get paid holiday?</i> No, not in those days. >unclear comment in BG, male voice< You could take a week off, but you wouldn't get paid.