



# Unheard Voices: interviews with deafened people

Cedric Battye  
Interviewed by Jan Sanderson

British Library ref. C1345/12

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## Interview Summary Sheet

**Ref no:** C1345/12

**Collection title:** Unheard Voices: interviews with deafened people

**Interviewee's surname:** Batye

**Title:**

**Interviewee's forename:** Cedric

**Sex:** Male

**Occupation:**

**Date and place of birth:** 1922, West Yorkshire

**Date(s) of recording:** 14<sup>th</sup> December 2008

**Location of interview:** The Westminster Hotel, Chester

**Name of interviewer:** Jan Sanderson

**Speech to Text reporter:** Francis Barrett

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**Interviewer's comments:**

**[Track 1]**

*So, first and foremost let me say thank you to you Cedric for coming all the way in this cold weather so close to Christmas and hopefully you will have a really nice story to be able to tell us?*

I thought it would be as good as most people with me being 86 years old and being deaf from a fairly early age, you know, I have a lot to tell.

*I am sure you have so we will get started and first and foremost can I just ask you so we have the details on tape, first and foremost can I ask when and where you were born?*

Yes, I was born at a little village called Hade Edge which is about 2 miles outside Holmfirth in West Yorkshire, it's it was a steep hill out of Holmfirth so we were well up in the Pennines so we got a lot of bad weather up there.

*Can you tell me what year you were born?*

I was born in 1922.

*That makes you?*

86.

*I am not very good at maths I am afraid [laughs]. Can you tell me about a little bit about your parents?*

Yes.

*Can I ask what your father's name was?*

Clement.

*Clement?*

Clement yes.

*Your Mum's name?*

Annie.

*Can you remember your Mum's name before she was married, her maiden name?*

Beever, BEEVER. That's right yes.

*And did you grow up with both parents, both your parents were there throughout your life?*

Well, I will tell you about that later as we come to it. I was born the 4th in a family of... in a family of 5. But a 5th child was added 7 years later. Now the eldest of the 5 was Vida, she was born in 1916 or 17 something like that then Archie was the next he was born in 1920 and Ronald was born the year after in 1921 and then I was born in 1922, so Archie, Ronald and myself were all born in June in consecutive years [laughs].

*That's unusual isn't it?*

Yes, yes, yes.

*And the youngest one?*

I was the younger of the 3 boys and then 7 years later Edgar James Edgar was born in 1929. That was the lot.

*It must have been a lot for your Mum to look after?*

It must have been hard for her yes and remember we were living in a depressed period in the 1920s and 30s, there was a lot of people out of work, money was scarce, my father did always keep in employment. Now in 1931, 2 years after Edgar was born my mother died at the age of 41.

[04:42]

*If I may ask can you remember what she died from?*

I have never been told properly but I gathered it was something to do with childbirth, might have been an abortion a miscarriage or whatever, it was something in that but no-one ever told me properly what she died of but of course my father was left with 5 children. My sister, the eldest, she was 14 and a half and Edgar was 2, and are Archie, Ronald and me were 8, 9 and 10.

*So your sister did she take over some of the...?*

My sister was at the technical college in Holmfirth but she had to leave when she was 14 and a half to take over the household duties and she did a very good job as well.

*Did your sister go on to marry?*

She married when she was probably 25 or something like that she had 2 children.

*She devoted her teenage years then literally to bringing up her brothers and sisters, her brothers?*

Yes.

*Being the only girl as well?*

Yes that's right so that's the family background.

[06:22]

*Did you all live in the same house all the time you were growing up?*

Oh yes. I lived in the same house until I got married when I was 25 yes.

*And you actually went to school in the area?*

The school was only a cock's stride from where we lived, the primary school so I was there 'til I was 11 years old and I passed for the grammar school I went to the grammar school at Honley.

*Did you have to take an exam for that to be admitted to the grammar school?*

Yes it was what was called the 11 plus I passed the 11 plus. Neither of my 2 brothers passed it but my sister passed it to go to the Holmfirth tech but the Holmfirth tech was superseded with the new grammar school at Honley where I went to.

*Can you remember what year it was when you passed the 11 plus?*

I started at the grammar school in 1934 stayed there 4 years till I was 16.

*About 33, 34 when you actually took the 11 plus?*

SPEECH TO TEXT REPORTER ASKING FOR CONFIRMATION OF SPELLING

Yes 33 yes, it's full name was the Honley grammar school.

*After you actually left school you stayed there till you were 16?*

Yes.

*Did you go straight into employment then or move on to further education?*

I was glad to leave I didn't want any further education at that time I had had enough. I took I studied engineering at the grammar school, so that when I left in July August whenever it was I went round all the engineering shops in the district in Huddersfield, but like I said it, was a depressed time and they weren't taking any people on. So, I trailed about for 6 or 7 weeks, couldn't get a job of any description never mind engineering. And then in, when was it, August September, 12 month before the war started you know, there was what they called the Munich crisis when the war nearly started then in 1938 about August September time, and the territorials were called up and there were 2 territorials working in the textile mill where my

father was employed, they were called up so there were 2 vacancies there, so I got one of the jobs in the textile industry.

*Was that working at the same mill as your father?*

As your father yes and the same mill as my grandfather he was still there working yes.

*Did your father ever re-marry?*

No, he didn't. He was 39 when he lost his wife and he never re-married, no.

*Still kept his employment. Had he worked there? Had your father worked at same place when he lost your Mum?*

He was still working in the mill. Previously to that when he came out of the army he went in the army in the first world war when he came out when he was demobbed in '19 or '20 during the time he was away my mother had started a little job in part of the house, the house we lived in had originally been two cottages they were made into one but in one half my mother started this little shop she sold sweets cigarettes and groceries as well and anything really. She were doing quite well and when my father came when he was demobbed he bought a little lorry and started haulage contracting but it was only a 30 hundred weight thing he had you know, and he did that for a few years. He had asthma, he got asthma pretty badly and he couldn't do this haulage business anymore and he got a.... oh what happened now, there was a chap who lived nearby he used to come, he was out of work and he used to come and help my father a little bit with the lorry. Now he was there 1 day, the manager of the factory where my father worked he rang up to say that they were wanting a hand loom weaver which my father had learned previously as a teenager, with my grandfather he was a hand loom weaver and my grandfather said to the manager, 'why don't you ring our Clement and see if he will come back?' so this chap Harry said, 'why, you go back to the mill Clement' and he said, 'I will drive the vehicle' and that's what happened. That's how he got back into the mill because really his health wasn't good enough to do the haulage job. Aye, that's about, as I say, my grandfather worked in the mill there as a hand loom weaver and his father worked in the same mill as a cloth finisher and his father was a cloth finisher and his father had his own textile mill in Holmfirth that was in the 1700s.

*So, it's something that has been in the family for generations?*

Generations and we have always been in the textile industry, yes.

*Do you remember your grandfather well?*

Grandfather, yes but I never knew the great grandfather, no.

*What was your grandfather's name?*

My grandfather was Edgar and my great grandfather was Andrew. My great, great grandfather was.... why can't I say it, I know it as well as I know my own name.

*It's okay*

It will come to me.

*Do you remember your grandmother?*

Yes, but unfortunately she died 3 months after my mother.

*What was your?*

So, she would be probably 60'ish.

*What was your grandmother's name?*

Hannah, Hannah Cassell was her maiden name.

[15:13]

*Did you have a -- were you very close to your grandparents as children, you know, after your Mum died?*

No, they lived over a mile from us, nearer to Holmfirth and we didn't go very often, we always went at Christmas because he had an unmarried daughter, my father's sister, and she always bought us little presents at Christmas and they were usually the only presents we got. Like I said, we were living in hard times and anything my father had to buy it cost him five times that because there were five children so we didn't get much at all got an orange and an apple in the stocking and perhaps a few nuts not much else.

*Did you have transport to get to visit your grandparents?*

No, had to walk down and walk back usually. There was a bus to come back but we couldn't afford bus fare.

*A lot of people walked didn't they?*

Right up to my school days if we went to Holmfirth it were all downhill you see so we always used to walk down and then have a penneth on the bus coming back. [laughs]

*So moving on a little bit on to another question I would like to ask you, can you remember you know as children and I am going back to when I remember being a child and how things were very sparse we used to go off to Sunday school quite a lot because it filled the time and it gave us something to do and occasionally we went on trips did you do such things when you were as a family as children. Did you go to church?*

We always went to Sunday school there was a Methodist Sunday school in the village although my father had been brought up in the church at Holmfirth because the Methodist was nearest he sent us there my mother was connected with the Methodist church I can't recall going regularly to the services. But we always went to Sunday school had a star card and used to get a first-class prize for a full star card you know.

*Did you get any attendance gifts?*

We didn't get any gifts. All we got for nothing after Harvest ceremony well it wasn't for nothing then after Harvest ceremony they used to sell all the product on the following Monday

night and the children were allowed to buy an apple for a penny. That was the only what you might call anything we got from the...

*I am thinking back I know when I was a child?*

Oh we got a school cake at the feast, we had an annual feast day in the summer we got a school cake a currant cake you know.

*I know when I went to Sunday school we got a Bible for good attendance. That was what I was wondering when you went to Sunday school?*

Yes, if you got enough stars on your card which we always did we got a book for a prize at the Christmas concert.

*Have you still got that book?*

I have several I have had for various years, yes.

*You have still got them after all these years?*

Yes.

*Treasures*

Yes.

*What did you know when you weren't at Sunday School and weren't schooling what kind of past times did you have?*

We had to do the best thing we could do as regard football and cricket. We couldn't afford a cricket bat, even a football you know, so we didn't get much of that 'til later on and in the summer the elder boys might have a football and again, we got a bit of kicking around. There was a nice big field quite close to where we lived where we could play football and a bit of cricket as well and there was a field behind the chapel as well. They bought it for the

graveyard you see and only used half of the graveyard and the other half we were allowed to go in and play cricket in there we did a bit of cricket there.

*Do you recall any particularly close school friends from that time?*

Quite a lot really.

*I wondered I can only barely remember the odd one or two school friends, erm, but usually we all have someone we could recall.*

The first one came into my mind was Ernest Booth. He was about the same age, then Lesley Greaves and his sister Joyce. Now, Joyce married the undertaker in Hepworth where I lived when I got married and she is still living is Joyce. I saw her only last week. There was Joyce and Harry Beaumont, Victor Hurst, Brian Hurst, Lewis Netherwood, Harry Hinchcliffe, Robert Bennett. Robert Bennett, he was one of the territorials that got called up in 1938 and he got killed during the war.

[21:38]

*After you left school and you actually got the job working in the mill how long did you stay in the mill for?*

Nine months. I continued looking around you know for an engineering job. There was a stop at the grammar school machine drawing etc... for I was there for four years yes and whilst I was working in the textile mill, I got an interview at David Browns at Huddersfield they were a big engineering place have you ever heard of David Browns?

*No, can't say as I have, no.*

Haven't you? David Brown, no? Oh well, have you heard of the David Brown racing cars? No? [laughs] anyway there were David Browns in Huddersfield and they sent for me to go for a test. Now, I took a test along with 70 other people, 70 other boys and I came 7th out of the 70 and they still didn't offer me a job and the reason they gave was because I was 16 and they wanted apprentices at the age of 14, so they could give them a good start you know so I didn't

get a job. Then, I saw in the newspaper a firm that was about two miles away, they made bricks and pipes, Hepworth Iron Company they called it, and they were advertising for an office clerk. I thought well that will be better than working as a labourer in the textile mills so I applied for that but I didn't get the job the job went to one of the manager's sons [laughs]

*Keep it in the family*

Yes, keep it in the family [laughs] anyway a few weeks or months later I got a letter from them. They had another vacancy would I like to apply for it which I did and I got that 1 there were only two of us and I got the job working in the works office. I had to start at 7 o'clock in the morning with the workmen collecting production figures things like that you know, and so I only worked in the textile mill for nine months then I became, my two elder brothers both worked in the textile mill as well, same mill, and I became the first Battye in 3 or 400 years not to make his living in textiles. I made my living in pipes and bricks, bricks and pipes.

*And your two brothers and your father were still employed in the textile mill were they?*

Yes.

*And your sister can I ask, I know she cared for you after your Mum died*

She did.

*So did she stay at home and look after you or did she have to go out to work as well?*

She stayed at home for a few years anyway and then she got a job a part-time job making lunchtime meals for the school for about 20 or 30 children and one or two of the teachers and she used to say there was a brass band quite close to where we lived between us and the school and they got permission to use the band room for the canteen and my sister used to make the food at home and carry it across to the band room and serve it lunch time so that was her first job and she was very pleased to do that. Later on she got a job as a cleaning lady in a house in Holmfirth she did that for quite a few year but she never had a full-time job.

*I wondered with her looking after the family obviously after your Mum passed away I wondered whether or not she ever fitted any work in because looking after 4 other children is a full-time job in itself?*

We didn't get looked after like we should have done if we had two parents we had to rough it a bit.

[27:15]

*Can I ask how old you were when you first noticed your hearing loss?*

Looking back I can't remember having any hearing problems when I was at the primary school up to the age of 11 or 12 but that's when it started round about that time my left ear and it used to discharge and it was a very heavy discharge it used to run down my cheek if I didn't control it I always had my ear stuffed up with cotton wool you know, and cycling and running and getting heated up used to make it discharge more. So the doctor sent me to Huddersfield Infirmary for treatment on this and I went for several years whilst I was still attending the grammar school at Honley and the only drops they gave me were H<sub>2</sub>O, hydroxide, hydrogen hydroxide, and then at one time they gave me some red stuff, it was like red ink and it was difficult to get in you know and none of my brothers or sisters or anybody ever suggested they put them in for me I had to do it the best way I could I used to finish up with red ink all down my face, it were a mess so I didn't use them for so long.

*Was it painful at that particular point?*

No, there was no pain except what happened next I got polyps in the ear or a polyp. And they said well we will have to get this out, this polyp. It was there during the time I was at the grammar school as far as I can remember and they had what they called a snare, you know what a snare is like with a lump of wire, and when they squeeze like a pair of scissors with a loop and when they squeeze it the loop would tighten up you see so there were two of them one holding me down there were no anaesthetic no local anaesthetic at all and one of them were trying to nip this thing off in my ear that was when I had pain and I have never had pain before or after worse than that it was really bad.

*How old were you when that happened?*

I might have been 15 going on 16 probably when they tried to get that. They had to have two or three attempts it kept slipping off you see and it were really excruciating! Anyway they got it off in the time and after that I remember I used to go to see the specialist about once a month or so at Huddersfield Infirmary and reading the notes it said I had had this whatever they called it and it said a small stump left, and they were treating it with silver nitrate, to burn it off, [laughs] and that didn't hurt, but I think you know I never had any further trouble with the polyp.

*Because of the discharge and having to wear the cotton wool in your ear obviously you were at school when all this was taking place so did it affect any school activities?*

Yes, it restricted me to some extent you know. I remember one example in the English class the teacher would read out a sentence and we had to write it down, and she read, 'the boy mislaid his grammar school', 'mislaid his grammar book', that's right 'mislaid his grammar book' and I wrote down, 'the boy mislaid his brother' [laughs] so grammar school sounded like brother to me that day.

*Did the teacher, had anybody become aware at this particular point your hearing had actually been affected up to then?*

Up to then I hadn't made it known I was hard of hearing but I was so upset about this occurrence with... that I told my sister about it at home you see and she wrote a letter to the school and the teacher apologised to me afterwards and she said, 'I didn't know you were deaf'.

*Had you actually been diagnosed at that point as hard of hearing or deaf?*

No, no. No I hadn't. It was just that I was restricted. This ear was probably okay up to then but I was just restricted because I had this stuffed up with cotton wool.

[33:14]

*You know when you had the cotton wool in and that only any sounds you were capable of picking up in the left ear would be muffled so you must have relied on the hearing with your right ear and with your family circle or family group or friends did it create any problems in that area?*

I don't remember having much difficulty with my family and friends, no, no, I don't.

*Did your family become sort of erm aware of it and remember that perhaps maybe they had to speak to you from a different angle or rephrase or anything like that?*

No, my father was the one who was deaf.

*Your father was deaf?*

My father was deaf and I was the only one of the five children who inherited it my father was deaf pretty bad he wore a hearing-aid at that time, one that was in his pocket here with a big wire round his neck so I wasn't considered as being deaf at that time no.

*Did your father, did he rely on the hearing-aids to hear, your father, or did he use the hearing-aids and another method to communicate did he lipread or?*

No, no, he wasn't deaf, he was hard of hearing. He could get by but he couldn't hear as well as 'normal' people.

*Did your father sort of understand the difficulties you had even though at that time they were only minor?*

We didn't recognise I had any difficulties at that time I don't think. It wasn't until later on in my teens, oh.

*How old were you when it was recognised?*

I didn't get my first hearing-aid until I was erm in the late '60s or '70s you know when I was 50'ish, aye, I didn't need a hearing-aid till I was about 50.

*After you had the polyps removed and the stump actually did the... what was it again what they used?*

A snare, oh silver nitrate did.

*Did that get rid of the stump?*

It must have, there were no more problems with it. This might have been when it started discharge when. It made the discharge worse. I don't know.

*Was it still discharging at this time you know later after you had the treatment and the polyp done and the stump?*

Yes.

*After that treatment after that course of treatment was your ear still discharging?*

I think it had still been discharging I seemed to give up going to the infirmary after I had started working I was probably a lot better.

[36:46]

*Did the problems with your ears did it have any impact on your employment at all?*

I will tell you another instance when I went for this interview for my job at the brick works. The manager who was interviewing me says he asked me, erm, about my previous employment, you see, and he seemed to know the manager at the mill and he said he asked me a few things about it and he said, 'how does he run his business?', and I mistook it for, 'how does he run his missus?'. [laughs] You know, I said, 'what do you mean?' {coughing}, so that didn't go down right well with my new employer did it? [laughs]

*Your employers and work colleagues were they aware you was a little bit hard of hearing or had a little bit of an hearing problem?*

It wasn't a real problem at that time, no. I was just a bit hard of hearing that's all.

*You sort of carried on?*

The boss said, 'how does he run his business?', and it sounded like, 'missus'. I missed the B at the beginning didn't I?. Things have happened always like that in my life now and again but mostly it doesn't matter.

*After you were referred to the hospital how long were you going to the hospital for?*

Like I say, I seemed to go into the infirmary in my mid teens after I left the grammar school I used to get half a day off at the grammar school to go to the infirmary and probably I couldn't get time off from work when I started work. I don't remember ever going again from my work at the brick works. I may have done on the odd occasion now and again, I don't know.

*Then you went into the engineering firm. How long did you work there for?*

I didn't get a job at the engineering - it was the brick works. I stayed there 43 years.

*Did you get promoted?*

I did, yes. I finished up as a factory manager.

*When you were at work and obviously in the early days and the early years when you first started your employment then you didn't sort of, apart from the odd occasion when you misheard, you didn't actually have a problem with your hearing?*

No.

*And so I am assuming maybe you would have just got mixed in with the rest of your colleagues and work friends?*

Yes, oh yes. Not much of a problem really, no.

*So it was quite integrated into the rest of the workforce?*

Yes, yes.

[40:17]

*What about when you started work. A lot of us, we can't wait until we leave school, start out in the big wide world and are one of the adults and you would have your work colleagues and possibly friends from when you were at school from when you were younger. Did you actually still socialise with people from school who you had gone to school with and work colleagues? Did you go out together?*

Yes, Saturday nights I had a couple of mates used to go down to Holmfirth and go to the pictures and have some fish and chips, catch the bus home [laughs] that type of -- we used to live for Saturday night, chase the girls a bit perhaps, you know, in their teens, and that was the main entertainment we had [laughs].

*I don't know I'm just asking when you actually as you said as you were younger you went to Sunday school, then when you left grammar school and you was employed, you went out to work. At what age did you actually cease to go to Sunday school?*

I went to Sunday school probably 'til I was 15 or 16. It was a bit uncommon then, they used to start dropping out earlier than that you know I went on quite – oh, and erm the thing about this Sunday school, it was a separate building to the chapel but we had to go to Sunday school at 1:30 till 2:30 then forced to go into the chapel as well for the chapel service and me and another lad got the job of blowing the organ pumping the bellows, you know, and eventually I got into the choir.

*Became a choir boy? How old were you when you were a choir boy?*

Got into the choir yes perhaps when I was about 18 or 19 meanwhile, I told you between where we lived and the school there was the brass band room and me and my 2 brothers all joined the band so we learned a bit of music there as well.

*Your two elder brothers?*

Yes, the younger 1 she wasn't old enough at that time but eventually when he was 16 that was the year when the war ended he joined the army, I think in -- I thought afterwards, you know, he had a poor upbringing when he had no mother after the age of 2. He wouldn't remember her at all, would he? And he joined the army and as a musician because he had joined the band as well, had learned how to play a cornet and joined the army and after 3 years they sent him to the Royal Military School of Music to train as a bandmaster, he became a bandmaster and he was the bandmaster of Royal Leicester regiment for a long number of years. And after his 12 years initial he signed on again, kept signing on and eventually he, you know, he stayed all his working life in the army and when he retired from the army, he got an MBE from the Queen for loyal service to Queen and Country.

*Oh wow. Were you close to your brothers? Were you very close to your brother?*

No, erm, we all had our separate mates, well Archie the eldest when he was sixteen he got a girlfriend so he were out of the circulation with the lads but Ronnie he had his own mates from a lad who worked in the mill and I had my own mates as well, so we never went out together as teenagers, you know, but we would always stick up for one another if necessary, so you know we didn't fall out or anything like that but we seemed to, well I think what distinguished me from my other two brothers I had been to the grammar school and they looked upon me as being, I don't know how they looked as being a bit different because I had a better education than them and I don't know whether they actually resented it or not but that was one of the things that separated us a bit yes.

*I can identify with that I have got sisters I went to the girls grammar school and was the only one out of us girls that did and two of my sisters closer to my age one of them always says one of them is the beautiful one of them is the brawny one and me personally I am the brainy one and she says beauty, brains and brawn and that's how we are known. That's -- I understand what you are saying about feeling different. Would you like to take a quick break and have a drink?*

We have talked a long time. I will get a drop of water I think.

[Break in recording]

[46:44]

*I am back on again. Right. So we have covered quite a lot about your early life and the grammar school was a big part of your life your childhood and it was obviously quite an achievement at that time have you got any special memories or something that sticks in your mind from that period when you were at school?*

From the grammar school. Oh the primary school yes. At the primary school the headmaster, they just rate the 3 Rs reading writing and arithmetic that's what they concentrated in those days didn't learn any silly things like, well I don't know what like, but they stuck to the basics you know and so that I learned the multiplication tables very early on in life and I was helped in that because I got the 3 elder siblings and we used to recite them in bed at night so I good really good grounding in arithmetic by learning the tables at an early age.

*Did that stand you in good stead with your employment later on?*

Always stood me in good stead yes.

*Obviously working in the office?*

Yes.

*Moving forward again, back to work I know you said you worked there for 43 year which is a long time and you covered the discharge with your ear and a few minor problems when you were younger you left school an you actually had your social life with your friends?*

Yes.

*Probably the ones from school and the band and probably some colleagues?*

Yes.

*During this point you mentioned about your older brother that was actually courting and about your younger brother that joined the army?*

Yes.

[49:06]

*Can I ask you can you recall how old were you when you first started courting or when you met your wife?*

I met my wife at the brick works when I was 21.

*Did she work there?*

She worked there as well yes. You see I started work there at the brick works pipe works whatever you call it, in June before the war started in September 3 years, and my eldest brother became in the following June my eldest brother became 20 and that was the age they were calling them up in the army the following June he was called up in the army. The following June to that Ronald was called up into the army that was 1941 and in 42 I was due to be called up but they rejected me because of my hearing problem. So I joined the home guard, that's just by the way.

*When you say they rejected you because of your hearing problem?*

Yes.

*Was it the fact it was discharging or was it combined with the fact you had had a slight hearing loss that had been detected?*

I tell you I remember what happened now I must have been attending at Huddersfield Infirmary at that time because when I got the calling up papers to go for a medical I got a note from the doctor there which described me condition and when I got to Leeds to the exam, they just weighed and measured me and looked at this note, and passed me as grade 4 [laughs]. So I didn't have to go but I did say I had been in the Home Guard for about 3 years during the war.

*Had you met your wife at that point?*

Sorry I will go back to that now yes. All the pipe machines in this factory were made by young men boys and young men and they were all getting called up into the army so labour was very scarce and the company started employing women to take the place, and Jenny my wife was one of those they could either go nursing or go in the forces or come into a factory where they had it was classed as a reserved occupation in fact our occupation was sort of a semi-reserved occupation. So, Jenny had a sister two years younger and she elected to go nursing but Jenny didn't want to leave home so she came working on the pipe machines with about another 30 or 40 young women so all the young men had gone. Now after a year or two on the pipe machines we needed, I was still working in the works office and the general office where the pay clerks worked the pay clerks were called up to work so the managers wanted me to go down to work in the pay office but I was already starting work at 7 O'clock, and they wanted me to do my production figures between seven and nine and then go down to the pay office and work in the pay office till 5 O'clock so I got Jenny to do the job in the office that I had previously been doing so later on as the firm progressed they only used to have one telephone line and it was Penistone One and they got a switchboard in there with three lines and they wanted a telephone operator and Jenny got the job as a telephone operator and that would probably be about around the time when I started courting her or soon after and we courted for four years and didn't get married till we could afford it.

*Did you have a big wedding or a quiet little affair?*

We had a proper wedding at the chapel where she was the organist and a friend of hers played the organ on that day.

*Were you still in the choir at that point?*

This was a different chapel it was a different village where she lived yes. And so we got married at the local chapel where she was the organist and yes we did everything you normally do in a wedding and had a honeymoon in London.

*Honeymoon was where sorry?*

London we stayed at the Bonnington Hotel in Russell Square.

*I am not sure if it's still there is it that?*

Yes, I think it will be, oh and meanwhile, oh it was after that yes round about this time the local hospital advertised for a part-time clerk of evening work 75 pounds per annum I thought I better be getting my hands on that so I applied for the job I got it used to go working at the hospital two or three nights a week.

*As well as your day job as?*

As well as well as my day job yes I was always keen on money after always being so short.

*Did your wife still work Jenny?*

Yes she was still working on the switchboard and she stayed on that job now until we got married and so as soon as we came back from the honeymoon a month afterwards she said 'Cedric I think I am pregnant' [laughs] 'You didn't waste any time then Cedric'. 'Good timing Cedric you had a good honeymoon love'. So she had to leave after about 6 months I don't think she ever went back to work again then because she had Philip then, and then two, oh four years later since she had the second one Charles so it was just the two sons, yes, yes.

[57:12]

*Do your two sons live close to you?*

The elder one emigrated to Australia, 2 years ago. But he is coming back next year.

*Does he not like it?*

Well, the reason they went one of his daughters worked in London as a speech and language therapist and she met an Australian who worked in London and she married him and eventually said I want to go back Australia so two years ago they decided they were going to Australia and Philip and his wife said we will go at the same time they all went together but the daughter now married to the Australian she has not settled so it's her who wants to come back so they are all coming back. Now he had another elder daughter than this one and she passed as a

doctor in England and she went to New Zealand on a 12 month experience thing and she met a man there so she has stayed in New Zealand she is not married but they have two children now and she is quite happy in New Zealand.

*So you have got two sons?*

Yes.

*What's their names?*

Charles, sorry my two sons are Philip and Charles my wife was a great Royalist and that's how she named the children Prince Philip and Prince Charles and we were married round about the same time as the Queen and Prince Philip.

*What year would that be?*

In 1947 we were married I think we were married three weeks before Prince Philip and the Queen yes, or it might be the other way round they might have been married three weeks before I am not quite sure.

*The same year.*

My wife was dead keen on royalty in those days that's how she named the children now then I have got four great grandchildren, two in Australia and two in New Zealand [laughs].

*Quite widespread your family then your family tree?*

Yes.

[59:53]

*Does your wife is your wife still living?*

No my wife died 20 years ago she had a brain haemorrhage. I came home from the club where I had been playing snooker about 5 O'clock for my tea and found her collapsed on the settee. And they took her into the Infirmary at Huddersfield, and she was unconscious and she stayed unconscious for five or six years, five or six days before she died she never recovered consciousness I stayed with her for five nights and during that time she just uttered one word 'Philip'. That were her eldest son that were all she said in five days and I thought well she is going to go on like this for many a week like this I can't go on staying like this every night I went home on the sixth night and she died we got a phone call about 2 o'clock

*I think it always happens that way I think that's quite a regular occurrence?*

She were only 67.

*When she died?*

Yes.

*You mentioned playing snooker?*

Yes.

*Is that something you have done for a lot of years.*

I only started playing snooker when I retired from work I never had time or the money to spend on it before. Well I was in the band for about 30 years. So.

*When did you leave the band can you remember how old you were when you left the band?*

I gave up playing after about 1950 but I was having a lot of stomach struggle at the time I was diagnosed with a duodenal ulcer and it affected me playing you see and that was one of the things that was irritating it so I had to give up playing because of that but I was the secretary for 28 years and when I gave up being secretary they made me into the resident I was president for 10 years, then they sacked me [laughs]. Have you heard of Dickinson's cream?

*No, I haven't.*

It's a very big cream factory quite near, near Holmfirth, and he has made a lot of money has Dickinson and they sacked me in favour of Dickinson to be president because he had all this money you see but it's been a good thing for the band because he has put a lot of money into it just like these people are putting it into football teams these days so although it upset me a great deal at the time it has been it was a good move really from the committee's point of view to get me out of the way.

*Do you still play snooker then?*

I started playing snooker when I retired about 20 years ago and we started, there is a veterans' league in the Huddersfield league and we joined the veterans league and we have had a team for the last 20 years and I am still playing in it we play on a Monday afternoon I am practising every day I go down to the club every afternoon five days a week and Monday is the match day you know. And I also play pool in another club.

Are you ok Franny? [to STTR]

*Okay you were saying that you also play pool as well?*

Yes, that's at the Hepworth club the snooker I play at new mill club.

*Is that close by where you live?*

Yes, they are both about a mile away in different directions from where I live.

*So you have found something to fill your time?*

I quite enjoy it, yes.

*Is it a league you play in?*

I we play in a league Monday afternoons with all the veterans they have to be over 60 to play in the veterans' league yes.

*What about the pool is there a pool league as well?*

The pool at the different club that's open to any age I mean I have played in it 20 years and the youngest player is in his teens.

*So quite a wide age group then that play?*

Yes, yes.

*So obviously moving on a little bit Cedric with playing pool and snooker is something you don't have to have 100% perfect hearing for?*

You don't need your ears at all.

*You don't, it is a hobby. Are there any other kind of hobbies you've not been able to do perhaps that have been affected or you've been restricted?*

I played in the band a long number of years but I can't listen to the music now, it's just a rumble you know so I miss that a lot not been to any concerts or anything.

*Being a brass band was it?*

Yes, yes.

[01:06:15]

*So when did you actually your hearing loss start to become a problem that you actually needed hearing-aids?*

I found I first decided to get a hearing-aid about 1970, so I went quite a long time without 1 and then that's when things started deteriorating in stages, you know I was using a very mild

hearing-aid for a while and then suddenly that becomes useless and so you have to get a stronger 1 and this proceeded in about 3 or 4 years over say a few years each between each stage, wasn't until.... it would have been in the late 1990s, 1997 or 8 when it finally took its last drop when I couldn't hear much at all and there wasn't another hearing-aid that would help me in any way so.... I was in a very bad period then, you know, I couldn't hear much at all really and I had a couple of years like that before my GP, he never mentioned cochlear implants, I think it was the policy not to mention cochlear implants because they weren't all that common and they were very expensive and they probably thought because I was 78 years old I wouldn't really qualify for one so they never mentioned it but they sent me to the audiology, the ENT department at Huddersfield and they never mentioned cochlear implants but.....

*How did you hear about cochlear implants?*

That's what I am trying to work out now. They never mentioned it at all at Huddersfield and after a while I thought I am going to ask my GP if he can find me a private consultant on hearing see what if I can make any progress through it that way and he made me an appointment to see Professor Ramsden, a private, I got a private appointment with Professor Ramsden at Manchester Infirmary and he did. When I got there my daughter-in-law went with me, and when we got there they sent me to the chap who does the hearing tests to see what strength and the results came back to Professor Ramsden and he looked at them and he realised I was deaf [laughs] and he said the only thing that's any use to you is a cochlear implant and that was the first time cochlear implants had been mentioned.

*Had you heard about them before did you know what they were and how they worked?*

I had heard them mentioned but I always understood I knew they were for profoundly deaf people and that to me that meant that they couldn't hear anything but profoundly deaf isn't that, totally deaf is when you can't hear anything at all. Profoundly deaf, yes you can hear a little bit and that was why I didn't think I should qualify for a cochlear implant and that's why I have never followed it up and when the doctors at Holmfirth and Huddersfield hadn't mentioned it I hadn't given it any further consideration until Professor Ramsden said, 'that's what you need, you need a cochlear implant' and he said I will write to your PCT in Huddersfield and tell them to make you an appointment at Bradford. Bradford is the place that deals with

cochlear implants for our area so I got an appointment to go to Bradford and they assessed me for 8 months, [laughs] and I thought I was passing everything that they threw at me.

*Did you have various tests during that 8 months?*

I went about once a month for about 8 months they did various things including a CT scan and other types of tests and what not and I thought I was doing all right I thought I was meeting the requirements of a cochlear implant and then the bombshell came after 8 months erm, the specialist said 'I am sorry we can't do it because of erm.... problems from previous operations you had had on your ear'. I forgot I missed this out, this was something that I did in the 1960s. I thought I had been working quite a while and I had a little bit of money in hand and I thought I ought to spend some of this on seeing if I can get something done with my ears and I heard about somebody who was deaf and had a bit of wire put in his middle ear to connect the ossicles you know, and I thought I were thinking something in that line and I went to see this specialist in Huddersfield privately and he said he would do an operation and he took me in into the private wing at Huddersfield and before the operation I did everything, told the nurses, I did everything rather than hang a notice on my ear this ear and he did the wrong ear.

*Did the wrong ear?*

He did my good ear. He operated on the other ear which was not much wrong with it and when I came round I said, he came, I said, erm, 'you have done the wrong ear'. 'Oh no', he said, erm, 'I wanted to see what that was like first', he said, 'and we will do the other one in 12 months' [laughs] and, you know, he never sent me a bill for that job. The anaesthetist sent me a bill for his part but the man never sent me a bill if it had been today I could have taken him to the cleaners couldn't I? [laughs] and he did the other a year after but he didn't make a job of it at all. But this is what the cochlear implant man at Bradford was referring to when he said there were complications you see.

[01:15:40]

*You know when you had got the hearing-aids and before you progressed this far at what point did you decide your hearing was such a problem and having such an impact on your life that*

*you needed to look further for other alternatives, you know, to see if you could improve the situation?*

That was in the 1970s thing when I realised I needed a hearing-aid, yes.

*Was it having a big impact on your life was your family life or socially?*

It was not having much of an impact really I had always had problems with hard of hearing but for some reason or other I decided that oh it was when the behind the ear things became common. I thought, well I hadn't fancied having one of those like my father had in my pocket you see. I had always fought shy of having one of those and then when these became available I thought I will have one of those. That's what happened in 1970.

*And a bit later on you moved towards?*

In five year stages, probably something like that, it deteriorated like that. I stepped up from a very weak hearing-aid to a bit stronger and a bit stronger until I was using the strongest that was available and then suddenly that went bang. That's when the hair cells in the cochlea have all finally died off.

*When you had been to Bradford and Bradford told you that you couldn't have a cochlear implant because of previous health problems, what was the next stage? What did you do then?*

I resigned myself to being deaf. That went on for six months, then suddenly I thought why don't I go see Professor Ramsden again at Manchester, so I made another private appointment with Professor Ramsden. I went to him and I told him what the chap at Bradford had said and he said there are no complications we can't overcome. I will be pleased to do it. So he said, 'I will write to your PCT and see if they will fund it'. I said, 'whether they fund it or not I want it doing'. He says, 'do you know how much they cost?'. I said, 'yes, I do' and anyway fortunately Huddersfield decided they would fund it, so that was quite a relief really and within a month of Huddersfield saying they would fund it I got it done at Manchester, no waiting time.

[01:19:10]

*What year did you have your implant?*

It would be either '99 or 2000.

*And there were no complications after the operation?*

No, none whatsoever.

*Does it work quite well?*

I tell you what Bradford said. He was quite frightened of infection. It was the infection that was worrying him. Anyway, what Professor Ramsden did, he did what they call a 'closed sack' and what he did, he blocked off the ear completely using some muscle that he had scraped out of my head up here, stuffed it into here and there is no infection can get in there. Now that's what he did in addition to the rest of the operation.

*What was it like, you know, when you had your switch on with the cochlear. You had your operation, then you go back for the switch on three or four weeks later?*

Yes, my daughter-in-law went with me again. I was able to converse with her in the car coming home.

*What did it feel like to you?*

Well, it sounds like a lot of what a lot of people say. It sounds like a bit Dalek'ish.

*Robotic?*

That improves as time goes on and straight after the operation I was discharged after about 3 days, something like that and I was dizzy for about a fortnight, had to walk with a stick. That cleared up after a fortnight and I have not had any problems.

*That was just post-op was it?*

Yes that's right. But I can have a dizzy bout sometimes, not very often. I might go 12 months without a dizzy bout. If I move quickly sometimes I stagger a bit, you know, a bit unsteady and when I am using steps I always use the handrail.

*Is that because of your balance?*

Yes, balance, yes.

*You know the impact of actually losing your hearing or recognising you were actually deaf?*

Yes.

*Did it have any impact you emotionally or on your family. How did they react to it?*

Well nobody seemed to bother so much well the family had more or less gone you see when it was, all the serious deterioration was after I was married, so it didn't have any consequences when I was still living with the family.

[01:22:40]

*What about when it got to a stage where hearing-aids were of little use to you and you weren't getting any benefit from hearing-aids and you decided to go for the implant?*

I was two years in a poor state not being able to hear much at all.

*How did you cope during that period?*

Oh badly, badly.

*In what way can you remember?*

Well, I was going to the GP in Holmfirth, and like I said he didn't mention implants and I actually said to him at that stage can you make me a private appointment at Huddersfield and

when I went the day after to see what he had done he said I have made you an appointment but it isn't a private one.

*So you didn't have to pay for it then?*

No it was just he called it Mr Penny he were a Nigerian and I didn't even get to see the top man at Huddersfield which is that's what I was wanting, so he didn't really do anything for me at all he didn't, the GP at Holmfirth.

*How did your family react during this period? You say for about two years you didn't cope very well. In what way did it have an impact? Was it on your social life or?*

Yes, I was married and living with my wife and two sons at that time but the two sons would be schoolboys, you know, or a bit older.

*How did they react to the situation, the family?*

Oh, I don't.....

*Did they just accept it as part of who you were?*

Just took it as something that was and you had to live with it you know.

*Did they learn any communication tactics to actually make life a bit easier for you and include you in everything. Did they learn how to communicate with you?*

Oh no

*Were there any communication problems?*

Well, we didn't seem to have any major problems you know at home I could communicate with my wife all right we didn't have to use lipreading and actually with having been hard of hearing all my life and I am looking at your lips now I never look in your eyes do I? I am

looking at your lips all the time and that's how I learned lipreading without knowing it you see. So that would probably be how I communicated with my wife.

*Is there any specific examples you can sort of recall where you may or may have not had support from your family, either good ones or bad ones?*

No, everything seemed to be taken at face value and what has to be will be and that sort of attitude and nobody.....

*Do you think that's because it's been gradual over the years?*

Yes, they got used to it in stages, you see. It only came as a shock that last step down when I couldn't hear much at all. But on the previous two or three stages, you know, if it went down I could go down to the infirmary and they give me a stronger hearing-aid and I was back to normal for another few years.

[01:27:33]

*Was your relationship with your wife over all those years, your hearing loss didn't have an impact on the relationship between you and your wife?*

No, no, no, no, no, no.

*You had a good relationship all those years up until she passed away?*

Yes.

*You know, I know with the implant you have a support network, support team, for the implant but do you have any support locally? Is there a support network locally where you live?*

No, if I need anything I've got to go to Manchester.

*You have to go to Manchester?*

Or if I need any spare parts for anything I can telephone and they will send it by post. I get my batteries from the Huddersfield.

*What about equipment in the home? Do you get it from Huddersfield? Is it a local?*

What equipment are you talking about?

*Any, such as a telephone or have you got any equipment or anything like that?*

Yes, I use a loop-system for hearing the television. I have got a flashing light doorbell and a flashing light telephone.

*Did you get them locally?*

The Social Services provide some of them and I got a loop-system for the bedroom as well because I have a television in there and I bought that one myself - it were about 70 pound - and I have also got a smoke alarm thing with a vibrating pad under my pillow in bed.

*So, was the local Social Services that provided the equipment for you...*

Yes.

*...do they provide any ongoing support for you or contact you from time to time?*

No, they don't contact me unless I contact them. I don't qualify for any services, you know, really.

*Do you feel you need anything other than what you've got?*

No.

*You are quite content with what you've got?*

Yes, I have a good set up and I am all right.

[01:29:15]

*You are still living in the same area you grew up in?*

In the same area round Holmfirth but I have lived in three different villages, first 25 years in Hade Edge where I was born. After I got married I moved to Hepworth, another village about a mile away. That's where my wife originated from and we lived in Hepworth for all our married life. Then, when my wife died, I sold the house. It was a three bedroom detached house and bought a two bedroom bungalow in another village next door. That's twenty years ago.

*What is that village called?*

Scholes.

*Stokes?*

No, Scholes, S-C-H-O-L-E-S and where I lived my married life that's Hepworth.

*STTR: Can I just ask how you spell the first village?*

What it is it's the edge of Hades!

*STTR: The edge of Hades? 80s? Hades?*

Hades, that's Hell int' it. Hell, the edge of hell. That's what it is! So, I know we have pretty much covered quite a long stretch of your life and your childhood and family life and obviously there is probably more we could talk about. We have done the majority of it now.

*I think we have. I think we are just about coming to the close now. Is there anything else of interest you would like to add to the interview, anything you feel we have not covered?*

Can't think of anything.

[01:32:29]

*It doesn't matter if you can't because we have got quite an in-depth look into your past.*

Oh, I remember I was going to mention when I was 25 when I got married at the time I had a bit of money left and I bought my first car the week before I was married relieve to that I had done a lot of cycle riding and cycle riding means sweating and discharge from your ear and when I have got a car and was out of the weather I didn't get as many head colds and I could hear better from then.

*Rather than the cycle?*

I was always susceptible to head colds and my hearing was always worse at that time.

*I remember you mentioning earlier on in the interview when you were at school too much exertion actually did affect a knock on effect with the ear discharging I can see where buying a car...*

Yes.

*Did you give the car a name?*

No.

*I remember our first car we gave it a name.*

It was a 1936 Ford 8 I bought it for sixty pound and sold it for £175.

*Made a profit on it then, made a big profit. Well I think we will close it up there now and thank you very much Cedric, it was really, really interesting, everything you've got to say. Everything you've said will be recorded on there so thank you for coming down and sharing that with us. I hope you've enjoyed it I have enjoyed listening to you. Thank you for that.*

[End of recording]