

Anne Jackson (for parents Chistyl Moczulsky and Basil Moczulsky) - Transcription

Audio Quality : Good

Focuses on immigration, family and working life of Ukrainian and German parents

0:00:00

LMI: Hi, if I can have your name please?

AJ: It's Anne Jackson.

LMI: And Anne, please can I have your address?

AJ: It's [REDACTED]

LMI: Thank you. And where did you live before this?

AJ: I lived at Slaneford Drive.

LMI: Thank you. Please can I have the names of your mum and dad?

AJ: My mum was called Krystal Moczulsky, and my dad was called Basil Moczulsky

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LMI: And which areas of Europe did your mum and dad come from, please?

AJ: My father came from Ukraine, Western Ukraine, which is near the Polish border. Had been Poland at some other time. And my mum came from Danzig, which is now Gdansk. And she was German, but it's now Polish, Poland.

LMI: Thank you. And I'm going to be asking you questions about your mum's experience of working in the mills. So, do you know when your mum started working in the mills? What year it would have been?

AJ: 1948.

LMI: Ok. And do you know which mill it was?

AJ: At Salts.

LMI: And do you know what her job title was?

AJ: Yes, she was a pattern weaver.

LMI: Had she come here and learned this, or did she have some experience from..?

AJ: She had some experience, so because of that she was sought after.

0:01:30

LMI: Right. Had she worked in a mill in Germany then?

AJ: She had.

LMI: Do you know how long before she did? How old she was at that time?

AJ: Well, she probably would have been about 15, 16. But I'm not sure how long she worked in the mill. Because obviously, the war broke out in Danzig, and I'm not sure when things started not to... work.

LMI: Yep, thank you. In Salt's mill then... So her title was pattern weaver. Do you know how long she worked there, in that mill?

AJ: She worked there... To be fair I'm not sure... maybe probably till she had me in '58.

LMI: Do you know what she did as a pattern weaver? What her role involved?

AJ: She looked after the looms.

0:02:33

LMI: Did you ever go visit her?

AJ: I did.

LMI: What was it like?

AJ: Extremely dusty and noisy.

LMI: Right. Anything nice about it?

AJ: The camaraderie, you could see it. They... actually... obviously couldn't hear themselves... hear speaking... but they could actually understand it, because they could lip read.

LMI: Right.

AJ: And so they did used to... while they were doing the things... they were actually having conversation just by lip reading.

0:03:14

LMI: Right. That's interesting, isn't it? Do you remember what hours she worked or how much her salary would have been?

AJ: Not then, but she... I remember her mostly working at Lister's Mill.

LMI: Right. Which years was that from?

AJ: Well, that would have been around 1979/'80. And she actually worked shift.

LMI: Right.

AJ: So she worked 2-10, which she liked, because she wasn't a morning person.

LMI: Yeah.

AJ: And then, I'm presuming, was it 6-2? I just remember the 2-10 mostly because she loved it.

LMI: Yeah.

AJ: It might have been 6-2. But we only lived a five-minute walk away. So she actually worked there till they closed the...she did velvet, she weaved velvet. Lister's was renowned the world over for their velvet.

LMI: Right.

AJ: I remember having velvet curtains, that she obviously got cheaper. They also used to have a seconds shop in the actual mill, that was always... a lot of people visited because the quality was apparently top-notch.

0:04:55

LMI: Right. And was that open to the public?

AJ: Yes.

LMI: Had she not gone back to work after 1958, when you were little? Or had she worked somewhere in between?

AJ: She worked a few places in between. I think after she'd... I think she stopped working for two or three years. I'm not quite sure, maybe three, because I ended up being looked after by a childminder. She went to work at Drummond's.

LMI: Yeah. And did she always have the same sort of similar role?

AJ: Yes, always. She was always the pattern weaver. Always the pattern weaver. She did tell me that she had a very good salary when she... for... probably till the mid/late '70s, early '80s. Well actually, I think she got made redundant from Lister's and her salary was still pretty good, but she said that when she first came here, for the first 10 years, her salary was really, really good or her weekly wage. (No idea how much.) She met my father at Salts, but he wasn't skilled at anything. I'm not sure what he did, but he was quite a proud man, and she was earning a lot more than him.

0:06:33

AJ: So he ended up going to get loads of different jobs, all sorts of jobs. Apparently, you could just walk into engineering, and stuff like that. But he ended up working for the Gas Board. And he ended up being a gang leader. And he ended up earning and having a good pension. So he ended up earning a lot more than her, with a pension. Which you know, considering he would be over 100 and... having a decent pension from somewhere was its weight in gold.

LMI: Yes. You said he changed jobs, didn't you?

AJ: Yeah, he changed jobs. Just... obviously, trying to get a better job.

LMI: Thank you. Had your mum... had she worked most of her life at Lister's then? Do you know which year she retired?

AJ: Right, so... she was born in 1924 and she retired when she was 60.

LMI: So '84.

0:07:57

AJ: Yes. She ended up in Salts. She retired from Salts.

LMI: Right.

AJ: So basically, she went... What I can recall, I know she started off in Salts. And I know that... then she obviously stopped working. I'm not sure... I think she went to Brighella Mills, which was up Little Horton. And then I know she ended up back... she went to Drummond's. But I know she ended up back at Salts for a time. Then she went to Lister's. And then from Lister's she went back to Salts. Because basically the mills were shutting. All the mills were shutting, so she was constantly getting made redundant. But because she was still skilled she did always get a job quite easily. I mean there was a time where, I dare say, that she could have easily not worked. But she wasn't very good at the household things. She didn't like to cook. My dad did quite a lot of the cooking. Well, they shared it. She used to do the shopping. My dad used to do the cleaning because my mum... it was never clean enough for my dad. And I used to say, 'You can do better.' And my mum used to say, 'I don't like doing it. So if I don't do a good job, your dad will do it.'

LMI: Yeah. 'So I just let him do it anyway.'

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AJ: But it was a very, even though he was quite... very East European...quite domineering and stuff, he wasn't typical in the home. Apparently, he was the only person that used to walk the pram around Lister Park. The only male. And he wasn't that typical male. But it's because his mother died in childbirth. And he ended up being the person around the farm

that used to do...because he was the eldest...so he ended up taking the role of... him and his sister... of cooking and cleaning and looking after the house. Which is quite unusual for that age. So that when my mum died, he actually could do everything he needed to do.

LMI: He was used to looking after the things.

AJ: Yeah, but my mum was quite clever. Because I remember saying to her one day... I think it was one of the times that she got made redundant from Lister's... And I said to her, 'Mum you're in your 50s, you've got money in the bank, you've got house paid off, why don't you just take it easy?' And she basically said 'No.' You know, 'I don't want to do things in the house, I don't want to do that.' And my dad retired...she retired before my dad, and then when my dad retired it drove her mad because he'd be going 'Well, the house needs hoovering.' 'But you only did it yesterday.' 'Yes, it needs hoovering today.' And it drove her mad. She wasn't a typical... she wasn't a stay at home, even though she probably could have had.

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LMI: In terms of the mills then, apart from the facts that I've been asking you about, dates and places and things, what are your memories? What do you remember? Because I know they did holidays once a year. Did she ever go away?

AJ: She did.

LMI: Did she like working there?

AJ: Yeah, she loved working there. She used to do... There used to be like coach trips to Blackpool and stuff like that. I think Blackpool, Morecambe. Just day trips. I remember as a child going on those. She loved that. I do remember she had friends that she'd have coffee with... people that she'd met in the mill, that she still kept in contact with.

LMI: Yep.

AJ: And there ended up being more women. She said when she first went into the mills, there wasn't any pattern weavers. The women worked in burling and mending...warping, whatever. But it was regarded then, when... after the, you know, well, not that long after the war, you know, people didn't have jobs, so it was mostly men.

LMI: Ok, so the burling, mending and warping was that mainly men then?

AJ: Women.

LMI: That was mostly women?

AJ: Yeah.

LMI: Ok. And the pattern weaving was mostly men?

0:13:45

AJ: Yeah, weaving and pattern weaving. There were... there did end up being quite a few women. I know, weirdly enough, I know that, I mean, I'm what, nearly 66? There was a girl that I went to school with, and she actually ended up in the mills. Which was like, 'Oh, why would you end up there?' Because I went to... well, I went to Bellevue, which had only just stopped being a grammar school. And I was the first year you had to stay on till 16. But which I would have done anyway because I was quite academic. But she wasn't. But it was like I remember, 'She's gone to work in mill,' it was like, 'Why would you go work in a mill?' And weirdly enough I don't know what ended up happening to her because she was a friend but not that close a friend. But like the girls that you see in this picture. I was the only one that didn't really achieve as much as they did. One of them ended up being a teacher. I don't know if she ended up teaching at Lilycroft School at one point, I can't remember. And one of them ended up being a chartered accountant. I think I was the only one that didn't go to university. Subsequently I did get a business degree, through work. But my parents were like *every* person that comes to the country and works really hard, and has a lot of hardship, a lot of discrimination. They want their children to be doctors, dentists. They want them to have a profession. They're desperate, aren't they? And my parents were not any different. They wanted me to have a better life than them. They didn't want me to work as hard as them. And it was education was...

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LMI: The answer, wasn't it?

AJ: Yes, yes.

LMI: When we were talking before, you mentioned that pattern weaving involved a lot of maths. And your mum was very academic, so she was very good at it. Could you explain a little bit of that to me, please?

0:15:42

AJ: Well, no, I just remember her saying that she used to... at one point, she used to have two machines. But then eventually when it came extremely electronic, you know, she had four.

LMI: Right.

AJ: So she used to have to make sure she knew whereabouts they were in the cycle. And all she said to me is that 'I needed to make... I had to count in my head what was going on, so that I knew that this... certain things needed to be changed.' So she said, 'I had to be good at maths.' Mental arithmetic, really.

LMI: Yeah.

AJ: But I don't... that's as technical as I know. I don't know. I just remember her saying that to me.

LMI: Yeah. Thank you.

0:16:35

LMI: Was she ever part of the union? Did she ever join? Did she ever need it?

AJ: No, I wouldn't have thought so, absolutely not. I don't think that age...

LMI: Yeah.

AJ: Yeah, it was they just came and worked hard. They didn't want to put their heads above the parapet.

LMI: Yeah.

AJ: I'm not sure if you were aware... I don't... as I say, I've got a box of photographs missing. But they had to have card. They had to have... they had a little booklet each, [a] book each. And every year they had to go to the police station, say where they were living, [and] what they were doing - to be able to live in this country for another year. And they used to have to pay money to the police station. And they used to get it stamped. Now I have it somewhere. Unfortunately, it's in a box somewhere. And that... I was quite shocked to find out that... Actually, if you want to stop a moment, I know where it is, one of those cards.

0:17:51

LMI: If it's okay with you, we'll carry on and finish this. And if you'll kindly find it for me. Thank you.

AJ: So yes, so that happened, that was dated... '60s

LMI: So, she came here in '48? And that carried[on] for... 12 years you had to do that?

AJ: Yes, yes.

LMI: Wow.

AJ: I don't know if I've got my mum's, but I've got my dad's, and it was the same thing. And I think I know where it is. I was shocked when I saw it. And weirdly enough, my mother became... paid to be a British citizen in the '70s. In 1972-ish. And it cost her a thousand pounds.

LMI: In those days?

AJ: Yes. And it would have... No, not a thousand pounds, sorry. Was it a hundred pounds? A hundred pounds, but that was in 1972.

0:18:34

LMI: Right.

AJ: Sorry. And it would only have cost another 10 pound more for my dad, who was a displaced person who didn't really have a proper passport. But he said, 'I was born Ukrainian, I'm going to die Ukrainian.' But my mum said, 'Well, I'm going to live here for the rest of my life, and I can't get a passport from where I was born.' So she became a British citizen. But yeah. So that's quite ironic. She had an Austrian passport.

LMI: Yeah.

AJ: 'Cos she was married to an Austrian.

LMI: Did she have any children?

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AJ: She had a daughter who unfortunately died during the war. She had a childhood illness, and because she would probably be malnourished... because she was in a war-torn place... she died. Unfortunately, my mother blamed herself because she should have gone to her in-laws in Austria, because they lived on a farm. But she'd never met them. She didn't want to leave her dad, because her dad had just been bereaved. So she made the wrong call. She thinks she made the wrong call. It came back to haunt her when she retired. And she definitely had PTS. Definitely. Because she used to... when I lived at home for a very short period of time between houses... and I once came home quite late, and she was wandering around the house in a trance. And she looked shocking.

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AJ: In the morning, I said to her, 'Are you all right?' And she'd go 'Oh...' And I said to my dad, 'What's wrong?' And he went, 'In the last couple of years this is your mum.'

LMI: Yeah.

AJ: So she definitely... I know she did say to me it was her fault that her daughter perished, died. And I said, 'You know, you do what you thought was best. And you had a grieving father.'

LMI: Yes.

AJ: 'And also I wouldn't be here.' I don't know if that helped her, but it was just... I can imagine that was quite distressing to lose... and think it was your problem, or your fault.

LMI: Yes, very much so. Is there anything else about the mills that you would like me to know?

AJ: As I say I know there was a great camaraderie. She worked really hard. She ended up getting tinnitus, because they didn't wear protective...

LMI: There were no ear guards, were there?

0:21:26

AJ: No, and she really suffered that in later life. And she also got emphysema. So I think that was a combination of her smoking and the dust.

LMI: Yeah.

AJ: Obviously, smoking didn't help, but the dust.

LMI: Yes.

AJ: I remember she said she didn't smoke until she came to this country because it was hard working there when she didn't understand the language properly or anything like that. So when she used to get stressed, they used to say, 'Come on, let's go have a cig.' So they used to go and have a cigarette. So she remembers that with certain people. So yeah, as I say, she also... I didn't realise that she could lip read until... I probably, when I was cussing her a little bit as a teenager or whatever.

0:22:28

LMI: Yes.

AJ: And then I'd think, 'Why do you understand what I say?! You just said!' And I didn't really realise that, until one day when she had been... she was ill, she'd had a sick note because she had thyroid problems, and we went into work to put a sick note in. And then I could... it dawned on me that they were all lip-reading with each other.

LMI: Right.

AJ: And the other thing I did notice, as I say, I'd been a couple of times over the years, and slowly over the years I noticed that the people that worked in the mills had started to change. There was quite a lot of East Europeans, and stuff like that. And then eventually I noticed there was quite a lot of Asian. So it was quite... and I know, you know, my mum used to say, 'Oh so and so, so and so.' And it'd be an Asian name, you know, so yeah. But obviously that was all male. That's when it, you know, changed.

LMI: How did she find that change?

AJ: I think she was fine. Because my mum just saw that foreigners needed to do those sorts of jobs.

LMI: Yeah.

AJ: And she didn't...no, she wasn't... I never heard my mum be racist to... The only people...Well, no, she wasn't. She did used to talk about the Jews a bit disrespectfully, but that was...

LMI: Yeah

AJ: But that wasn't just her, was it, you know? Not in a...

LMI: Yes.

AJ: ...terrible way, but as far as she was concerned, they were the rich people, and whatever. But no, she was... she had... Yeah, she'd never... she had all sorts of friends really. She wasn't that sort of person.

0:24:27

LMI: I suppose if she'd... she was probably still in that time where she remembered coming herself.

AJ: Yeah.

LMI: And having to do the jobs.

AJ: Yeah.

LMI: And struggling with the language.

AJ: Yeah.

LMI: So she probably [saw]? a new set of people going through the same thing.

AJ: Yeah. Not so much my dad. I think my dad used to go to the pub too much. And he used to basically think all Pakistanis didn't work, and they tossed it off, or whatever. But the weirdest thing is, because he ended up living on a cul-de-sac off Lillacroft Road,

LMI: Yeah.

AJ: ...and obviously my mum... he lived another 12 years after my mum had died and lived on his own. And he used to... he was one of those, the minute it snowed he'd be out shovelling. It'd be like, 'You don't need to do it, just wait till it stops snowing.' But he'd have to shovel, and stuff like that. And he'd always have a big set of ladders, he was always cleaning his windows, he was a doer. And there was an Asian chap who lived across, a couple of houses. I don't think I ever met him, but he was very kind to me dad. When he got to the point where it was a bit difficult, he'd come and clear the thingy, and he used to borrow my dad's set of ladders. I remember distinctly my dad saying, 'He's a good man, he's a nice man.'

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And I'm going, 'Yeah?' And he says, 'I've got these ladders and I think when I move...' because he moved into a shelter, he said, 'Do you want them? I think I'm going to give them to him because he's such a lovely... And he works, you know.' And I went, 'Yeah. You can give those ladders.' So I think with my dad it was more of going to the pub listening to people, but once... he would try... if he got to meet someone, doesn't matter what they're like, if he thought they were hard working, they were okay.

LMI: They were okay. It was about work, wasn't it?

AJ: Yes. They had extremely strong work ethic. That was the one thing. And also, my mum instilled in me, 'Always have your own money. Never stop working. Never rely on a man.'

LMI: Good woman!

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AJ: Which basically, I assure you, after 20 years, 29 years of marriage... I fortunately had a career, had a pension and I could do... because there's so many people of my generation, or a little older, even younger, that gave up working because they had children. And something went wrong and what did they have? What they had? Not a lot.

LMI: I think that was a wonderful advice. And thank you very much.