

*Was there anything particular about that, any special stories that were banded about?*

Sometimes went through those carriages with friends the old fellow who looked after them used to take us through Queen Victoria's own bedroom. Through her coaches, there'd be a day saloon and a night saloon and he used to point out the various things, her writing table and suchlike and so forth and when we got into the corner he said, 'and this is where she kept her false teeth!' In the washbasin!

*Did she ever actually come to Wolverton to see you?*

Not round the Works but she went through Wolverton a few times. At that time of day there was a housing shortage the same as there is today. The Railway Company built lots of houses many of which, thank God, have been demolished recently.

## Ted Brooks

### McConnell Bloomer

There was a very famous locomotive builder who was in charge of it all called McConnell. He was the man who built the Bloomers, you've heard of the Bloomer engines have you, the one they've got on Glyn Square? You know why they're called Bloomers do you?

Well at that time there was a woman who was very famous in the Woman's Freedom Movement and she did away with skirt and she had sort of trousers tied at the ankle which she called bloomers and that's where the title bloomer came from. When McConnell built his engines he cut away the side of the engines so that the, the working part of the engines were visible, you see, so he did away with what were known as a skirted engine so they called them Bloomers.

## Len Squires

### Women working

I can tell you that the Wolverton factory was built to accommodate the North Western Railway as it was in those days. They built a factory in Wolverton as you know and to accommodate the daughters of those people, McCorquodales was persuaded – they were doing a lot of railway printing at the time – they were persuaded then to build this factory to give work to the daughters of the men who came here to work the Railway Works.

*Was there a very strong thing that the wives wouldn't work in the works at that time?*

There was no such thing as women working in those days, not married women. I believe in the First World War women worked, married women worked, but it was unheard of. Soon after my wife left when we got married the then manager asked me if she would go back because they'd got a rush of work in the department in which she had worked and I wouldn't hear of it. Women didn't work in those days. I wish I had let her, I wish I had agreed to that because it keeps the contact with your friends.

## Dora Bull

### Hours, pay and overtime

Yes, winter and summer and if they were a minute after six they had to lose a quarter-of-an-hour and if they were over the quarter-of-an-hour they had to lose the quarter till nine o' clock and they never come out a minute before half-past five. Then they'd got to walk back, Saturdays as well till twelve o' clock.

*How much did they get paid for doing all that?*

About fifteen shilling.

*A week? Terrible isn't it, did they have overtime?*

Well they did but I don't think there was such a thing really in those days. You see they worked longer hours and I suppose they got it all in.