

must leave, she thanked me for what I had done she said I had been most kind to her. I said I would come again and see her. I went then to Aunt Mary (another one of our old ladies). She was 100 years old, what a difference her home was, she was looked after and so was her home. She looked just like a queen in bed, I said "hello Aunt Mary, what do you want me to do for you today?" "I want you to sing for me," she said. "And what would you like for me to sing" "I have Christ what want I more" "Mary I will sing it for you", and I was singing and she said to me "you're singing the third verse for the second" 100 years old she was and she remembered her verses, it just shows she was a good Christian, loving and serving Christ. " I will come back to that verse again Aunt Mary", which I did. I had great joy giving Aunt Mary the hymn that she wanted, it wasn't very long after that that God called her home I have Christ what want I more wasn't that lovely for a young girl just coming out serving the Lord Jesus Christ as her savior.

How old were you then Mrs Laskey?

I suppose I was about 15/16.

So that was during the First World War?

OH yes, it's about 1914, I was born 1900.

Were talking about these ladies and these were living in the Exe Island area?

Oh yes, they used to come to our meetings.

You were living in the Exe Island as well with your parents?

I lived in Edmond Street, not far from Exe Island. If you come up Frog Street, our old shop was right across.

What sort of shop was it?

Groceries, confectioner and all that.

How many brothers and sisters did you have?

5 brothers and sisters.

You all went as a family to Exe Island?

Oh yes, Mother went before us. I have a sister 90 living in the flats in Cowick Street; she was there too.

What sort of people lived in Exe Island, was there a lot of poverty?

Yes, lot of poor people. None of us had a lot of money. They were people who kept themselves very respectable. I can't say Exe Island was a very bad place, it wasn't. It was all nice people there. A lot of shops around Exe Island, there used to be a barrier all the way around with a tree in the middle. It was a lovely place. I went to Exe Island School.

In those days it was industry down there wasn't it, Mills etc?

Oh yes there was. The people worked very hard down there. I can't say nothing like somebody would let????? But myself, I can't say anything wrong about them and I'm speaking the truth. You might get a Saturday night people coming out of the pubs around there, and of course when the drinks in the wicks out! There was a policeman takes them away on the hand ambulance.

What the barrow?

Yes, just a little arch way/little shed, and they would be drove along and took up the police station, perhaps kept there for the weekend. If they were civil they would let them out the next day. That's all I can say I had seen. Exe Island itself now where the children went to Sunday school in that district was Ewing Lane, there was another Sunday school

Who ran that Mrs Laskey?

Mr Cox a solicitor. Not the Cox down South Street, none of them, that's Salvation Army people, was a Mr Cox that just did me up in Southernhay years ago. Mr Cox was a lovely man. Miss Watts, she was a lovely lady too and Mr Loin. Other teachers from other places would come and help us. A lot of the Mint people were very good to us.

So inter-nominal Sunday schools?

Yes

I see

Was a lovely lovely place and very spiritual as you have heard me say before. Our Sunday school was over the bridge. We didn't have many from Exe Island or anywhere. We had St Edmonds school; none of them was Church of England. They went into Frog Street into St Edmonds Church. A lot went over to the Salvation Army in Crickbed(?) Hill; there used to be a Salvation Army there in Crickbed. The others went over to Ewings Lane Sunday school, so we at Copient St (?) and Edmonds Road or Coleridge Road all the way around there School Road, Regents Street all the children around that way and out St Thomas's. The Gregory's, you know the Gregory's right opposite my sisters in the shop in Cowick St.

No I don't know.

Oh. All the Gregory's, we had all nice people like that. We had all lovely people in Exe Island that went to our Sunday school.

I suppose that there were long families in those days?

My mother had 13!

Goodness!

Oh yes, long families. 12?

In quite small houses as well.

Yes quite small houses, and yet there were some you would see their clothes hung out on the line spotless.

Not everybody these days knows the difference between Westquater or Exe Island. Would it be true to say that Exe Island was the flat bit of it and the Westquarter was going up hill, is that roughly what it was?

Yes that's right. I can't see when they talk about the Westquarter I can't for the life of me wonder what they're talking about Westquarter or Exe Island?

(End of side one)

After Robert Dratt. I used to go to the Guildhall meetings for Exe Island. I used to go to committee meetings in Gandy Street.

Now going back to Exe Island there was a stone built Exe Island mission, which is now, the Pentecostal. There is a fine building, a handsome building now do you happen to know when it was built – back in the 1800. It was run by Exe Island mission, no what was that, a group of Exeter businessmen was it?

Yes. We never came into the city mission not until Mr Walton-Turner came into us. It was a wonderful thing when he came in with us because he uplifted a lot of things. We had a sister Edna, sister Winnie, Sister Miriam and Sister Christine there (sisters used to do a lot of work - deaconesses) we used to call them sisters.

What one after the other?

No all together, there was a lot of work there.

When are we talking about, still the First World War?

Yes

What would they do?

They would visit people, turn up their sleeves, do things in their home, help the sick, go to the hospital, go out to Whipton (used to be isolation) and do a lot of other things. They have done tremendous work. Mr Turner, George Turner father of the sons in the shop. He fell in love with Sister Edna, which was a great thing, and I presented their wedding present to them from the mission.

When was this, time of the First World War again or after that?

After the First World War.

Going back to Exe Island mission what we said is there was the Exeter City mission, which at first was separate.

Oh yes. We were only Exe Island mission people.

Where did there used to be Exeter City Mission Chapels do you remember where they were?

None in Exeter. When Mr Turner got these sisters from London they were Exeter City mission. They were the London mission, and then they called ours Exe Island City mission. That's when we became a city mission, when we had the sisters.

Who was the pastor of the mission?

Mr and Mrs Waite. When I went first it was Mr Eccles, I went to his funeral.

What would he do, would he preach twice every Sunday, what sort of things would he do what sort of activities?

Sundays we had a men's bible class a women's bible class (old people) Young women's bible class a young men's bible class and a Sunday school which was very large.

Mondays Christian endeavor and a band of hope (children was taught the rites)

Tuesday night's woman's meeting

Wednesday open air meeting (all over the place e.g., Garden square, North street, ? ware, Exe street Westquater)

What about music?

Yes we carried our organ with us. We had an organist and dear Mr Eccles and he always used to sing a little talk with Jesus makes it right alright, wonderful man.

People would come out the house to listen?

They would wait for us Wednesday nights and stand and listen

After Sunday nights young people used to go to shut-ins some would have violins and others would give out hymns, read out the lessons and give a little talk. We used to have real good evenings. We would divide the shut-ins up and go around to different ones on Sundays. Never wasted time when we were younger, we promised we would do all we could and we did. In the women's meeting they would say I was down for a solo (I used to sing a lot then I had a voice then) the joy you used to get out of it because you were singing to somebody, it was wonderful.

Boys brigade would be in one of the rooms in the church

Thursday choir practice

Friday a prayer meeting and bible study, boys brigade would be in the back having their bible class.

That was the routine for the week

We didn't talk about the services; there were services on Sundays one in the morning and one in the evening?

No, never one in the morning

Why was that?

Well you see it gave the people time to go to their own church.

But you would have a service in the evening?

Oh yes, all the afternoon we'll be there.

Would you always have the same preacher in the evening?

No. You know/heard of Mr Stevens that belonged to the Whipton, his father, he would come and man who had the butcher shop up Westgate we had all ?????? Redemption's. Alexander at first and then we had redemptions

We will talk about that in a minute because that's another story. So you had a nice evening service with sanckys???? Hymns and you had an organ in the church then did you or in the mission?

We had piano

One thing which is...

We had orchestra

Did you

Oh yes

What to complicated hymns?

Yes, Mr Jellors, he had his daughters Jellors he was called (a lovely man) made me lovely costumes a good tailor and there was Stan Salter who belonged to St Thomas

What did they play?

Stan Slater played a violin and his wife Cathy used to sing.

How many would you have in the orchestra, a dozen people?

Yes and Miss Osmond used to play the piano; we had wonderful times there.

What about special missions, were there times when they made an appeal for people

We had Mr Goody come there once, and we had converts????

Did you

It was packed; I've never been shy of crowds because I was always brought up with our mission full up, we never seen it empty always full up. Plenty to do there. The people would congregate, they new there was something on and would come. There was no job to get them

Just open the doors and they would come in?

They loved the mission.

When Mr Goody came it was full up and you had conversions. Now tell me, I'm interested in what you might call the doctrinal position, did they baptize in the mission?

No, they used to convert people and christen

They used to christen babies?

Yes they christened babies; I used to enjoy that.

What about the other sacraments, did they a communion?

No not until they come out Burnthouse Lane.

So it was more of a mission?

Yes, oh yes

What about the social side, there must have been poor people, apart from going to see people and helping them was there any funds available to help people who were poor?

Yes, we had the blanket society, we had coal and if the children needed shoes/boots they could go and apply for them. If they had to find out if they were really needy because you can't be plagued in these sort of places, you got to know what you're giving.

What about if anybody needed to go into hospital

Recuments you used to subscribe to the hospital we had all that – it was very good people. I can't put my finger on anything that wasn't right there.

Now what about money because that's a practical point, somebody had to pay the pastor so he could live and the sisters had to be paid as well for living expenses.

The mission was never poor they had legacy upon legacies coming in. We got it coming in now so it's all right. I love my mission, every time I pass there I look on that building, the place where I first met my savior and it will always be precious and dear, every inch of that old fashioned building seems to tell me Jesus is near. Perhaps you think I'm foolish, but I only express what I feel I love the old building where to me Jesus became real.

This cassette recording made on the 19th January in Exeter by Mrs Elizabeth Laskey who's going to talk about her memories of *Ex Island Mission*?

Now Mrs Laskey – I know the Ex Island Mission was obviously was in the Ex Island when do you first remember it, and how old were you?

1904
When I was about 4, and I remember them asking me to stand up and sing a chorus I very pleased. I was able to stand up in front of all the Sunday school and sing that little chorus, which really delighted my young life. As I got older and was able to go into the higher classes and to hear and learn more about Jesus and his love, that was the great love in me as a young child. I always wanted in my life to live for Jesus and know when I went into a larger Sunday school I was very very distracted. I wanted the girls to listen to me not to listen to the Sunday school teacher, I knew that she was very angry with me. One day she said to me "If this is going on, I shall have to go and see your parents". I knew if she did that I would be 'in for it' (a good hiding from my parents) because they wouldn't allow me to be rude in any way to anybody, especially in Sunday school. The teacher then said to me to come and sit out in the front, by the side of her. She placed her bible on my hand; I wondered why she did it, because I'd been so distracted. I knew my teacher came out on a Thursday night, because she was in a gentleman's service. I waited for her, and when I met her she said "hello, and why are you here?" I said I'd been waiting for you, because you know I can't get that bible off my hand that you put on me on Sunday, and there's something that's different. She said to me "I know, you come along with me". She took me with her and we had a lovely little talk, and do you know that made me love Jesus more and more. When she prayed with me I had to pray back and I said:

*Jesus, I want to belong to you
I want you to take the whole of my life
I don't want any of it, because
I want to live for you*

And do you know as the days went on I began to love Jesus more and more. Then I was old enough to join the Christian Endeavor, what a wonderful time I had there because Ex Island was full of the gospel, full of the whole truth, Gods Love and I began to value it. We had a harvest festival on a Monday night. They said to me "you're going to be the sick visitor". I went to a dear old lady over in the Briar's, I knocked on the door and she said "who's there", I replied "I'm from Ex Island Mission and have come to see you" and she said "you go downstairs knock on the door and ask for the key". I went down and I knocked on the door and a lady said to me "why do you want the key" and I said "I come from Ex Island Mission, and I want to see her". She gave me the key but she didn't like it and didn't want me to have it, but I took it. When I looked in and saw the dear old lady, as young as I was, I felt I'm going to do something here. I took these eggs and I'd seen a piece of bread and butter/margarine, anyway I boiled one of these eggs and buttered some bread and made buttered fingers and gave her this egg and butter. I said to her after "I would like to be able to get you out of bed onto this chair". She said, "you can't do that my dear". I tried, and got her out put her on the chair and made up the bed and then I looked across and seen the ashes right up in her fireplace, so I did her fireplace. After making her bed and making her comfortable, I put her back, the dear old sole said to me "how lovely it is to get into the bed feeling very comfortable. I myself, didn't want my dinner that day, I was so overjoyed as a young girl to know what I did for this dear old lady, tidied up her little room and made her comfortable. When I told her I