

Dealing and Hawking

Dealing

My dad was member of the Showman's Guild, Weston section. It made it easier to get a spot on Guild Ground. In between metalling, my dad started having carpet halls. And in the winter my mum and brother would have them too. You would rent a hall or pub and try and sell as many carpets as you could. It was very hard work lifting them in and out.

I remember one day my dad say to my mum, 'I want you to stop duckering. It's holding me back. I need to move about and I'm earning more off dealing carpets and metal. So give it up and see how we go on.' This wasn't just a change in living, though. This was to being about a whole change inlifestyle. From Rominchell to a Traveller's lifestyle. Nothing now – a big thing in those days.

Extract from Clarice's personal writing



Clarice's father, Nelson, is marked X on the photo. He worked with the lasso and loop and gun shooting. This was in the early days of his marriage, before he had children. The photo is taken on Newcastle Town Moor Fair.



Nelson selling carpets at Weston Super Mare Boulevard.

And you know I loved going out. My brothers were married when I was about thirteen so I used to go out with my dad and I'd drive motors back for him. He'd deal for motors and he'd deal for horses. I couldn't cook or bake much when I got married but I could tell you the price of a motor trailer down to the last ten pounds. So I was a bit of a tomboy in that aspect. But I loved clothes and nice things and because I always went out to work, I had my own money. My dad would get me anything but I had my own money as well. I had my own car; I was quite independent.'

Extract from oral history interview, June 2007



Present to Clarice on her 21st birthday. A Zephyr car. Doncaster Races.

Hawking

Maggie: When we'd be on our own we'd never be lonely because we always had one another. It was a very close family. And we'd always have one another; you know we never really needed anybody else. My father used to go out on a horse and cart. That's how he used to get his living. Dealing horses. He'd go out on a horse and cart, gathering rags and scrap. My mother used to go out hawking with the basket from door to door. She'd done it all her life. She loved its style. Lovely things. She liked nice things ... she loved to see the children ... she'd always have our clothes made. You know and the boys' clothes she'd always have them made. And she used to love fancy shoes on us. She was a very, very old fashioned gypsy woman but she loved it style. She used to sell lace, lucky charms and then in the later years bedding ... Nottingham the lace would come from and the charms would come from Birmingham from the swag shop."



Mrs Lovell, who was Welsh, selling her wares door-to-door (crochet work?)

Extract from oral history interview with Maggie Nedic, May 2008

In the oral history interview Clarice says that hawking, which used to be the backbone of all Travellers has declined because of the constraints in cold calling ('cooling off period') and people's dislike of buying from the door. Added to that is the difficulty in finding goods cheap enough to sell at the door and the lack of safety for women.