



Harris & Pearson Oral History Project

Kathleen Billingsley Interview

When did you work at Harris & Pearson?

I didn't, it was my Great-Grandfather – his surname was Wills.

What do you remember about him?

I remember my Grandmother telling me he was born about 1850, and he went there when he was a young boy. He worked there until he died. He was 60 when he died, 'round about 1910. He was a brick maker. My Grandmother said he used to work in his carpet slippers. He used to keep pigeons, and if they were ill he'd go out into the country and collect leaves and make herbal teas for them.

Did anyone else in your family work at Harris & Pearson?

Yes – my Grandmother. Her maiden name was Elizabeth Taylor, but she was called Liz. She worked there until she was 75. She was about 4ft 6in high and took a size 2 in shoes. She sorted the clay. When it was cold they had fires in the brickyard. She took her breakfast with her. She was very proud of the work she did. She had to finish because her eyesight was going, and she was worried to death because she couldn't keep her house on because she hadn't got enough money. She died in 1940/1, aged about 87/8. She went to live with my Grandmother in Lower High Street, but there wasn't enough money to pay for her to be buried with her husband.



*Elizabeth Taylor -
Kathleen Billingsley's Grandmother*