

## **Shortages**

### *Girl, Aged Sixteen*

As a young girl, I loved to go to the dances. I only had two best dance dresses, which I had to alter every now and then to make them look different. We used to get some material or nice paper and fold it carefully to make belts.

We had an open coal fire, but coal was on ration. I remember my dad going into the woods and chopping down one of the trees so we could have wood for the fire. My dad and brother spent all day chopping it up. I remember my dad with a wheelbarrow going round the neighbours giving out logs.

I can remember the state of our whole estate was in when the Co-op got a box of bananas. Everyone queued up for hours. My mam dragged me to the shop with her. Just one banana and we had to wait all day. I was really bored.

You could hardly get wool and so my mum used to undo all my dad's old jumpers to make us hats, gloves, wool socks and scarves; if she had enough wool, all to match. I used to be the envy of the street.

Sometimes the coal ration would run out, so we would put the gas oven on and put our feet inside to keep ourselves warm.

Nobody could afford to make a birthday cake, so instead you had a decorated hatbox as a cake, or a wooden cake with candles on.