

# The Backbone of the Company

As the business grew, so did the need for typists, telephonists and secretarial staff - all traditionally women's jobs.

"We had Dictaphones and the guys in, which I presume was something like Customer Service department, they used to dictate their letters into the thing and we used to get the tapes and we'd listen and type what they were saying..."  
Bonny Cannon



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"... I used to be a copy typist and also a telephonist, you know the earphones, and we used to have some funny things to hear on there. There used to be men talking about what they done the weekend before, or they used to say jokes, or talking about people in the offices, or we might pick up a certain amount of information and that was very hysterical that was." Eileen Bundy

"... If you were a newbie you got the oldest typewriter which wasn't very good, the keys stick, because if you type too quickly all the keys would come up together and go one behind the other one and stick, and then you'd have to take them all down again." Bonny Cannon



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"... One of the girls in personnel, she said that they was doing a competition for Miss Ilford Limited, and they said 'Oh we want some girls in different offices to do it' and they asked me to go. And I had my photograph taken, I think it was in Ilford somewhere, [...] and that was about two or three months before the ceremony and all that, and anyway, they chose me! [...] I won two tickets to go to the Palladium and to see Frankie Vaughan." Eileen Bundy

"... I was crowned Miss Typing Pool by a vote from everybody [in the office]. You had to vote for somebody in the typing pool and I got a sash and like a little crown thing." Bonny Cannon



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Although Ilford Limited allowed women to continue working if they got married many women left after having a baby.

"... In those days once you had your baby you left you see, no going back to work. Some did, they used to put them into a nursery run by the council, but the majority didn't, they didn't go back to work once you had your children..." Joyce Smith



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## The Faces & Places

Pictures (top to bottom):

1. Bonny Cannon (centre) and her colleagues in the typing pool, c.1960. Bonny is pouring a drink from a bottle which may have been her prize for winning Miss Typing Pool.
2. (Left to right) Margaret, Liz, Jean and Eileen Bundy standing on a staircase outside their office, c.1960. Pioneer Market can be seen in the background, top left.
3. Bonny Cannon, the winner of Miss Typing Pool, c.1960.
4. Eileen Bundy, the winner of Miss Ilford Limited, c.1960.
5. The switchboard at Ilford's site in Basildon, 1974. Copyright Keith Davidson.
6. View of reception from the Ilford Limited showroom on New Oxford Street, with Eileen Bundy at the switch board, c.1960. Eileen was promoted to work at the showroom after her Miss Ilford Limited win.

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