I should tell you that I was born into a food retailing family, which in retrospect I suppose, was a greater influence on my life than I thought at the time. My maternal grandfather had opened, just before the war, the First World War, a grocer’s shop, also in Enfield, and it was the sort of shop which in later years I learned to call a carriage trade grocer’s. I was introduced to the business of retailing food as it was done in those days from that sort of shop. I mean biscuits arrived loose in biscuit tins, of which there was an enormous array, all with coloured labels on the side, and you had to know where the different tins were, and you’d take them out by hand and put them in a bag and weigh them. Ham of course was cooked behind the shop and sliced on the bone by hand. Butter was served from a big slab and you cut it up, and you used these wonderful wooden things which had decorations on and impressed, embossed in the surface of the butter pretty pictures of flowers and stripes and things of that sort. Tea was weighed out in quarter pounds and half pounds, sugar was weighed out in pounds and two pounds and so on and packed in bags which had ‘T W Mills’ printed on them, pre-printed.

I was allowed to help myself to broken biscuits - because of course with everything being handled and tins being what they are, a proportion of the stock was broken and it was not permitted to pack broken biscuits in a bag to give to a customer. So all the broken biscuits, as they were discovered if you opened a tin and said ‘oh that one’s broken’, you’d take it and put it in the broken biscuit tin. Now, two things could happen to broken biscuits. Number one was I could pinch them, number two was they were bagged up and sold as broken biscuits to those members of the public who couldn’t afford to buy decent ones, if you know what I mean. I mean, people on low income with lots of kids would buy that sort of thing, so we had people from all sorts of social backgrounds who came in. The fact that the posh people had their goods delivered in the horse and cart, as I call it, was only one aspect of the business.