

1940s

- During the Second World War the factory was managed by Ethel Pickles and Catherine Gray whilst William and his younger brother James went off to serve in the forces³¹.
- A firebomb landed in the middle of a pile of empty wooden barrels in the factory yard, but fortunately, it failed to explode and was safely defused³².
- During the war years considerable quantities of ready meals and sweet puddings were canned for the War Office for distribution to H M Forces in this country and overseas³³.
- During the post war period, William Simpson inaugurated a scheme of gift parcels. This provided for the despatch of thousands of parcels containing Goblin canned meats to families short of food because of rationing. These were paid for by friends and relatives in the United States and Canada with dollars, which the country badly needed³⁴.
- A measure of success of the gift parcel scheme is evident by the fact that questions were asked in parliament as to why Simpsons were able to sell so many meat products while rationing was still in existence³⁵.
- Several Manchester United players worked at the factory in this decade. After the war, William was asked to be a director of Manchester United Football Club but turned it down!!³⁶.
- Simpsons was the first company to can hamburgers in the late 1940s³⁷. They became a best seller in coal, steel and shipbuilding regions of the UK³⁸.

³¹ Simpsons 1975 anniversary brochure

³² ibid

³³ Three page history document, possibly by Norman Edwards Public Relations

³⁴ Simpsons 1975 anniversary brochure

³⁵ L.M.Simpson, 1990, Talk to Stretford Local History Society

³⁶ W.J.Simpson. interviewed 2010

³⁷ L.M.Simpson, 1990, Talk to Stretford Local History Society

³⁸ W.J.Simpson. interviewed 2010