

Disclaimer: This interview was conducted in 1995 and concerns memories of 1930s life; as such there may be opinions expressed or words used that do not meet today's norms and expectations.

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\* Bolton, Greater Manchester, 5 June 1995: Valentina Bold interviews Dorris (Doris) Braithwaite, Vera Entwistle

\* Transcribed by Joan Simpson/Standardised by Annette Kuhn

\* DB=Dorris Braithwaite, VE=Vera Entwistle, VB=Valentina Bold

\* Notes: Second of two interviews with Dorris Braithwaite and Vera Entwistle; Sound Quality: Fair; this interview was originally transcribed in a phonetic manner; the original phonetic version can be accessed through our physical collection - please contact Lancaster University Library for details.

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[Start of Tape]

[Start of Side A]

[VB tape introduction]

**DB:** Near a river. The River Mersey. Between Lancashire and Cheshire, you see. That divided this. But, you'd have thought there was far more, you know, really. And of course, we were the same 'cause there was the Cheshire countryside which were the Cheshire lanes.

**VE:** Oh, it's beautiful, Cheshire.

**DB:** And eh, we always thought the same. That it was all mills, cloth caps and clogs. And it wasn't until, I think we were going to Blackpool and we came through Rochdale. Before the motorway was built. And I was amazed! I said, "There's countryside!"

**VE:** Yes.

**DB:** You know, I was really amazed.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** And of course, now there's no mills, you can see the moors. Which I presume you wouldn't be able to see because of the smoke! Would you?

**VE:** Oh you couldn't. Couldn't, you couldn't.

**DB:** I wrote one about Bolton, didn't I?

**VE:** Yes, you did.

**DB:** A stranger coming to Bolton, you know. And imagine them all cloth caps and erm shawls. It was quite good really. [laughs]

**VE:** You had me with the high heels on.

**DB:** You what?

**VE:** You had me with the high heels on. Looking through the keyhole!

[hilarious laughter]

**DB:** Aw, let me just find that.

**VB: Aw dear.**

**VE:** It was a masterpiece, that, really, you know.

**VB: These are lovely. They're in such good condition.**

**VE:** Pardon?

**VB: I'm saying this is great to see this erm, movie story.**

**VE:** Yeah, yeah.

**DB:** Pardon?

**VB: I'm saying I'm really enjoying looking at this movie story 'cause it's in such good condition as well.**

**DB:** Yeah, yeah. Well I've got about what? Four, five more that I keep. Eh, actually, I've got some 'Picturegoers', and the reason I kept those was because Alice Faye's life story was in it. And it's a

follow on, you see. So I've got about half a dozen 'Picturegoers'. I had stacks but they just got... With moving they got chucked out, a lot of them.

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** And those. I've got about half a dozen of those, I think. Mainly with articles of him in, [referring to Nelson Eddy] you see.

**VB: Yeah. It's interesting seeing that. As you say, if you had that on your wall as a girl--**

**DB:** [laughs]

**VB: Nelson Eddy and his hat.**

**DB:** Yeah, yeah. That was in *The Girl of the Golden West*.

**VB: Right.**

**VE:** What's that?

**VB: It's the same one as the one you've got in your, your bedroom now.**

**DB:** That's right. Yeah, yeah. Yeah he was a bandit in that.

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** It was very good, you know, actually, when you think about it.

**VE:** Is that the one with Leo Carillo?

**DB:** Yes. Mhm, that's the story of it.

**VE:** Yes.

**VB: With Walter Pidgeon in it as well.**

**DB:** That's right. He was the sheriff.

**VB: Yeah.**

**VE:** [laughs]

**DB:** He was good! He was. He was good. I liked Walter Pidgeon.

**VB:** [laughs]

**DB:** I didn't like him in that. 'Cause he was the villain. He wanted Jeanette, you see.

**VB:** Ah, right!

**DB:** But erm, when 'Mrs', with erm Greer Garson--

[laughter in background]

**VE:** Aw, I think they could have put somebody nicer looking.

**DB:** Who? Who?

**VE:** Well I don't--

**DB:** He had to be a villain no matter what he looked like.

**VE:** No, I'm talking about *Mrs Miniver*.

**DB:** Aw *Mrs Miniver*! Aw, he suited the part though.

**VE:** Ronald Colman could've done that better.

**DB:** Oh! [laughs] You've got to give him some, poor fella!

**VE:** No, he never did anything for me at all.

**DB:** She never liked him.

**VB:** But Ronald Colman was--

**VE:** No, well, oh! Ronald Colman!

[general laughter]

**VE:** He could've played the part better. He was nicer looking.

**DB:** Oh, get away! He was good, he was.

**VE:** I never saw anything in Walter Pidgeon at all.

**DB:** Did you see him in *Madame Curie*?

**VE:** I saw him in all of them.

**DB:** As Louis Pasteur [referring to *The Story of Louis Pasteur*].

**VE:** And I still didn't like him. *How Green Was My Valley*? No.

**DB:** Aw. Poor fella.

**VE:** He didn't do a thing for me.

**DB:** Well, he didn't do anything much for me but, [laughs] I thought he was good in the parts he played.

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** That's Simone Simon and Don Ameche.

**VE:** They could've put him in--

**VB: Oh right.**

**VE:** In it as well. Don Ameche.

**VB: *Josette*. [pause 4 seconds]**

**VE:** Oh, when you see him there. It's cruel, isn't it?

**VB: Oh yes.**

**DB:** Don Ameche. He was on eh... Did you see him on erm, the show?

[VB talks to DB in background; inaudible]

**DB:** He was really nice. He was a nice man, too.

**VE:** Yes he was.

**DB:** He was the erm, compere on Nelson's shows.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** Him. And Dorothy Lamour. Have you heard of Dorothy Lamour? Erm, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy who were the dummy and--

**VE:** The ventriloquist.

**DB:** The ventriloquist. And the dummy.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** And erm, it was called the 'Chase and Sanborn Show' [referring to the 'Chase and Sanborn Hour'. And it was on the radio. And it was on every week. And Nelson was on, he became a permanent fixture with them, you know. So it was all of them together. Used to do skits. Oh, and they were funny, weren't they? Even now, for all the, you know. So long--

**VE:** Fancy a ventriloquist being on a radio!

**DB:** I know! [explosive laughter] That's what my son said!

**VE:** [laughs]

**DB:** [laughing]

**VE:** I was just thinking about it the, when you said, Edgar Bergen, the ventriloquist.

**DB:** [laughing]

**VE:** On the radio!

**VB:** [laughs]

**DB:** Well, you see, he threw his voice. And you got his own voice, of Charlie McCarthy. You thought that he was a real person!

**VB:** [laughs]

**VE:** Well, you'd have to do if you couldn't see him!

**DB:** Well he-- [laughs]

**VE:** Was he six foot four?

**DB:** [laughs uncontrollably]

**VB: [laughs]**

**VE:** Was he about six foot four?

**DB:** Who?

**VE:** Charlie McCarthy.

**DB:** I've no idea. [laughs] No idea. What he was like.

**VE:** Oh, she's not got it.

**VB: [laughs]**

**VE:** Was he not six foot four. You couldn't see him, could you?

**DB:** Oh funny! Funny, funny.

**VB: [laughs] [inaudible]**

**DB:** Eh. What was I going to say? Oh and then they'd have a guest artist on. Each week. And they used to do this skit. There'd be songs in between. And then they'd do this skit, didn't they? And they had--

**VE:** Was it the one where they had like a hurricane?

**DB:** Ye-ah. [bursts out laughing] Oh, it's really funny that. Because, you know, Dorothy Lamour was in a film with Jon Hall who'd just come up at that time, hadn't he?

**VE:** Yeah. He was good looking as well.

**DB:** And, did he, he didn't take Tarzan off, did they?

**VE:** No.

**DB:** No. Eh, but he was that type of a, you know. He had his loin cloth and whatever, swinging through the trees. And they made this film called *The Hurricane*. And they do a skit on that. And oh, it's really funny. [laughs] "Swimming, swimming!"

**VE:** "Oh, is that Dorothy Lamour, coming out of the hurricane?" [laughs]

**DB:** Oh dear. I mean, some are corny. But some you can still laugh at.

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** Can't you?

**VE:** [name?] said that the other day.

**VB: Have you got some of these on tape? Nelson Eddy's radio shows.**

**DB:** Yeah. I have actually.

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** I have. I've been getting quite a few, haven't I?

**VE:** Yes.

**DB:** I've never had any eh, only actually records. Erm, I didn't buy tapes 'cause I preferred the record. And then also, there was no tapes until just a few years ago when they put only the erm, well-known ones on.

**VE:** And then her gramophone broke, so she had to get tapes.

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** You see, they re-did these.

**VB: I see, right. Yes.**

**DB:** And erm, they've knocked a lot of the surface noise off.

**VB: Ah, right.**

**DB:** [coughs]

[pause 4 seconds]

**DB:** While we're having our lunch, I'll put you, I'll put you that 'Ole Man River' one on.

**VB: That would be lovely. Yes.**

**DB:** It is funny that. [pause 4 seconds] It was only, it's all through her. It's all through her.



**VE:** Guilty. I'm guilty.

**DB:** Because, erm, I just used to have his records and play them at my own, you know, leisure.

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** Whenever I felt like putting them on and that. And then--

**VE:** Oh, I got your record, didn't I?

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** Yeah, good.

**DB:** And it was while we were at the writers' circle, we had then, erm. What was her name? That used to be the tutor of us. She thought she was--

**VE:** Betty. Betty.

**DB:** No. The other one. Stella.

**VE:** Stella.

**DB:** Stella.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** And she used to give us a set thing to write about, you see.

**VB:** Mhm.

**DB:** And we hated it, didn't we?

**VE:** Oh.

**DB:** We didn't like having to write, we liked to... [conversation about tea/coffee] Anyway, she gave us this interview with erm, either a star, a film star or a character in a book or whatever. Somebody dead.

**VE:** A historical person.

**DB:** Yeah. Anybody. [laughs] Well, as we came out I said to Vee, "Oh, I don't like," I said, "I don't like being taught to do this. I don't know. How can you do an interview with somebody you've never met. You know. Even met." So she says, "Well, you're all right. You've already got one." So I said, "Who?" She said, "Nelson Eddy! Good grief! You know enough about him, you see." So, of course, I did one, didn't I?

**VE:** And it was a good one, too.

**DB:** Yes it was. And they put it in the magazine.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** And then, I started thinking about writing his life story, didn't I?

**VE:** Mhm.

**DB:** So I did, I started it. I did it. And then, erm, it was 'Evergreen' here [name of the magazine].

**VB: Actually, Kath Browne showed me a copy of that.**

**DB:** Did she?

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** Yeah, well that was through Vee.

**VB: Yes.**

**DB:** Because erm, I said, "I don't know what to do about it." And then I read Deanna Durbin was in, about this chap that had always queued up to see her films and all this, you know. And, I said to Vee, "I don't know whether to write and ask if they're interested." She said, "Go on! Go on!", you know. Well, I had it on the thing there. I kept thinking "Shall I send it, shan't I? Shall I, shan't I?" Anyway, at the finish I wrote. I thought, well I won't send it. I'll write first. So I wrote and asked were they interested in erm, Nelson Eddy's life story? And eh, I got a letter back saying, yes, they'd be quite interested if I could include Jeanette MacDonald as well. You see they're always put together. Well I didn't know as much about her as I knew about him. So I had to do a little bit of research on her. Anyway, I got it together, didn't I, and I sent it off. Next, I got a phone call. Yes, they'd accepted it. So I was thrilled to bits. Oh-h!

**VB: That's great. It was a wonderful piece that. Because you had so many illustrations and everything in it too. It really was great.**

**VE: Yes.**

**DB: And I did a tape. He asked me would I do a tape. And he did the tape. Actually I've got a spare one here that I was saving for [Gil?] if you want it?**

**VB: Oh that would be great! Yes.**

**DB: Erm, but I'd have to send for another for him. Erm, the only thing is, at the beginning. It's been waiting for him since last year. At the beginning he's wrong. The fella that usually did it which was Percy [surname redacted]--**

**VE: Oh Percy [surname redacted], that's right.**

**DB: Added his own bits. At the beginning. 'Cause he rang me and he said, "I've found a discrepancy, you see." So I said, "Well, what is it?" He said, "Well, you've got Jeanette MacDonald's birthday." I said, "Well, if you read it properly," I said, "I've given three," I said, "Because, nobody really knew her birthday. It was stated 1903, 1905 or 1907. Take your pick." But on her wedding, and her birth certificate, was 1907. But then they found a school certificate which had 1903. And of course, in those days, they took, they took years off their age, you know. And I always had the feeling that she wasn't that much younger than Nelson. Anyway, he goes and puts 1901!**

**VB: Aw dear.**

**DB: Which was ridiculous. And he read that off a record album. And every time I read that, I could chuck that!**

**VB: Oh, it's so annoying.**

**DB: That's mine. That's mine to erm, all that's mine to there.**

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB: When he says erm. [turns pages] Here. "Jeanette Anna MacDonald was born in Philadelphia on the 18th of June, 1901." And that should be 1903. But erm, and another thing that annoyed me with it was, that's the, I sent him a cassette. So they did cassettes off that. And then they put *The Merry***

*Widow*. Well they weren't in it. It was only her in it. [pause 3 seconds] It was lovely to see [inaudible].

**VE:** Who was in *The Merry Widow* with her? Was it Maurice?

**DB:** Maur-ees [referring to Maurice Chevalier].

**VE:** Ooh. [inaudible]

**DB:** It's two pounds twenty. I've been saving that for you. You can tell I sent for it. I've written on it, I think.

**VE:** I got one, didn't I?

**DB:** Yeah. I think you did.

**VB:** If I give you the two pounds twenty then you could use that to get another one.

**DB:** That's right. I'll send for another.

**VB:** That would be fine.

**DB:** I'll send eh. Let me just read you this little piece.

**VB:** Right.

**DB:** This was when we first met. And it goes "Dorris. A new found friend. The loo with no knob."

**VB:** [laughs]

**DB:** "We'd go in the writers' circle. We'd never been before. And halfway through, we went to the loo, apparently there was no knob on the door. Well Betty was there before me, so she collared the loo, which was free. I peered through the hole of the loo with no knob and saw an eye looking at me. Pretty soon they emerged as quiet as a mouse, the eye that had looked back at me. 'Although there's no knob,' said its owner, 'there's a bar on the inside, you see.' Now the eye, it belonged to Dorris and we'd never met before. But now we're the best of friends, through a loo with no knob on the door!"

[everyone laughs]

**DB:** It's your writing that!

**VE:** Yeah, it is, isn't it? Yeah.

**VB:** [laughs]

**VE:** That's an original, you see. Must be worth something.

**VB:** [laughs] Aw dear.

**DB:** Oh crumbs.

**VE:** I can see her now. I was saying to Betty... [whispers; inaudible]

**VB:** Aw.

**DB:** So it's all thanks to her, you see. And then I picked a Scots magazine up, didn't I? My cousin had given me some. And it was over there. And one night I thought, oh, I'll just have a glance through this. And of course, reading the letters page I saw Hollywood. Well it drew, it always drew like a magnet, didn't it? The name Hollywood. You know it was magic to us, wasn't it? The name Hollywood.

**VE:** Oh Hollywood!

**DB:** You dreamed of going.

**VE:** Going to Hollywood.

**DB:** And eh, there was a lady saying she was writing about Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. But she was mostly interested at the moment in Jeanette. And finding if anyone had, knew of her family which originated in Scotland, you see. And eh, normally they don't put an address on, but they'd put her whole address. And a friend of mine had written saying someone was advertising on the radio, didn't they?

**VE:** Mhm.

**DB:** For facts about Nelson and Jeanette.

**VE:** That's right, yeah.

**DB:** And writing a back and I said "Ooh, getting mine done first!" You know. Anyway, erm, I wrote to her and it was through her. She started sending me these radio cassettes.

**VE:** Yes, she did, yes.

**DB:** So really, it was thanks to her. And then we got involved with the, going to the Mac/Eddy [fan convention] at Blackpool. And getting more cassettes there, didn't we?

**VE:** Mhm.

**DB:** And eh, from then eh, I wrote to Perry who was the erm, president in the United States of the NEAS. Which is the Nelson Eddy Appreciation Society. And erm, he said that there was erm, a meeting in Cambridge Springs in America. They have it every year. And it was Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. And Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald. Two pairs. And, he said two English people are coming. And he gave me the addresses. And I wrote to both of them but I only got an answer from one. And this was Sasha.

**VE:** Was it?

**DB:** And she sent me them from America. And they're in marvellous condition, aren't they? Most of them. They're really clear, you know.

**VE:** I've still not got mine. And I still haven't heard from my penfriend. She's got me two but. I've written again. And I said, are you all right? Is there anybody I can contact?

**DB:** She never said last time she wrote though, did she?

**VE:** No.

**DB:** 'Cause you asked her then.

**VE:** Yeah. She asked for my phone number which I gave her, you know. And she said, "I'd like to talk to you on the phone about it." Nothing. I've been writing since I was about twelve.

**VB:** Mhm.

**VE:** But I don't know whether she's ill or not. You see, she's on her own. I mean both parents have died. Obviously, I mean, she's my age, you know.

**VB:** Yeah.

**VE:** So, I don't know whether she's ill or what, you know so I said, "I'm worried, is there anyone that you could"--

**DB:** It's such a long way.

**VB:** Mhm.

**VE:** Get to contact me and tell me that you're all right".

**DB:** And then she sent me some of his grave. Sent me some of eh, ooh what did I do with that? Ooh I should've smelt it last night. [laughs] You should've smelt it last night. And when Vee came this morning, I got up, I thought, ooh, I can smell that hotpot still. And I said, "Can you smell it?" She says, "No." I thought, it must be on my nose. [laughs]

**VB:** Ah dear.

**DB:** Anyway, where were we up to?

**VB:** We were just having a look through this. Erm, and you were saying about Alice Faye as well.

**DB:** Oh yes.

**VE:** Yes.

**DB:** She made some eh, she made *Old Chicago* with Don Ameche. Tyrone Power and Alice Faye.

**VE:** That was a good one.

**DB:** That was a good one. It was a cargo fire. You know it started the fire.

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** It was a marvellous film that. And erm, then she was in quite a lot of musicals. Now and again, she'd be in a serious one. Bit like Ginger Rogers.

**VE:** Yes, she was.

**DB:** She liked to do a serious one as well.

**VE:** Alternate the, you know. From sort of comedy films.

**DB:** She was a very good actress. And she was very well liked.

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** She was very well liked.

**VE:** Yeah, she was.

**DB:** She was another genuine person. No edge on her or, you know. And, I mean in her letters. May, my friend used to write to her and she was very like her, actually, my friend. And she used to say, "Oh, I've heard from May." You know. It was so lovely. It was that--

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** Little personal touch.

**VB: Yeah, yeah.**

**DB:** And eh, then I wrote and asked her for a photograph for a boy that was in the, well he was in the Eighth Army actually. And, she said, "Oh, I've posted the photograph off for Eric." You know. [laughs] It made it so nice.

**VB: Ah, it is. Yeah.**

**DB:** Natural. And then I dropped it like. 'Cause when I was married and that, you know, it just faded out more or less.

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** 'Cause I was busy with, well. I was busy with my son and all that, you know.

**VB: Yes.**

**DB:** And then eh, with Alice Faye, it was my cousin that rang me one, ooh, when would it be? The nineteen... [pause 2 seconds] seventies. About the seventies. And was she on erm, now was she on television? Yes.

**VE:** Yes, she was.

**DB:** She said, put the television on. And wasn't it Dennis Norden?

**VE:** Yes.

**DB:** And he was doing, he'd got her there and she must've come over.



**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** And he was interviewing her on eh, on the programme. 'Cause she says, "Go put it on! Go put it on!", you know. "And talk to me afterwards," like. You know. And I flew in and I put the thing on. And, oh she was so lovely! Oh, she was--

**VB:** [laughs]

**DB:** She was so lovely. She'd aged--

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** Gracefully, you know. And she'd not over made up or anything like that. She looked really nice.

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** And I wrote actually afterwards, to Dennis Norden to ask, you know, could he give me an address I could write to. Anyway he said, no, he couldn't. But if I was to write to the studios and he'd pass the letter on. He said but she's just as lovely and as nice as she appears to be--

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** You know. Anyway I did send, I think I sent it to the 'People's Friend'.

**VE:** Yes you did.

**DB:** And I got an address.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** And I wrote to her. I said I'd seen her on, you know. And how lovely it was to see her again. And I sent her a book of my poems, didn't I?

**VE:** That's right.

**DB:** And she sent me a letter back. And she said, "You've made my day," she said. "How lovely to hear after all this time." And she said, "Your poems made me cry." [laughs]

**VB:** Aw.

**DB:** Or brought tears to my eyes. And she sent me a book. Her own book. She'd written one herself.  
[pause 5 seconds] You get a bit of a laugh but it was 'Growing Old, Staying Young'.

**VB:** Oh-h!

**DB:** And that was the... [clears throat]

**VB:** Isn't that lovely? It really is.

**DB:** Yeah.

**VB:** I read your beautiful poems. Brought tears to my eyes. She had a lovely, flamboyant hand as well, hasn't she? [laughs] "Hope you like the book and please have happy, [tries to make word out], happy holidays, is it?"

**DB:** May, probably was. May have been erm--

**VB:** At Christmas.

**DB:** Christmas. Yeah. [coughs]

**VB:** "Keep in touch and... [tries to make out writing] something, try to find a picture of Nelson Eddy for me."

**DB:** Let me see. I asked her, I think, at the time. It was when I was writing, wasn't it? About her. And I asked her, eh, could she tell me anything. I didn't know. But it said in that book she'd had lunch with him, didn't it?

**VE:** Yes.

**VB:** Ah.

**DB:** Erm, but she never sent me a picture, did she?

**VE:** No, she didn't.

**DB:** [laughs] I never got it. In fact--

**VE:** [coughs]

**DB:** I didn't get an answer to my last letter. Eh, "Read your beautiful poems. Brought tears to my eyes. Hope you like the book and please have happy holiday. Keep in touch and will try and find a picture of Nelson Eddy for you."

**VB: Ah. There's some lovely photos in this as well, aren't there?**

**DB:** Yes.

**VB: I see what you mean. I mean, she has--**

**DB:** Yes. Yeah. You see.

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** 'Cause I mean, she was in her seventies. She must have been seventy, eh, five I think. Seventy something, anyway. 'Cause that's her husband and he's eighty odd.

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** He's eighty, he was eighty five. I bet you she's eighty-five now.

**VB: Yes.**

**VE:** D'you not find that a lot of Americans write the same--

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** Eh, my pen friend writes exactly like that.

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** A big loop on the L and a big swoop on the Ys, you know.

**VB: Yeah. Growing old or staying young. It's lovely.**

**VE:** We don't need a book to make us, growing old, staying young, do we?

**DB:** No we don't. We just do it.

**VE:** Yes, we just go along and do it.

**VB: 'Cause I was interested when you were, you know, saying about Alice Faye and her personality.**

**DB:** Yeah.

**VB: And when you were saying about Nelson Eddy as well. And the sort of kindness and--**

**DB:** Yeah. It comes over. And I mean, to have come over on the screen, it must've been, you know, you're not seeing them personally. So to see that and feel that on screen, there's something there.

**VE:** Oh yes.

**DB:** And it's not just odd ones. Everyone, especially Nelson Eddy. Everyone that likes him have all experienced the same feeling. That there was something there behind his handsome looks and his good voice. That there was a erm, well a spiritual--

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** Kind of a spirituality. A good feeling.

**VE:** I was telling Val coming up on the bus, our Hilda used to sit there absolutely gone and think he was just singing to her!

**DB:** Well you did!

**VE:** And you know, she was.

**DB:** Yeah, yeah.

**VE:** I used to keep watching her, you know. And when he was smiling she was, as though he was--

**DB:** [laughs]

**VE:** Actually smiling at her. Any minute he would come off the screen and she'd be eh--

**DB:** [laughs] Yeah. And the same feeling was there with Alice Faye. That she was a genuine person.

**VE:** Yes she was.

**DB:** You felt, there was a feeling there you couldn't really explain.

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** I mean we liked a lot, we liked a lot of the stars. And we'd rave, "Ooh, isn't he nice!" and eh. But there was nobody ever.

**VE:** There was just the odd one or two that sort of--

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** You know, drew you again.

**DB:** Yeah.

**VB:** 'Cause I was interested as well when you were saying that about having that dream. You know.

**VE:** What was that one?

**DB:** [laughs]

**VE:** When you were sat sort of on, I don't know if you've heard of erm, they used to call them love seats. And one of the seats would be that way, and one of the seats would be that way. And that's how we were. He just leaned over, "It was very kind of you to teach this young lady to swim".

**VB:** [laughs]

**VE:** And I'd say, "Oh, not at all. Not at all." And I could feel myself sort of, you know. I woke up with the warmth of lips--

**DB:** [laughs]

**VE:** On my mouth. And I thought, "Ooh, how lovely," you know.

**VB:** And was he as he is in these photos?

**VE:** Yeah, yeah. Young, as I remember him.

**VB:** Yeah.

**VE:** Right from the very beginning, you know.

**VB:** Yeah.

**VE:** Oh-h.

**DB:** I wrote mine out because sometimes a dream's gone--

**VE:** Well, I can remember mine. It was so vivid.

**DB:** But erm--

**VE:** It was just short, in the swimming baths. And I can see Rachel out of 'Emmerdale'--

**DB:** [laughs]

**VE:** Smiling up at me and her hair all sort of floating. She's had it cut short now. All floating like this. And, you know, [ratty?], you know. And then turning to me and saying, "It's very kind of you to teach her how to swim." She's lay on her back, smiling up at me. I [straightaway?] I said, "Ooh, it's been a pleasure."

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** Yeah. Here's one. I wrote it down. "My Dream: I was in a room, like a schoolroom and there were people about and someone announced, 'We have Nelson Eddy here today and he's going to sing for us.' Nelson came into the room, followed by a woman. I don't know who she was. But she was going to sing with him, from operas. [laughs]

**VB:** [laughs]

**DB:** "He stood next to me and waited. Just opposite was Monty, my husband. And he kept humming and trying to say the words of the song. And I kept shushing him. But he persisted. He said, 'I know the song but can't remember the words.' I said, 'Shush'. Nelson was nodding as though agreeing with Monty about the words. They didn't sing. Then the next scene I was in a larger room full of people. But I was in my nightie-- [bursts out laughing]

**VB:** [laughs]

**DB:** "As I went from one person to another. We'd been told to draw something and add a little story and Nelson would sign it. He came in then and sat between two girls. And I muttered to someone, Vee I think, [laughs] 'He should've sat near us!' I couldn't write anything so I decided to go for something so that he could sign it. When I came back everyone was around him. I found I managed to push my way towards him and ask for his autograph. He looked at me and said, 'But you already have it, Miss Dorris.' I looked at him in wonder and said, 'You remember that I wrote to you?' He smiled and said, 'Why, of course I do.' And put his arms round me, kissed me--"

**VB: Oh! [laughs]**

[End of Side A]

[Start of Side B]

**DB:** [pause [reading story of dream] "He looked up and said, 'She won't kiss me back.' With that I threw my arms round his neck and, [laughing], kissed him properly." [hilarious laughter]

**VE:** Trust you.

**DB:** She's putting this on tape! "The next I was walking beside him and I said, 'Next time you come, you must stay with us.' He looked quite serious and replied, 'That would be nice. I get fed up with hotels!'"

[general laughter]

**VB: Poor Nelson.**

**DB:** I wrote them, you see, 'cause sometimes it's gone. Some are very vivid and they'll stick with you.

**VB: Was that quite a recent one then?**

**DB:** Yeah, not all long ago. Yeah. Yeah.

**VB: Did you used to dream about him when you were seeing the pictures as well?**

**DB:** Eh, [pause 2 seconds] I can't really remember that far back.

**VE:** No I don't think we actually dreamt it so much as, sort of imagined, you know--

**DB:** [inaudible]

**VE:** Went over it in your imagination, you know. You could actually see the whole thing. And you would probably be saying the female's part, you know, to him, sort of thing. Just imagining that you were the female in the film.

**VB: Yeah.**

**VE:** Well I did. I don't know about you.

**DB:** Oh yes! Well my friend and I used to act them out. We used to act the films out. 'Cause she liked Cesar Romero. Have you seen Cesar Romero? 'Tache and very dark. Well she was blonde. So if she went for the dark, I went for the fair, you see. And we used to act them in her cellar. We used to act the film. And she was Nelson Eddy 'cause she was blonde and she had a deep wave. And she used to deepen it and draw her hair back. I wish I could find that photo. I took a photo of her once. And she's doing, like that. She's looking like him on it. Drew her hair back. And she was Nelson Eddy, see. And I acted Cesar Romero. [hilarious laughter] Then she'd be Alice Faye. And I'd be Annabella. And erm, we had the [pause 2 seconds] mop as the microphone.

**VE:** Wasn't Tyrone Power married to Annabella?

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** Once over.

**DB:** Yeah. Yes after they'd made erm, [pause 3 seconds] *Suez*.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** They made *Suez*. Which was the story of erm, Ferdinand de Lesseps. Made the Panama--

**VE:** Oh, of course, yeah.

**DB:** The Panama Canal.

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** No the Suez Canal.

**VE:** Suez Canal.

**DB:** If I'd made *Suez* I'd have gone to the Panama!

**VB:** Oh. But that's amazing, like acting out the films. Were you transported while you were doing that?

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** Yeah, we were!



**DB:** And we'd be, I'd go as a typist. I was going to be Nelson Eddy's secretary and she was going to be a hairdresser, you see. And she was going to do all the stars' hair. [laughs] You just dreamed. It was just, it was a magic name.

**VE:** Yes.

**DB:** It was a magic world, you know to--

**VE:** You could escape from the mundane things, everyday things, you know.

**DB:** You just lost yourself in the films, didn't you?

**VE:** They used to say, "Oh, I have enjoyed it. Cried all the time." [laughs]

**DB:** Well, I was crying, what was it, the other day. Oh, I was a bit sad last night, watching *Girl of the Golden West*. How many times I've seen that?

**VE:** Oh yes.

**DB:** She still brings a tear to my eye. 'Cause she's lovely in that, I think.

**VE:** They were magic really, together, weren't they?

**DB:** Oh yes.

**VE:** Like Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Although when you had other partners, everybody still said "Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers."

**DB:** Ginger Rogers. And I watched that erm, that tap dance they did on *Follow the Fleet*. It was absolutely marvellous.

**DB:** Oh, it's wonderful.

**DB:** The feet, they're sort of, they're doing that, doing a little skip while they're tapping, you know.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** There were so many little twirly bits that it's, it's eh. How their feet--

**VE:** And they were together, weren't they?

**DB:** Absolutely.

**VE:** 'Course he was a stickler for timing, wasn't he?

**DB:** Oh yes.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** And you see, she must've been good to have picked it up so quickly from him.

**VE:** So quickly, yeah, yeah.

**DB:** Because, when he was asked on an interview who his favourite partner was, he wouldn't say. He said, well, it wouldn't be fair, really. 'Cause they were all good.

**VE:** They were all very good.

**DB:** I mean, they were all wonderful. Rita Hayworth was a beautiful dancer and so was Cyd Charisse. They'd very long legs. Specially Cyd Charisse, hadn't she?

**VE:** I always thought Rita Hayworth used to walk a little bit in.

**DB:** Yes she did. She did.

**VE:** When she walked. And erm, Leslie Caron.

**DB:** Oh she was very good.

**VE:** And Vera Allen.

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** 'Course, they both did ballet as well, didn't they?

**DB:** Yes.

**VE:** Erm--

**DB:** Yes.

**VE:** I think that made, a little bit more, you know.

**VB:** Mhm.

**DB:** But erm, at the end when he finishes he says, erm, "I think it has to be Ginger."

**VB:** Oh. [laughs]

**DB:** You know, it was just like that. And it was lovely, really. "I think it has to be Ginger." 'Cause there must be something there to--

**VE:** They've got to have that co-ordination, haven't they?

**DB:** Yeah. And also something. Like Torvill and Dean, both married different people. But there must be something there to make that magic.

**VE:** And yet the public always seem to want to marry them off!

**VB:** Ah. Yeah.

**VE:** You know. Like, because they were so well. But that last one that I saw of them, erm, he made her cry.

**DB:** Yes, I know. He wasn't very nice.

**VE:** He wasn't very nice at all.

**DB:** No. He swore at her. He swore at her.

**VE:** And he said, "Oh, don't start with the waterworks."

**DB:** Yeah, yeah.

**VB:** 'Cause there were rumours about them not getting on well at all, weren't there?

**DB:** Well, I suppose to a certain extent there's got to be. Erm, you've got to fall out. I mean, I don't believe anybody that says they've been married and never fallen out!

**VE:** No, I don't.

**DB:** Because, me and my husband used to fall out.

**VE:** Oh, you would!

**VB:** [laughs]

**VE:** Miss Faulty. You would!

**DB:** Well I was a bit. I was like Nelson, a bit hot-tempered but--

**VE:** [laughs]

**DB:** I fly up, you see.

**VE:** Well, the red tints in your hair.

**DB:** Yes. I know, I know. But erm, I've lost my glasses. But erm, you got over it. I mean, what would life be if you never fell out? It would be too tedious. Wouldn't it really? If you don't fall out, then one gives in--

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** All the time.

**VE:** Yeah. One gives in.

**VB: How did Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald get on together?**

**DB:** Fine. Fine. They really did. And I've got him where he, he mentioned he's sixty-two, you know. On one of them tapes. On that interview. I've done it for you. And he says, "They always ask me," he says, "why I didn't marry Jeanette MacDonald." Oh, no! First he says eh, something about, oh they ask him about Jeanette MacDonald on the Australian tour, you see. And do you ever see her? So he says, "Oh, yes," you know. "I see her quite often." And eh, he said eh, "She's married. She's Mrs Gene Raymond, you know." He says, "I mentioned that because most people think she's Mrs Nelson Eddy." [laughs]

**VB: [laughs]**

**DB:** He says, "And they ask me, why didn't I marry her." So he says, "Well I did! Eight times!" [laughs] He says, "For another good reason. She was already married."

**VB: Aw right. [laughs]**

**DB:** But I mean erm, probably they had their fall-outs. Because, during *Sweethearts* they were doing something. And they'd been saying that they didn't get on together. And there was some reporters on the scene. And erm, in it, they have a fall-out in the film, don't they?

**VE:** Yes.

**DB:** Because she thinks he's, he's fallen for his secretary, you see. And she's going at him and he's going at her. And he says, "We were better actors at that time. And we were really giving it all we'd got." He says, "She stood on my toe, and I raised my fist. And we were having a real ding-dong do," he said. One of the reporters said, "Well, you can tell they don't get on with one another."

**VE:** They took it for real, you see.

**DB:** So, the other one said, "But it's in the film!" You know. "It's in the film." He says, "You wait till you see the film." Of course, when they showed the film, they'd cut that scene out of it.

**VB:** Oh-h!

**DB:** [laughs] And erm, and there again, you see, she used to like, she was the star. Jeanette was always the star. And, everything had to be right. The lighting behind her head and her hair and make-up. And everything, you know, dresses and whatever, had to be perfect. Everything had to be perfect.

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** Well of course Nelson had come on. And he'd do the scene. And then off he'd go. He couldn't have cared less. He just did his scene.

**VE:** He was off.

**DB:** And it used to annoy her. [laughs] She said, "Another thing annoys me," she says. "There I am, trying to learn my lines and he's already learned his."

**VB:** [laughs]

**VE:** I think she was a bit of a perfectionist.

**DB:** Oh, she was.

**VE:** Definitely.

**DB:** Well he was. With his singing.

**VE:** Oh yes.

**DB:** But his acting. He just eh, did his scene and that was it, you know. As long as he'd done it right for the director, that didn't matter.

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** But when it came to his singing, then that was a different thing altogether.

**VE:** Very serious.

**VB: I see, yeah.**

**DB:** It had to be. Because he mentions in that where he sings all those erm, songs from foreign land-  
-

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** Lands. He sings in German, Polish, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Hungarian. [inaudible]

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** And he said erm, when he's on the interview, when they interview him. He said a man had written to him. And he'd got a collection of his records. But he said, he hadn't got that one. The foreign land, the foreign land one. He said, and I can't help him out 'cause I've not got it myself.

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** He said erm, erm, and at the time, he said it was such hard work, he said, at the time. Because, he said, I had to have erm, different people to speak it. To help me with the language. 'Cause he didn't speak them all. He did speak, he spoke Russian, didn't he? And he could write Russian. He could speak Italian. Eh, [pause 2 seconds] erm, erm, what was it? Some he could speak so much, some he could only sing. Like, usually in operas.

**VB: [laughs]**

**DB:** But he sang in five languages. But he said, he didn't sing in Hungarian, he didn't sing in Polish. But he sang these two songs. And he said he had to have someone there to make sure he was doing it right. Pronouncing the words right, he said, and it took an awful lot of time and preparation.

**VE:** Would be hard work that really, I mean, wouldn't it?

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** And also when someone asked him erm, which was the hardest song he'd ever sung. D'you know what he said? [pause 2 seconds] That one that you don't like him singing. 'Rachel'.

**VE:** Oh no.

**DB:** He belts it out. He actually belts it out. And it's marvellous. 'Cause I asked David, I said, "Was it Frankie Vaughan that sang that?" And he said, "Yes." Wasn't erm, Tom, Tom erm, Jones. Tom Jones sang erm, oh crumbs. He had a belter, didn't he? Was it, was it 'Delilah'?

**VE:** 'Delilah'. And 'Jezebel'.

**DB:** 'Jezebel', 'Jezebel'. Well I was asking David. I said, erm, who was it? 'Cause I knew he had it!

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** He had him singing 'Green Door'.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** And something else. Erm, ooh what was it called? On the other side. Can't think. But he belted that out. And, I said, well I've got Nelson singing 'Rachel', I said. And he said that was the hardest. Was the hardest thing. 'Cause he literally does belt it out. Well, he sang one. That was, that was the last LP, I think, he did. And it was 'Of Girls I Sing' and it was all girls' names.

**VB: Ah right. Yeah.**

**VE:** Yeah I like that one.

**DB:** Yeah.

**VB: I'd like to hear that. 'Cause it's not the sort of style I would associate with him.**

**DB:** No.

**VB: When you say that--**

**DB:** Yeah.

**VB: Belting it out.**

**DB:** Yeah. Well, I'll find it. We'll have our lunch and eh, I'll put it on while we're--

**VE:** That's quarter past one.

**DB:** Oh! I know. The time goes so quickly.

**VB: I was interested as well though, a minute ago, when you were saying you didn't think much of Maurice Chevalier.**

**VE:** No, no.

**VB: [laughs] What was it that put you off?**

**VE:** Well he was good in his own way. Yeah, he was good. But if you compared the two. You couldn't, you went right off him, you know. He always seemed to be so cocksure of everything to me.

**DB:** Yes. You've hit the nail on the head.

**VE:** I thought he was, eh. Eh, he was conceited.

**DB:** Well, that's how he came over to us.

**VE:** Oh yeah, Yeah. And he always gave you the impression, no matter what anybody thinks, I am the star! Don't you think so, Dorris? I, I, me.

**DB:** Yeah. And I think he thought all the women were after him.

**VE:** He thought he was a ladies' man.

**DB:** He made a pass at--

**VE:** And he made a pass at Jeanette MacDonald. And she made a pass back. [laughs]

**DB:** And of course, he didn't like it.

**VE:** He didn't like it, you see. That was what he didn't get.

**VB: Yeah.**

**VE:** No, he never seemed--



**DB:** She made *The Merry Widow* with him. She made *One Hour With You*, *Love Me Tonight*. And was there another one? [pause 5 seconds] [*The*] *Love Parade*. 'Love Parade'. 'Love Parade'.

**VE:** It was coming. [laughs]

**DB:** And erm—

**VE:** She altered entirely when she got, with Maurice Chevalier, she was sort of, like on guard in a way, wasn't she?

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** You know sort of eh.

**VE:** She wasn't relaxed at all with him.

**DB:** No. Sort of erm, was waiting, you could almost sense her waiting for the next--

**VE:** Line.

**DB:** Yeah. Whereas with Nelson--

**VE:** She was very relaxed with Nelson Eddy.

**DB:** Well she relied on him, you see. She said he was always someone--

**VB:** Mhm.

**DB:** That she could rely on.

**VB:** **They look very natural together in, like that photo from *Maytime*.**

**VE:** Oh wait till you see the film. Oh!

**DB:** Oh! In fact, you ought to come and see the lot. I've got eight.

**VE:** Told you'd have to stay the week. Told you.

**VB:** [laughs] **It is lovely that, that photo there.**

**VE:** Yeah, it was--

**DB:** It wasn't in colour, was it?

**VE:** No.

**DB:** It was like almost, it wasn't dead black and white.

**VE:** No.

**DB:** Because *Rose Marie* was like a brownie, it was like a sepia.

**VE:** Yes it was.

**DB:** *Rose Marie*.

**VE:** Yeah, yeah.

**DB:** But it should've been in colour.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** And the first *Maytime*, the very first one they were going to make. Thalberg was directing it. He was a very brilliant director. If you've listened to any of these, ooh. They go on at him. Whether he'd have remained a brilliant one, I don't know. But he was going to make *Maytime*. They were going to do *Maytime*. He was directing it. And then he died. He was only 35 when he died. So, of course, it got shelved at the time. And then Louis B. Mayer decided he'd take over, didn't he?

**VE:** Were they going to do it in colour at the beginning?

**DB:** Yes. It was in colour. And a different story altogether. And when Louis B. Mayer saw it, he was, although his life wasn't prudish, he was a prude in his films. If you understand what I mean. I mean they had to be erm, [pause 4 seconds] pure. You know. No sex please. And in a way it made the films nicer than they are now. Because you got the romance. You got the hint. But you never saw all that goes on. So, I mean it was just pure romance that. And they brought in the Hay, what they call the Hays Office. Erm, and they could only do such a thing and such a thing. And that's why you only see them. When they kiss, they only kiss at the side of the mouth. And it only had to be a peck. You know. You never see a proper kiss, do you?

**VE:** Oh no, no.

**DB:** The only time he kissed properly. I put it on for Eva last week. Was *Knickerbocker Holiday*.

**VE:** That's right.

**DB:** And she says, "He's having a beano here!" He was everlasting kissing Constance Dowling.

**VE:** Yeah, yeah.

**DB:** And poor Jeanette only got bits on... [laughs] Oh she got one decent one in *Maytime* at the end.

**VE:** I was going to say, yes I was going to say.

**DB:** And eh, anyway, they altered it. They altered it completely. The storyline. And they also said it was too dear to do it in colour. So it went, it got the black-and-white treatment. But it's still beautiful.

**VE:** It's not very severe, though, black and white.

**DB:** No. It's lovely black and white, I think. I really think it is. Even though it would have looked nice in colour.

**VE:** You could put your own imagination on the colour.

**VB:** Yes.

**VE:** You know.

**VB:** It looks very sort of softly focused.

**VE:** Yes, it is. Oh it's a lovely film.

**DB:** It's a beautiful film. It is. And I've done you two erm, if you want them. Erm, I've done you two magazines. [pause 5 seconds]

**VB:** Oh-h!

**DB:** You can take them with you.

**VB:** That's wonderful.

**DB:** You can have them. And that's all about his death, actually.

**VB:** Thanks very much.

**DB:** And what people say.

**VB:** That's really--

**VE:** Well, it'll give you a bit of, you know--

**VB:** Yes. Well with these photos. That's fantastic. Yes. Oh, it starts off with his funeral. That's good.

**DB:** Always looking for Rachel, wasn't he? 'Rachel'.

**VE:** Is something burning?

**DB:** No, it's turned off.

**VB:** So it's 1967?

**DB:** Yes, that's right. Yeah.

**VE:** We saw an old gent collapsed on the pavement when we come in.

**DB:** Oh, did you?

**VE:** And the bus driver opened the door and this woman was... He said, "Don't touch him. Don't touch him at all. Don't move him at all. Just leave him."

**VB:** Yeah.

**VE:** So I don't know. Might be in the papers.

**VB:** Yeah. He didn't look too good really, did he?

**VE:** No, he didn't. No, no.

[pause 4 seconds]

**VB:** *Naughty Marietta.*

**VE:** That's another good one as well.

**VB:** This is really good. I'll enjoy having a good look through.

**DB:** I thought you might.

**VE:** Yes you will.

**VB:** **That's great. Thanks a lot.**

**DB:** I did quite a few at one time, didn't I, for all the eh? But eh, [pause; cups being put down] I sent for a lot of back numbers you see.

**VB:** **Yeah. So how often is this produced?**

**VE:** **Is it every--**

**DB:** It comes out eh, four times a year.

**VE:** Four times – that's the [Spring one?].

**VB:** **Ah yes.**

**DB:** Well that actually's a combination of eh... They're a [year, you see?] I have an article in one. That's the last one. You didn't see that, did you?

**VE:** No.

**DB:** That's the last one. [pause 3 seconds]

**VB:** [inaudible]

**DB:** There you are. There's my article.

**VB:** **Aw right.**

**DB:** [laughs]

**VB:** **So this is in the summer '94 one.**

**DB:** Yes they did *Rose Marie*.

**VB:** **I like that. "Nelson Eddy Appreciation Society presents the most famous Mountie ever."**

[laughs]

**DB:** [laughs]

**VE:** [laughs]

**VB:** Ah!

**VE:** Oh, there's a man after my own heart!

[general laughter]

**VE:** That's what I like. A big steak! Ooh.

**VB:** It's Nelson in *Marietta, Rose Marie* and *Maytime*.

[pause 5 seconds]

**VB:** Is that right? [laughing] I'm just looking through this. Erm, where you say that you sent Nelson a photo of the two of us. He wrote back saying you made a splendid looking couple and he was sure you would be happy. [laughs] Was that one you made up yourself?

**VE:** No-o!

**DB:** No. I did actually send. I sent him some wedding cake.

**VB:** Right.

**DB:** And then also I invited him to my wedding. [laughs]

**VB:** A-ah! [laughs]

**VE:** Oh, Eddie Bracken.

**DB:** Yeah.

[pause 5 seconds]

**DB:** We invited him to erm, yes, he came, they invited him... There's Ann [referring to Ann Denitz, Eddy's wife].

**VE:** Isn't she tiny?

**DB:** Mhm, they said she must have been only my size. I always liked that one of him.

**VB:** You were saying, though, you were a bit jealous of her at the time.

**DB:** Oh I was! [laughs] Uncontrollable! [laughing] Oh-h! And so were a lot! One girl, one woman writes in one of those letters. She said, "I was so mad," she said. "I wrote to him," she said. "And I told him off," [laughs] she said, he should have married [her?; laughing; inaudible] and he sent her a picture. Sent her an autographed picture. I bet he had a good laugh.

**VB:** Was she an actress as well as--

**DB:** No, she wasn't actually.

**VB:** Ah.

**DB:** She eh, she'd nothing to do with show business. She just liked to listen to music.

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** And he said that she was his sternest critic.

**VB:** His sternest critic.

**DB:** He said, "Sometimes she makes me happy and sometimes she makes me sad."

**VB:** Yeah. But you forgave her eventually. [laughs]

**DB:** Yeah, she knew what she was talking about, you know.

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** And she helped him. You see she stayed in the sidelines. She just eh, they were never photographed together, were they really?

**VE:** No.

**DB:** No. And he says, when one's asking about her, he says erm, she stays eh-- Oh! I like that. Isn't it lovely? That's a lemon.

**VE:** A lemon. Look at the size of that lemon.

**VB:** Goodness me. It's more like a melon, isn't it? That's amazing.

**VE:** I said, "You've got it wrong. It's a grapefruit, surely?" She said, "No, it's not. It's a lemon."  
[laughs]

**DB:** Jeanette said, "D'you want to see his lemon?" When she was talking about him. "Lemon tree, lemon tree". [sings]

**VE:** [joins in singing]

**DB:** Oh but, on that interview he says eh, about his garden, he says, oh he was at an orchid show, he says, "I don't grow," he says, "Actually," he says "My flowers are weeds." [laughs]

**VB: Aw. [laughs]**

**DB:** He says, "I'm away for three months. I come back and it's all covered in weeds." [laughs] Oh, you'll have to come, you'll be coming for months if you want to learn about all these, you know.

**VE:** Oh yes. Told you, told you.

**VB: This is great.**

**VE:** She's not quite got it, has she?

**DB:** Pardon?

**VE:** She's not quite got it.

**VB: Aw. The eyes are--**

**DB:** A little bit narrow, too, yes, yeah.

**VB: The smile's quite good.**

**VE:** The smile's quite good.

**DB:** My friend's is the best. You know, you'll never get your dinner.

**VE:** Oh yes, we will.

**VB: [laughs]**

**VE:** Oh these are some of the members. See we're all about the same age, aren't we? [laughs]

**VB: Oh it's amazing, you know, the long-standing fans though.**

**DB:** Yes, yes. That's my friends.



**VB: Oh-h! That's very good.**

VE: And that's his own.

DB: That's his own, he did that- he did a caricature of himself.

**VB: [laughs]**

VE: That is very good.

DB: I sent that to him. Not that one, that's a copy. But I sent the original to him. He signed it and he said "I consider the drawing very well done."

**VB: That's really--**

VE: It's good.

**VB: Yeah it is. Excellent.**

VE: I am going to have to have a wee or I am not going to have my--

DB: Go on. Go on.

**VB: Aw dear.**

VE: Hold onto that.

**VB: Right.**

DB: I hope this tastes all right.

VE: If it doesn't I shall tell you. I shall tell you.

DB: I don't know what it'll be like 'cause I've never made hotpot before. [laughs]

**VB: Actually, I've just realised. I'm embarrassed. But I don't actually eat meat.**

DB: Erm, well, it's bacon.

**VB: Right.**

DB: You don't eat that.

**VB: I don't, no.**

**DB: Well I can p'raps get you a bit off without--**

**VB: Is that OK?**

**DB: Yeah, yeah.**

**VB: It looks lovely. But I should've said before.**

**DB: I nearly put some meat in, you know. But eh, I made this with this.**

**VB: It'll be good.**

**DB: D'you like onions?**

**VB: Eh, yes I do, yeah. Everything but the bacon, really. That would be really nice. But eh, you've got some collection of photos here though.**

**DB: Oh, I've got [inaudible] album!**

**VB: Yes.**

**DB: D'you like onions?**

**VB: Yes, I do.**

**DB: Did you find anything?**

**VB: Och, I'll just leave it. Actually I like the drawing of yourself as well. It's not very kind. [laughs]**

**DB: Well he wasn't, he wasn't.**

**VE: I tell you. If she've been in the 1930s she would've been queuing up for that.**

**VB: Ah. That looks really good.**

**DB: She doesn't like meat.**

**VE: So, d'you not like meat? D'you not?**

**VB: Not really, no.**

**VE:** Oh! You can chuck it on mine. I'm not [inaudible].

**VB:** Right. I'll put this tape off.

**VE:** Well, what was--

[recording paused]

[recording re-started]

**VB:** Erm, the letters are great.

**VE:** I've got to leave this dish soaking [calling from kitchen].

**VB:** Right.

**VE:** All right?

**DB:** Are you talking to me?

**VE:** Yes.

**DB:** What?

**VE:** I've got to leave this dish soaking a bit.

**DB:** Yes, you will. You will.

**VE:** Yeah. Got quite a lot off but, there's still a bit on yet. [singing]

**VB:** It's amazing seeing these letters going from 1937 right up to 1961.

**VE:** Yeah, yeah. It's unbelievable, isn't it?

**VB:** Yes.

**VE:** When you stop and think, time's flown past. You think when you turn twenty-one, it starts then.

**VB:** [laughs]

**VE:** It does, really.

**VB:** Mhm. [pause 10 seconds] [extract of music on briefly] This first one from July 9, 1937, "Dear Miss Jones, Thank you for your letter and kind remarks regarding the films *Naughty Marietta* and *Rose Marie*. I enjoyed making both films. You asked about the next one. It is to be *Maytime* again with Miss MacDonald. I have a very busy schedule and plans are going ahead for my next concert tour when I shall be away from the studios for three months. All best wishes to you and your mother. Sincerely, Nelson Eddy." And then, comparing that with the last one in 1961. September 23rd. "Dear Dorris Braithwaite, it is most gratifying that friends remain friends, even when one is not able to answer all the letters that come in." [tape cuts out]

[End of Side B]

[End of Tape One]

[Start of Tape Two]

[Start of Side A]

**VE:** Don't start it till I come back. [laughs]

**VB:** Okay.

**DB:** I'll probably be following you. [laughs]

**VB:** Aw-w.

**DB:** Well, you've got *Naughty Marietta* to see. [still laughing] *Rose Marie*. Erm, *Naughty Marietta* was the first one.

[recording appears to have been stopped to enable the watching of *Maytime*]

**DB:** Is it on?

**VB:** Just put it on just now.

**DB:** Would've thought she'd come yet. She'll have her say. [laughs]

**VB:** But as you say, there was just so much in it.

**DB:** Mhm.

**VB:** It's amazing.

**DB:** To me, it's a beautiful film. I mean it deserved, it got it for photography. And I don't know whether the music didn't. But they never gave them erm, they never got really what they were entitled to.

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** You know. And on these later, where he's erm, being interviewed, when he goes to Australia. I've got erm, there's umpteen interviews from 1962 to '67, you know. And eh, he never wants to think of his movie. You know, he said eh--

**VB: Really?**

**DB:** All those are gone. Those days are gone, he said. "It was a wonderful time but they've gone. I'm looking forward. I don't look back." But you see, a lot, he was criticised, wasn't he? At first they were all for him. Ooh! Oh, star overnight and all this, you know. And then gradually, they started criticising, didn't they?

**VE: Yes they did.**

**DB:** And saying he was wooden and eh, a stick and all this palaver, you know. Well, Kath said the same, didn't she?

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** She said, "Oh, he had a fine voice," she said. "But he couldn't act." And what was wrong, what was wrong with that? [probably referring to *Maytime*]

**VB: Absolutely nothing. [laughs]**

**DB:** He did everything. He had the lively boyishness at the beginning, the serious, you know. And erm, I just don't understand them.

**VE:** No, I don't.

**DB:** At all. A lot, I know a lot was because he stood erect. Well the singer, he was, he was trained for that.

**VE:** Yeah. You have to stand up straight to keep breath, to keep--

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** Diaphragm in tune

**DB:** But you see eh, a lot was men. And then they'd say erm, well, all the women went for him. But like one woman said, that's why the men liked Jeanette! Didn't you think that was the reason that they liked Jeanette? It was obvious, you know.

**VE:** Of course it was.

**DB:** But it's amazing how many men did like him. That, I had a letter off a man, didn't I?

**VE:** Apart from that, I think a lot of the other actors were a little bit jealous.

**DB:** Well I don't know that it was the actors.

**VE:** Well Ray, Ray Bolger--

**DB:** Aw well, he altered his, he went. He was a fool, him.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** Because one minute he was talking about him as though they were friends. And then the next interview, he was saying that he'd eh, done him out of some of his dancing. He said that he'd erm, and it wasn't Nelson at all. In fact, on that interview, he says, doesn't he? He said "It was only me that got that bit of dancing in." He said, "It was a shame," he said, "'cause he's a wonderful dancer." And he said they'd done quite a bit. And then they cut it all out, he said, "All that work gone." he said. And I said, "Ooh. Why don't you leave that in at least?" he said, "he does a marvellous act with a cigarette." Which he did, didn't he?

**VE:** Yes he does.

**DB:** Lighting a cigarette and then he throws it, and all the fire, all the crackers.

**VE:** That's right.

**DB:** And he's dancing, you know. With the crackers. And it's only a few seconds that it's on.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** And he said, "That was thanks to me, really," he said, "nobody else thinks so. But it was, 'cause I told..." And of course Ray Bolger said he'd had him cut out.

**VB: Mhm. [inaudible] mention there.**

**DB:** Yeah. So, you know. I don't know, he'd done something. Must've done something to upset him. But erm, no. Because right from his first film, I mean, *Naughty Marietta*. He more or less come off the concert stage. And they'd signed him up from listening to him on a concert stage, you see. And he'd got fifteen encores. And there was about three lots in the, in the auditorium, from the films wanting to sign him up. And I think he was going to sign with, I don't know whether it was RKO or erm, what was the other one?

**VE:** Paramount.

**DB:** One of them anyway. But, they must've messed him about and tried to maybe knock the fee down. I don't really know.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** But he said it all fizzled out. And then his agent had got well, L.B. Mayer had got in touch with his agent, you see. He was cute enough though to say that he'd had three, he signed up for seven years. But he also said he wanted three months off each year for his concert tours. And, he got it. But you see afterwards Louis B. Mayer wanted to, he wanted him to give it up. But, it was in the contract. He'd been cute enough to get it in the contract.

**VE:** Well he was a businessman as well.

**DB:** 'Course he was. He always said he was a businessman. He said, "I'm not a romantic", didn't he? He said, "I'm a businessman, not a romantic". But isn't he? I mean, it shows in all his films, doesn't it?

**VE:** Well this is the acting bit that they say he can't do!

**DB:** I know! I know. And in *Naughty Marietta*, he'd made three films, he'd been two years in Hollywood. Erm, waiting.

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** And he wanted to get out. He was fed up. He had to turn up every morning. They'd say, "What are you turning up for? They'll send for you when they want you," you see. And he tried to get out of his contract two or three times. And of course L.B. Mayer kept saying, "No, no. Wait for the, it'll come, it'll come," you know. And then eh, they put him with Joan Crawford. He just had an end bit

where he comes on. And he said, "From a concert stage." He was singing a red hot number, you know. And then they put him in *Broadway to Hollywood* which he only sang about three lines. Cut him off. And eh, then the *Student Tour*. Which erm, I was going to say if you had time, but you might not have. 'Cause you'll be having to go in a minute.

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** Erm, they gave him again a red hot number to sing. And eh, then Louis B. Mayer wanted to put *Naughty Marietta* on a few years before. With Jeanette. But there was no male singer--

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** You see. And eh, then he decided that he'd do it if Jeanette had agreed to having an unknown singer opposite her, you see.

**VE:** A little bit like the story.

**DB:** Yeah. And she agreed, you know. And eh, *Naughty Marietta* was made. And overnight, he was a star! They went mad over him.

**VE:** I mean I don't think a lot of people realised that going from stage to films is--

**DB:** It's totally different.

**VE:** A totally different thing. I mean you're sort of doing your part, in front of a camera, to be taken--

**DB:** Yeah.

[tape cuts out]

**DB:** As he says in this interview about, he says, "There's nobody there erm, on the radio. There's nobody there when you're filming." He said, "I like the audience. I like the rapport," you see. And he said, "I've got a funny streak," he said, "but nobody wanted to know about that," you see. Because he was a success in them. And this woman, you know that horrible woman.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** She says, "Ooh, don't you want to be a success?" You know. But he liked being himself.

**VB: Yeah.**



**DB:** And I think that came over.

**VE:** Mhm.

**DB:** He wasn't acting, acting acting.

**VE:** [inaudible]

**DB:** He was his own natural self.

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** Which I think was what came over to most.

**VB:** He was really funny in that scene where he was drawing the picture on the wall. [laughs]

**VE:** Oh yes.

**DB:** Well that's another one.

**VE:** I wish I could draw like that.

**DB:** They'd got an artist to come to do that. And he didn't turn up. This is his, in Nelson's diary. You know the *Maytime* diary. I'll try and do that for you. Erm, he said, the artist didn't turn up. So he said, course he was very modest, you see. He would never flaunt what he was able to do. And he said, "I'm like a bit of an artist." 'Cause he'd been an artist, eh, for an advertising firm. You know, he'd been the staff artist. He says, "I can draw a bit," you know. So, course the director said, go on then, go ahead. And of course, this is where he drew this caricature. Well, he said, "Afterwards," he said, "I was very embarrassed because [Name?] had brought all these stars." Joan Crawford, Clark Gable, eh, one or two others that he mentioned. And they're all, "Oh! A masterpiece. Oh, it's beautiful!"

**VB:** [laughs]

**DB:** And they're all going... [laughs]

**VB:** Aw dear.

**DB:** But erm, because they played erm, they replayed *Naughty Marietta* quite a bit, I think, in America on the films. Because he said, if they keep filming it, finally land on the moon, you know.

And when they land on the moon, it'll be there. Or they'll be doing the song in *Naughty Marietta*.

[laughs] Oh dear.

**VB: But as you say, the way they act together is just great.**

**DB:** Oh, it's marvellous.

**VB: They sort of spark each other off.**

**DB:** Yes, yes. I think erm, he was very, with her being the star, he was very erm, erm, well a bit in awe at the beginning. But then when he found that she was friendly, you see. 'Cause they'd warned him that oh, she was hard to work with and all this, that and the other. And he went apologising to her. And she didn't know what he was apologising for. He said, "Well, I've been told you were hard to work with. But I know very well you've been passing scenes my way and generally helping out." He said at the finish they got, went to the different erm, what do you call it, that you have on the lot, not cabins but the little, you know--

**VE:** Yes.

**DB:** Dressing rooms and that. And they rehearsed the scenes together, you see. And I think he used to act the fool for her. And eh, to make her laugh, you know.

**VE:** It would ease the tension as well, wouldn't it?

**DB:** Yes, yes.

**VE:** You know.

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** I mean she was already a star. And I mean if you were going to be with somebody that's already made it--

**VB: Mhm.**

**VE:** And you were on tenterhooks, really. Aren't you really, wondering--

**DB:** Mhm.

**VE:** "Will I do it right? Will I botch it for her?" Or, whatever. You know.

**DB:** Yeah. Well look, when he tells him to jump on that horse. [laughs]

[general laughter]

**DB:** Van Dyke tells him to take a leap. Now he mentions it on *Rose Marie* but I think he got his erm, his films mixed up there. Because there was no scene in *Rose Marie* where he had to jump on a horse. But in *Girl of the Golden West*, he does, don't he?

**VE:** Yes.

**DB:** He kisses her hand and he stands back and he takes a flying leap. Well he nearly goes off the horse then and rides it off. 'Cause he did a lot of his own stunts. And Van Dyke had said jump on this horse. And he said he landed, he took such a leap, he landed over the other side! [laughs]

**VE:** [laughs] Jumped right over.

**VB:** Aw.

**DB:** But, it's really funny to hear him talk about these different things, you know.

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** And, especially when they get together on that radio show, don't they? Because, was it in one she says erm, erm, and singing that 'Owl and the Bob Cat'. Yeah, and she says, you didn't impress me one little bit, you know. And then she says, "Well, go ahead. Sing it now and maybe Jeanette'll be impressed." [laughs]

**VB:** [laughs]

**DB:** I wish I could get hold of a few more actually, of those, you know.

**VE:** I mean they did a funny thing with her with the bean thing on, didn't they?

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** They kept telling her it wasn't right and she had to keep eating more baked beans. [laughs]

**VB:** What was that?

**VE:** In *Rose Marie*.

**DB:** In *Rose Marie*. She's supposed to be, she's left deserted on the shore. And eh, he's cooking his... He says, "I've got bacon 'n' beans." "No, I hate bacon. I don't like beans." He goes off and sets up his own camp, you see. And of course, the aroma's good. Oh, and she's [sniffs, sniffs].

**VB:** [laughs]

**VE:** And she'd be wet through, wouldn't she?

**DB:** Yes. [laughs]

**VE:** [laughs]

**DB:** He'd rescued her from the lake. You'll have to come again.

**VE:** Oh it's really funny, that one.

**DB:** And erm--

**VE:** But on the set, you see, what they did--

**DB:** They knew she liked beans.

**VE:** They knew she liked these beans.

**DB:** She was looking forward to beans. [laughs]

**VE:** And she said afterwards, "I never want to see another bean." [laughs]

**VB:** [laughs]

**DB:** And then she found out that they'd played her up. Van Dyke had kept saying, "No, it's not quite right."

**VE:** "Not quite right. You'll have to have more beans."

**DB:** "Do another take." And Nelson said he was throwing these over his shoulder. [laughs]

**VE:** [laughs]

**DB:** There's quite a few erm, you know.

**VE:** I mean, you can see the funny side of things when you think about it. Like when I was in 'Aladdin'.

**VB: Mhm.**

**VE:** I mean, at the back of the stage was like, a jumble sale. [laughs] All props and things, you know. And you sort of had to stride over things and then, sort of float on, you know.

**VB: [laughs]**

**VE:** And then when the eh, beer crates went from under Abanazar. He was stood on these beer crates, you see. From the front it was gorgeous. All the jewels all sparkling, you know. The lamp, all, you know. "Give me the lamp. Give me the lamp."

**DB: [laughs]**

**VE:** And he's sort of looking down this hole. But from the back we could see him stood on these beer crates. And one of the stage hands was hurrying round to do, get ready for the next scene. [laughs]

**DB: [laughs]**

**VE:** And he knocked the box from under him. And he ended up with his chin, "Give me the lamp! Give me the lamp!" Oh, he was! He just reminded me of him in that, he was raging!

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** He would be.

**VE:** His ears went red.

**VB: [laughs]**

**DB: [laughs]**

**VE:** And his nose, ooh!

**VB: Aw.**

**VE:** Said, we'd better stay in the dressing room till he's gone.

**DB: [laughs]**

**VE:** But you see, from the front the illusion was absolutely--

**VB: Yes.**

**VE:** And he was a marvellous actor. But from the front, you know, my mum said, "Oh," she said, "that [inaudible; scene?]."

**DB:** [laughs]

**VB: Ah.**

**VE:** And the dresses we had on were like gossamer.

**DB:** Mhm.

**VE:** Beautiful shade of blue. But when you came backstage. [laughs] They were filthy! My mother said, "Do they never wash these?"

**DB:** [laughs]

**VE:** I said [I don't know?]. But from the front, with the different lights, the mixture of lights, they were absolutely beautiful. And she came backstage and she said, "Oh!" she said, "They haven't washed them. They look really awful."

**DB:** [laughs] Was there something else you wanted to ask?

**VB: Well I mean, I was just thinking about, I mean, the costumes in that were just amazing, weren't they?**

**DB:** Oh yes.

**VE:** Beautiful.

**VB: Mhm.**

**VE:** It's a great pity it wasn't in colour, isn't it?

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** You know.

**DB:** But eh, they didn't make a colour film, did they? Till, was it *Sweet*, it was *Sweethearts* the first?

**VE:** *Sweethearts*, I think.

**DB:** Wasn't it?

**VE:** Mhm.

**DB:** And then they did one for *Bitter Sweet*. But, you see, about that time he was going grey. And eh, *Sweethearts*, in one, that one that woman did for me, you can see his hair. You know, going--

**VE:** Going.

**DB:** More golden than it looks in the one I've got.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** In the one I've got he looks grey. But there again a lot of blondes do turn up dark. 'Cause I had one not long ago. A little boy who was a blonde and he was dark, nearly all the time in the film. Greyish-looking,

**VE:** Yeah, yeah. [inaudible; overtalking]

**DB:** You know. And oh! I was disappointed though, 'cause I'd been looking forward to seeing his blonde hair. But that was good, wasn't it? *Sweethearts*.

**VE:** Oh lovely that.

**VB:** **It was a lovely song in the film, of course, as well.**

**DB:** Oh, it's beautiful that. Yeah.

**VB:** **Yeah.**

**VE:** Yeah.

**VB:** **I like the way they did that and brought it back again.**

**DB:** It was wonderful really. And the flowers where they keep joining them then when it's sad they all go. It was beautifully done, wasn't it, really?

**VB:** **Yeah.**

**VE:** Though I do think they could've got somebody better than John--

**DB:** [laughs] Well he was okay for the part!

**VE:** Didn't like any of the Barrymores.

**DB:** No.

**VE:** Didn't like any of them.

**DB:** And yet they were all supposed to be good actors.

**VE:** Well they were but--

**VB:** But he couldn't, 'cause in a film like that, I mean, he could've been someone that you felt a bit sorry for.

**DB:** Yes, yes.

**VB:** And you couldn't—

**VE:** [inaudible] He couldn't have done it.

**DB:** Yes. [inaudible; overtalking] he would--

**VE:** Oh he could've done it. Because Paul Lukas's played like Germans and you know--

**DB:** Well didn't--

**VE:** People of authority.

**DB:** The same thing happened in *Knickerbocker Holiday*. Because Charles Coburn had been asked to play in it. And, what was the other fellow? Otto Kruger.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** And Nelson. I think he bought actually the rights, Nelson, to do that film. But he come unstuck really because he didn't sing the song he wanted to sing. There was no way he could sing it, you know. And it was supposed to be erm, oh going back to when New York was New Amsterdam, more or less. It was way back. You know, the Dutch settlers. And they wanted, he wanted Otto Kruger as the governor, you see. And Charles Coburn was supposed to be playing that girl's father.

**VE:** Father.



**DB:** Funny, the comedian, you see. But when Charles Coburn read the script, he said he wanted to be the governor. And erm, Nelson said, "Me and Otto Kruger commiserated over this quite a bit. 'Cause," he said, "I felt that Otto Kruger had a glint in his eye", you know. And he said he could understand maybe a young girl being attracted to an older man that had a glint in his eye.

**VE:** Yeah.

**VB:** Mhm.

**DB:** Not Charles Coburn. Who looked seventy-five, he said, you know.

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** I mean there was nothing about him at all to attract.

**VE:** No.

**VB:** Mhm.

**DB:** But he said, the picture was on Eddy and Coburn so Coburn got his part, you see.

**VB:** Yeah.

**DB:** And poor old Otto Kruger had to be satisfied--

**VE:** And he was quite distinguished.

**DB:** Oh he was a good actor, Otto Kruger.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** I can't think what I've seen him in. What he was playing the lead in.

**VE:** Wasn't he with Rita Hayworth?

**DB:** Yes he was, but he played her father, didn't he?

**VE:** No.

**DB:** Oh no! That's right. Oh, yes, yes. But there was a young fella played him as a young man.

**VE:** Oh yes.

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** I'm trying to think of what we saw him in, as a young, I can't remember any that he was a young leading man.

**VE:** No, I can't. I don't think he ever actually was. Really.

[pause 3 seconds]

**DB:** I don't know.

**VE:** Not the absolute lead.

**DB:** You don't really come.

**VB:** Mhm.

**DB:** You see, there's quite a few stars that--

**VE:** Didn't quite make it to what you'd call the A ones, you know.

**DB:** Never got to the top. They were always in films.

**VE:** The B films, you know.

**DB:** You knew that.

**VE:** Which were like--

**VB:** Like these guys that were in that.

**VE:** Yeah, that's right.

**DB:** You recognise the faces. Yeah.

**VB:** You recognise the faces round the table. Yeah.

**VE:** This one at this side used to be a judge.

**DB:** Yes, that's right.

**VB: Ye-es.**

**VE:** And the one at this side always played an Irish--

**DB:** Mhm.

**VE:** Seafarer.

**DB:** Mhm.

**VE:** With a cap, you know, with the leather cap on.

**DB:** Mhm.

**VB: That's right! 'Cause he was in that film with, was he not in the film with Spencer Tracy where he's--**

**VE:** S'right.

**DB:** Was he?

**VB: He was that lawyer. [laughs] You know the one I mean.**

**VE:** Was it *Captains Courageous*?

**VB: It could've been.**

**DB:** Yeah.

**VE:** Think it was.

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** I taped *An Affair to Remember* the other day.

**VE:** Oh I sat and--

**DB:** Did you watch it? Did you watch it? Well I just saw the end. D'you know I was in tears again.

**VE:** Oh, I was.

**DB:** Did you not see it?

**VB: I didn't, no.**

**VE: Oh, it's a lovely film.**

**DB: The first one, the first one was Charles Boyer. And erm, Irene Dunne. [referring to *Love Affair*]  
D'you remember? Did you see that?**

**VE: No. I didn't actually see it. But I do remember that they made it, you know.**

**DB: Aw. It was lovely.**

**VE: Well Charles Boyer was very--**

**DB: Oh yes, he was very good. And they made... Then Cary Grant and Deborah Kerr, you see. And although it was lovely, but--**

**VE: I thought that was nicer.**

**DB: But, I always think that the original was the nicest.**

**VE: Yeah.**

**DB: Yes. It loses something. I don't know what it is.**

**VE: Well I thought *Magnificent Obsession* was the best. With Robert Taylor and Irene Dunne.**

**DB: Oh. Well that was the original, you see.**

**VE: Yeah.**

**DB: It's the original. You can't really best--**

**VE: You can't. Although Rock Hudson--**

**DB: Oh Rock Hudson was marvellous.**

**VE: It just didn't quite click.**

**DB: It was lovely but--**

**VE: After you've seen the other one, you know. You start comparing them.**

**VB: Yeah.**

**DB:** Well it was like *Rose Marie*.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** I mean when they remade that. They did that as the original screen, eh stage play.

**VB: Mhm.**

**DB:** The *Rose Marie* that Nelson and Jeanette made, they altered the story to make the Mountie the hero. Well actually in the stage play he's not the hero. He's only in love with her, you know. But, and then they took a lot of songs out. And erm, that one that he sings, 'Just For You', under her window. It's a duet. And I've got it. I've got him singing with erm, Dorothy Kirsten--

**VE:** Mhm.

**DB:** And they sing it as a duet.

**VE:** That's right.

**DB:** They sing all the songs from the stage show, you see. But erm, it was very good. And Howard Keel was smashing as the Mountie. And so was erm, oh what was his name that took the trapper off? Fernando Lamas. But it just, to me, *Rose Marie* as they did it. It was a more romantic story, you know. Because they're together, aren't they?

**VE:** That's right.

**DB:** There's just two of them in the wilderness, you know.

**VE:** Yeah.

**DB:** And eh, you know, they were lovely films.

**VE:** I felt sorry for eh, Shirley Temple when she was with them. Now she was with another of the Barrymores and... To me, they all have the haughtiness about them.

**DB:** Yes they did.

**VE:** I mean.

**DB:** They did. 'Cause Ethel Barrymore was a--

**VE:** She was a bit on the stiff side and Victorian, you know.

**DB:** You're going to be missing that.

**VB: Oh right.**

**DB:** I'm not rushing you. It's up to you.

**VE:** No, she's not. You can stay all night if you like.

**VB: [laughs]**

**DB:** Well, there's a single bed and there's half of mine. [laughs]

**VE:** I told you. Told you.

**VB: No, you're right. We should really watch the time.**

**DB:** Anyway, you must, you'll have to come again. It's no use.

**VB: That would be nice, yeah.**

**DB:** Give us a ring whenever you want to.

**VB: Well I would really like that. Erm, it may not be until next year though now. Because erm, I'm down here for another couple of weeks and then I move on to London. I'm going to be seeing people in London. And then East Anglia I'm going to after that so. [laughs]**

**DB:** Oh God!

**VE:** Oh where the posh people are!

**VB: So I'll be where the posh people are. So erm--**

**VE:** She won't want to know us.

**VB: No, I will. [laughs] I'll still want to know you but as I say, it might be a bit like, maybe early next year or something.**

**DB:** Well, it doesn't matter. You just ring up.

**VB: That would be great.**

**VE: Just drop us a line and let us know how you're going on.**

**VE: I don't like it down south.**

**DB: [laughs]**

**VE: They're a bit snooty!**

**DB: Is that one of your eh, cassettes?**

**VB: Oh yes, it is. Yes. So erm--**

**DB: Just pop them in the thing.**

**VE: I'll do it. Can you put that on there?**

**VB: It's just been such a nice day. And hearing the tapes. It's so kind of you to make a copy of that as well.**

**DB: Oh, that's okay. Any time. As I say I nearly did you one... [recording pauses and restarts]**

**VB: That's got all the dates on it as well.**

**DB: Yes it has. Well I've sent for one. If you want one, you can have one. Erm, I've sent for a couple more. What did I do with your... [tape cuts out]**

**[End of interview]**