

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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- * Harpurhey Library, Manchester, 31 May 1995: Valentina Bold interviews Ellen Casey
- * Transcribed by Joan Simpson/ Standardised by Annette Kuhn
- * EC=Ellen Casey/ VB=Valentina Bold
- * Notes: First of one interview with Ellen Casey; Sound Quality: Poor; 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.

[Start of Tape One]

[Start of Side A]

[VB tape introduction]

EC: So we used to be waiting in the entry there, and when we went we used to sneak in the back.

VB: [gasps]

EC: Because the toilets were there also.

VB: Right.

EC: [inaudible] We used to do to all sorts of... just to get in the pictures. Mind you we missed half of it, or whatever, but... Just to get in. But that's what we used to do. That was the back.

VB: I see.

EC: So it's only a little place, as you can see, in a back street. But they used to go in there for a pint and we used to be hiding in the entry--

VB: [laughs]

EC: And then ran down there.

VB: [laughs]

EC: [inaudible] [That's the type of things we used to do?] [crackling noise on tape] We got away with it.

VB: Oh that's handy then. Take advantage of their need for a quick pint.

EC: [inaudible] We used to eh. [coughs] I'm a bit husky you know, this morning. Do you notice?

VB: Yes. I can hear it in your voice. [pause 5 seconds; fixing mike] That should be us.

EC: I've erm, I've written all this down.

VB: Ah.

EC: Those are my favourite, those are my heartthrobs. [inaudible]

VB: Mhm.

EC: I loved that. Got it from Central Library. It was a actual photo but it's a bargain for four pound.

VB: Yeah.

EC: They got a negative for two fifty. But, thought well, that was only the ten pee so I thought that'll do me. I love that.

VB: Which of the picture houses was that?

EC: This was the Rex [probably referring to the Rex Picture Hall].

VB: The Rex. Yeah.

EC: But before... before the eh, I used to go when it was silent films. Because that'd be about 1926. That was when I first went with my gran, told you, is this on? [referring to tape recorder] my grandma used to take me to read the words out to her. You see, because it was silent films. Other than the piano playing at the front. And erm... [pause 2 seconds] she could... she could read but she could hardly see the words, you know. Well there was a lot of it went on. So my grandma took me as soon as I could read well [when I was six?]. Well after that [pause 2 seconds] we used to go to the first house which started half past six. And erm, we used to sit on the eh, there was forms at the front. There was about a dozen forms at the front which was only tuppence. So we used to sit on the back row. The form on the back row. And erm, [pause 2 seconds] the other forms were occupied you know, mostly by children. If children were on their own they put them on the first four. Put them on the first four forms. And eh, oh they weren't quiet. If it was a film that wasn't very interesting, they'd be running about. They'd be going backwards and forwards to the toilet. Well with it being silent films it was never quiet you know. Or some kids'd have clogs on. Well it was only bare floor... well it was only bare floor. You know, no carpets. And erm, there was nobody in... there was nobody in to eh sell things. You know like a cigarette girl or erm, you know, the one with the tray like they did. There was nothing like that. So you took your own... your own sweets in or whatever. And erm, mostly it was erm monkey nuts with shells on. Used to be shelling them. Throwing the shells off!

VB: [laughs]

EC: Used to be shelling the nuts on the floor, and then they'd take an orange, peel'd be on the floor. All these were going backwards and forwards. There was no peace. [And then there was them?] with clogs on. And erm, you sit next to some children you could smell camphorated oil. You know, they'd have their chests rubbed with camphorated oil. Or whatever stuff on there. You know, to keep it clean. And when I think back there was, there was no, no peace at all. You know what I mean?
[amused voice]

VB: [laughs]

EC: Anyway, the first house, my gran had to go to the first house which was half past six till half past eight. I used to go with her then we used to come straight home. My gran used to go to bed. I used to go to bed. Straight home to bed. 'Cause my gran worked at the hospital and she used to have to be up at half past five in the morning. She walked it there and back so... that was my gran. Anyway we used to call, before, before... When it was the silent films it was called the 'Royal Cinema' [possibly referring to the Royal Osborne]. And eh we used to call it the 'flicks'. Or, "We're going to the pics." Or 'the flicks'. Or 'the cinny', we called it. This is how we used to go on. We used to call it 'the cinny' or 'the pics' or 'the flicks'. And erm, [pause 2 seconds] they didn't open through the day. Only of a night. And Saturday matinee. Or erm, no Sunday. No Sunday. Closed all day Sunday. So, we used to go to the Saturday matinee. I didn't like the Saturday matinee because there was mostly westerns. I didn't like westerns. I didn't like westerns. You know all this shooting one another and the Indians. I was terrified. So, it was very rare I went to the children's matinee if it was a western. I didn't like them.

VB: Mhm.

EC: And eh, what I mostly liked was the, you know, musicals. Now the erm the doorman, the doorman, the chap that used to be stood at the door--

VB: [coughs]

EC: He was called Sam. And through the day his work was plumbing--

VB: [laughs]

EC: He was a plumber. And you would see him walking round the district and he used to have a gas meter or something, we had gas meters then. He'd have a gas meter on his back carrying all piping round his neck. Lead piping. Eh there was no transport. He had no transport. So when we seen him of a night with his peaked cap on, stood at the door. And erm he had an overcoat on with the brass buttons. And that's where we used to go, we used to say, "Sam, Sam, the dirty man."

VB: [laughs]

EC: "Sam, Sam, the dirty man." [laughs]

VB: You were telling me about another one of the doormen that was known as--

EC: Yeah well I'm coming to that.

VB: Ah!

EC: Yeah, I'm coming to that. He got that. We used to shout that to him. "Sam, Sam the dirty man."
[laughs]

VB: [laughs] Poor soul!

EC: [laughs] And erm, after that like we erm we got erm, oh it closed down. Closed down for six weeks. They'd put in talkies. To modernise it. They were modernising and it closed down for six weeks and eh... [pause 2 seconds] Aw it was so sad. It was so sad. You know, we didn't have nowhere to go. And erm that's when I went to another picture house, right. I mean [pause 2 seconds] that was called the 'Central', the 'Central Hall', but we called it Dickie Banks's [referring to the New Central Hall, Collyhurst]. We called it Dickie Banks's. Now when our place, our picture house closed down they were supposed to be going to modernise it. And also, you know, do all the different things to it you know. Talkies..., so we thought, well it's going to be better. We'll manage. Anyway erm we went to this other one and it was called Dickie Banks's. Oh we went on the front rows. And the men used to move you along. They'd squash you, squashed up because it did well like, you know, it did really well because our picture house had closed down and we all automatically went to that. Oh they shoved, they shoved, that lady would be squeezed up like this. This is why I only ever went twice. I wouldn't go again. It was just awful. The end person was like that.

VB: [laughs]

EC: [laughs] It was terrible. They were so strict at that picture house. It was unbelievable. After us, the way we were eh, you know, running about mad and whatever. Talking. So I just didn't go to that. Anyway, eventually, our cinny opened. Although it was only a small place we loved it. And eh, but it still had the small screen. You know. Still had the small screen when it opened. And they called it the Rex [possibly referring to the Rex, Buckley Street, Collyhurst]. Posh, with the name. You know. So

they called it the Rex. And eh then we got erm this new what we called, well, I don't know whether to call him an attendant but we used to call him the chucker out--

VB: [laughs]

EC: We always called him the chucker out. Now we knew him. We knew him and he lived in our neighbourhood. And he was called Leonard Shaw. Now where they got the name Tarzan from... [pause 2 seconds] The erm hospital. Not far away. Still there now. On Daisy Day, what we called Daisy Day, they used to have fancy dress parade. And they used to do it for money. For the hospital. And he used to always go to the parade. As Tarzan. And he had the physique. He was a real Johnny Weissmuller. He was. And he had, used to have the erm, like the cubskin round him and that, you know. Covered. And erm he was really, you know, he was a good Tarzan. So, they got him as the chucker out! [laughs]

VB: Oh ho ho! [laughs]

EC: Well he did his, he brought a lot of silence into it, you know. Because it was the talkies then you see. So everybody was frightened of Leonard Shaw. Tarzan. The kids used to be quiet you know. And erm the films were started, the talkies. First night it was queueing up round, right round, you know. Queueing up for the talkies and erm it was packed out. Anyway, the first night, it wasn't too bad. It was crackling a bit--

VB: [laughs]

EC: Crackling a bit you know. It wasn't too bad. We coped with that. And my granny was better. You know. She could hear it. She wasn't bad at hearing. And eh she could hear it better. So I thought, oh, she's not gonna need me now! She's not gonna take me, you know.

VB: [laughs]

EC: So I was a bit upset about that. But she did. She carried on. Anyway this was 1930. This was 1930. So erm after that, she erm, she still took me because it was only, well I think it was one night a week she went so. Anyway erm that was 1930. Hadn't been going long and she died. She died. She died quickly. So anyway the erm, the films after that, I managed to go myself. But they kept breaking

down. You got the erm, you got the mouth moving without any sound. Or you'd get the sound without any picture.

VB: Mhm.

EC: So it went on like this for a couple of weeks. And then the lights would go up. And then the kids'd all start stamping their feet and whistling you know. Stamping their feet. Running about, banging their feet. Even Tarzan, it took him all his time to sort it you know. Anyway after that thought "Oh when am I gonna get to the pictures? I haven't got any spending money." No way could they afford to spend it because she had [seven lads?] as well as me. I was the eldest. So, she couldn't afford it. We had to make our own way to get to pictures. Well I used to go errands, I used to run nearly all over Manchester to do errands for a ha'penny. Or I mean, I'd do you know somebody's step, whatever. I'd mind kids. I'd take bottles back. They used to take beer bottles then. You know. And I used to save it up in a matchbox. You know ha'pennies and pennies. I used to save them up till [pause 2 seconds] I managed to get tuppence for the pictures. Well, we could go on our own then. I'd be about ten then. Be about ten. And my mother used to let me go on my own. Pretty big for my age. And we had no danger then. And the picture house was only about a hundred yards from where I lived. Only a hundred yards. And erm so my mother used to let me go. First house. I used to come home and go right to bed of course. And erm so that's the way I did it.

VB: Mhm.

EC: But like I say, getting the money, I erm... you know, some weeks probably some other kids'd be going then. 'Cause we all went, we had to go errands you know. Somebody would rush [possibly beat?] me to it or whatever. So when I could get the money together I used to always save it till there was a musical on. Or a romance. That was why I wanted. Oh I loved musicals. Well I remember, 1931, at the end of '31, I went in Booth Hall Hospital to have my tonsils out. Now I'd seen that film on the pictures and it was called *Sunny Side Up*. And it was Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell. So the two main songs I knew and I... Because they used to bring a song sheet round. My auntie used to buy them. And these songs were in it. So I went into Booth Hall to have my tonsils out, and I was singing all this time. This thing, the title of the song. [sings] "Keep your sunny side up! Up." I knew all the words to that. And then there was another one. 'If I Had a Talking Picture of You'. Well I was singing these in the hospital you know. I was really full of music and songs. I loved them. So I was singing them in the pictures right through. I still know all the words, right through. Anyway

it came. I had my tonsils out. Well I couldn't, you know, couldn't sing. Couldn't speak. I remember the nurses saying, "That's quietened you!"

VB: [laughs] Cruel.

EC: "That's quietened you!" No more 'Sunny Side Up'. Till you're going out. You know.

VB: Aw dear.

EC: And I always remember that. Yeah. That was the films. And I still know them songs. And it was just great. Anyway erm [pause 2 seconds] I started getting better you know. Getting [older?], you know. I came out and erm I used to still go errands for people. Probably get ha'penny, penny but they always went in the matchbox. Sometimes my brother used to always eh try and get before me to go errands. Now he was only, there was only a year and ten months between me and my brother. What he did when he was ten, he started smoking. [inaudible] he used to get to the corner shop. He used to always go and get a cigarette and a match. And I wouldn't. I've never ever smoked. Ever. No. My money went into the matchbox, saved till... And if I got enough, and I loved the films such as *Sunny Side Up*, I'd go the next night and see it. You know, tuppence and I used to really... And if I hadn't seen any films well, my friends, we'd be sat in the schoolyard in the playtime erm talking about the film. They'd tell me what I, you know. And it was all that. All that went on. Anyway I always remember one night I went to the... to the pictures. It was supposed to be a romance you know, and I didn't know who they were. And there was one actor in it and his name was Ross Alexander. And I've tried, you know how they revive these films now. I've tried to get that film. I don't know when it was. But this Ross Alexander film, I still know his name. I fell madly in love with him.

VB: [smiles]

EC: Aw. I did. Honestly. I must've been about twelve.

VB: What was he like?

EC: He was tall and dark. He had really dark hair. And erm, [pause 2 seconds] I'd only seen him in that film. And then later I seen him in another one. He was in *Captain Blood* with Errol Flynn.

VB: A-ah!

EC: He was in *Captain Blood* with Errol Flynn. His name was Ross Alexander. And I can still see his name now. And after, my auntie used to buy the 'Picturegoer'. And I seen in the 'Picturegoer' he'd died. I don't know whether he'd had an accident. But he'd died. And them was the only two films. And I keep waiting to see if, if they come--

VB: Mhm.

EC: On the, on the eh, I've looked in films and I cannot. I just don't... I don't even know whether he'd be mentioned in the film. But I'd know it if it was on.

VB: Mhm.

EC: But I was madly in love with Ross Alexander. And erm, what happened then... So anyway, still went on. I was going to the films. Erm Janet erm, Janet Gaynor. Charles Farrell and then it came to Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire. Well. Oh them! And erm anyway I started going on them. But what I did then, I was getting near fourteen. I wanted to really be there every night if I could at the pictures. Not westerns. Erm not British films. I couldn't stand, I wouldn't go and see George Formby films. No. I wouldn't see no British films. No. They had to be American.

VB: What was it that put you off people like George Formby?

EC: I don't know. To me he was more for chil, well, I didn't class myself as a child at fourteen, thirteen. And I was very old for my age. Because I had to look after mostly the children. My mother used to be in and out of hospital. And I was the mother sort of thing you know. So I couldn't, my brothers loved George Formby. My brothers loved him. You know, such as 'Aladdin' and the TT races and all that [referring to *No Limit*]. Yeah. They loved that. That wasn't me. Not as though I disliked him, but the films. I wanted musicals. Romances. You see.

VB: The stories didn't appeal to you so much either.

EC: Yeah, yeah. The structures... you know. And anyway, what happened, I was erm, I got near, before, just before I started work I hit on something. I used to see these shops and they used to have eh posters up at Billy's advertising the films at the picture houses. Right. So I used to go in there and erm I used to ask them and say, "Are you using...," you know, "...your free pass?" [Note: certain shops were given free tickets for advertising films]. No. If not could I please have it, you know, I can't afford... And most of the shopkeepers had it and they used to give them me. So I had that going. And I never told anyone. Thought no, they'll start doing it.

VB: Yeah.

EC: See.

VB: Good idea.

EC: Yeah. I never did it. And I also found out I could do it after, to them that had Belle Vue billings up [referring to Belle Vue zoo]. They were mostly pubs. And they never, you know they couldn't leave the pubs. So I had that going also. Belle Vue. So this worked and I used to probably once a week I'd get you know, this, they got to know me. You know. And if I went errands for my mother, used to usually try and get in these shops, you know. So I thought, it's great. I always remember that. I was [quietly?] pleased, clutching them, you know the pictures--

VB: [laughs]

EC: And that was another thing what I got going. Anyway when I got to about fifteen I seen this lad. Well I think he was nineteen at the time. I was about fifteen. And he resembled Ross Alexander. Aw did I chase him!

VB: [laughs]

EC: Oh I did. Honestly. He was. He had the same jet black hair. Brushed back as they used to have it. And the same sort of, you know, wave. And he did resemble. Aw. I was mad on him.

VB: [laughs]

EC: I was mad on him because of this Ross Alexander. I even think about him today and erm... So he had a good job actually. In them days. He went in the printing. Which was a good job. And he was dressed nice and smart and everything. Finally I got for him to take me out. And he took me to a picture house that was down there. And it hadn't been opened all that long. To me, it was what we call posh. It was posh. Probably Fred's shown you where it was. It was near a cenotaph [World War One memorial]. Did he take you down there? The cenotaph.

VB: Yes I think so. Yes.

EC: Did he call it the Essoldo or what? At first it was the Rivoli when they took it. It was the Rivoli. Down Rochdale Road,

VB: That rings a bell.

EC: Yeah.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And it's just near a cenotaph.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Well that's where it was. And erm he took me there. And it was really posh. I'd never been in before. Couldn't afford it. And he took me in there and it was, luckily it was Janet Gaynor eh no, no, not Janet Gaynor. Eh Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers musical. And it was that one where they were singing. Oh I still remember the song. Even now. Erm 'Cheek to Cheek'.

VB: Oh, *Top Hat*.

EC: Yeah. Em, how did it start, 'Cheek', [sings] "When we're both together dancing cheek to cheek..." And I thought, oh-h-h. Going upstairs on the balcony! I felt I had the cream. I was so thrilled being with this Ross Alexander!

VB: [laughs]

EC: Yeah. And he used to take me often to the pictures.

VB: It's a romantic film as well.

EC: Yeah, it was. And I went more to the pictures. And he took me to... very rare to my cinny. My little lovely cinny. No, it was very rare. Either to the Essoldo. Or there's a place further up, you know. And erm, oh I felt really posh. Honest, I was on top of the world. But that Ross Alexander. Anyway, I moved on from them. And erm, [pause 2 seconds] I always remember he was... the... Ross Alexander as I call him. His name was Alfie Griffith. Alfie Griffiths. So. So that's it. Now them times, you couldn't eh you never seen anybody, you know, indecent. You never seen any films where they were indecent or anything. Erm it was called erm... it used to come on first. 'This is to certify', you know, the big thing first. 'This is to certify'. And erm if it was a U film you could go in. Like. There was loads of children went on their own like me. If it was a U film, you could go in--

VB: Mhm.

EC: But if it was an X film [referring to 'A' rating], you had to go in with adults. Well we used to stand outside and ask people, would they take us in. So we used to do that. Soon as we went in like we just left them. It was just that you had to be with an adult to go in. Because they were erm like, as I said, there were only, there was no undressing scenes. They were avoided. And obscenity was forbidden. So, it was very rare you know, you seen anything... now, there was a big to-do. There was a very big to-do when eh Mae West came along. Mae West. You know she was in with eh one of my, another one of my heartthrobs, Cary Grant. Oh-h! He was... well he was something similar to Ross Alexander.

VB: I was going to say, tall and dark.

EC: Yeah. He was similar to Ross Alexander, so I loved Cary Grant. Now he was with erm Mae West in *I'm No Angel*. And erm... [pause 2 seconds] he erm... It was the first one was... he was that he was in with a [call?], *She Done Him Wrong*. That was 1933. And that's when she, she said erm, "When I'm good," "When I'm good, I'm very very good. But when I'm bad, I'm better."

VB: [laughs]

EC: That's right. You know. "When I'm good, I'm very very good." Very tight you know. "When I'm good, I'm very very good. When I'm bad, I'm even better." And erm there was the other one. Erm *I'm No Angel*. That's when she had to say, "Come up and see me some time." Now she caused, there was all the Catholics, you know, were going mad. You know. "Don't go and see that." You know.

VB: Is that right?

EC: The Catholics were all up against it. Yeah.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Catholics were all up against it. My mother was a Catholic. She used to say to me, "Don't go and see Mae West. If Mae West's on at the cinny. Don't go and see Mae West."

VB: That's interesting.

EC: Ooh, the Catholics were all up the, they said that she was a bad influence.

VB: So did the priests try and tell people what--

EC: Yes. Yes.

VB: Ah. Yeah.

EC: There was a big to-do--

VB: Yeah.

EC: About Mae West.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Well, that made people want to go all the more and see her. Especially with Cary Grant.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Oh yeah! There was eh signing petitions and everything. Yeah. About eh Mae West and these films. Because like you said, indecent gestures or obscenity or whatever, mhm. It wasn't, it had to be avoided. And whatever. There was so many rules about the pictures then. Anyway Mae West, oh she caused a riot.

VB: Mhm!

EC: But nothing came of it. She carried on. And then there was another one. Clark Gable and Jean Harlow. Aw *Red Dust*. That was, oh God. I used to, I used to, some of the films they was weepies. And I used to cry in bed of a night. I used to cry. Thinking about it all the time. I used to cry. I daren't let my mother see me cry. She'd stop me going! [laughs] And I used to be crying in bed. Specially... there were real weepies like Robert Taylor. He was aw, he was out of this world. Ooh! Robert, gorgeous! Well he was in a film with Greta Garbo and it was called *Camille*. And eh I thinks she dies, you see her dying at the end and he's at her bedside. I think it was that she had TB or something. Well TB was tuberculosis them days you know. And that. Oh I broke my heart crying about that. And erm then he was in another one. *A Yank at Oxford*. That was good. Getting on 1938. Just before the war. Another one was *Magnificent Obsession* what he was in. With Irene Dunne. Well, [pause 2 seconds] she, she... That was out of this world, that. I don't think I've seen it since. I don't think I've seen it. You know, on the television.

VB: Yeah.

EC: You know they keep [reaping?] them up. But there's hundreds they've not put on yet! There's hundreds. Because I do watch for them. Especially Clark Gable and Joan Crawford. They were in one called *Possessed*.

VB: Ah.

EC: That was 1932. That was great. And that was eh *Camille*. *Camille* was marvellous.

VB: Mhm.

EC: And erm--

VB: 'Cause Joan Crawford changed quite a lot through the thirties didn't she?

EC: Joan, Joan Crawford changed... Oh it was unbelievable. Joan Crawford. With Clark Gable in *Possessed*. Just a reminder, that was 1932.

VB: Mhm.

EC: And I have seen some of them since. And I've booked it down. Funnily enough, I was that obsessed with it then, I've, you know, when I've seen them I've booked them down. I've got them written in a book. You know. 'Cause it brought back memories.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Memories to me. The thirties. That was before the war. And, to me, it was just a lovely time. Growing up you know. I was struggling, I was struggling to get to the pictures and erm, then I seen another one, *Little Women*. That was lovely. *Little Women*. Eh Katharine Hepburn. Katharine Hepburn and eh, it was also a book that. I got it out the library. And eh the four girls, they were called Jo, Beth, Amy and Meg. And erm, I loved *Little Women*. And I tell you what broke my heart. You'll never believe this! Broke my heart crying in bed about *King Kong*!

VB: [gasps]

EC: *King Kong*! D'you know with the end where all the planes were going round him. And he's firing at him and he's grabbing the planes you know. And eh the one that was with him, Fay Wray. Oh my God! I was! Although, I was sick of it with her screaming. They called her the Queen of the Screamers.

VB: [laughs]

EC: They called er the Queen of the Screamers. She was screaming out when he had her in his hand you know. WIIIIII!

VB: A-ah.

EC: Screaming! Screaming! Screaming! Oh my God! And that was, is a good film and it was something unusual. *King Kong*. You know, we'd never know it. Ooh! But she was screaming, screaming. Especially the you know, the sound you know. Wouldn't have been so bad if it had been silent. But anyway we called her, when she was called on, Queen of the Screamers. That was Fay Wray.

[tape cuts out]

[End of Side A]

[Start of Side B]

EC: But before Mickey Mouse we used to have Felix. Felix the Cat. Before Mickey Mouse. And we used to always sing, in the pictures. [sings] 'Felix gets a walk, he gets a walk. He's there, with his hands behind him, you will always find him! They blew him up with dynamite, into the air he flew. Felix, Felix. Felix Felix. Came down walking still.'

VB: [laughs; coughs]

EC: [laughs] We were all singing that! And then, then, then there was another cartoon. The *Three Little Pigs*. Then they used to all sing, 'Who's afraid of the big bad wolf? Big bad wolf.' Remember that? 'Big bad wolf. Who's afraid'. So this is how it was. I used to love cartoons. But that was the big one. When it came. That was the big, that was the first big long feature cartoon film. *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.

VB: [gasps]

EC: Oh! That was lovely. And then all the kids they were, 'Hi ho. Hi ho!' You know. 'It's off to work we'll go.' It used to be really funny you know.

VB: Mhm.

EC: The kids at the front--

VB: 'Cause that was one of the first colour ones as well wasn't it? *Snow White*.

EC: Yes. Yeah. I think that was getting on before the war. I think it was erm 19--, just before the war.

VB: Yeah.

EC: 1938. And erm and when this Ross Alexander, Alfie Griffiths, took me to a picture house and it was the first one. I think it was the first British film that I liked really. And it was when Gracie Fields first started. And it was erm *Sally in our Alley*. Now queued up outside this picture house. And the queue was a mile long. I think that was a British film there. Well it wasn't too bad, but like I said I wasn't one for British films. And in that she sang 'Sally'. And eh 'She's a Lassie from Lancashire' and all this sort and 'Fred Fanakapan'.

VB: Did you like Gracie Fields?

EC: In some things. I seen her in a few films. You know they took us once from school to see one of her films and it was called *Queen of Hearts*. I remember that. Well. Taken to the pictures. We loved it. You know. And she had these marvellous dresses on and all this. Well that was, that was very nice, yeah. I liked Gracie Fields but it was always the same things. You know. Got a bit corny--

VB: Mhm.

EC: After a few. You know. But she was new at first. You know, coming from Rochdale--

VB: Yeah.

EC: Which wasn't far away. Ooh. Thrilled to bits. But eh, some of the songs she used to sing was a bit stupid like 'Fred Fanakapan' and... 'Fred Fanakapan', the 'Biggest Aspidistra in the World'. That wasn't my, that wasn't my eh thing, you know. So the film, that was it. Now the frightening films. You had to go in with somebody for these. Now I shouldn't have gone to them but I wanted to see them, and *Frankenstein*, 'The Mummy's Hand' [referring to *The Mummy*], *The Old Dark House*. They

were all Boris Karloff. And eh I'd only be about eh, ten then. Nine, ten. *Dracula*. 1931. *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. The first one.

VB: Mhm.

EC: I used to be terrified. I used to be go home terrified. I used to run home all the way. And then we didn't have no lighting up the stairs and we used to get a saucer or whatever, a tin lid. Anything what we had. We used to get a candle lighted. Then we used to put the wax on... stick the candle in and then go up the stairs you see. I don't know what I'd been to see, dunno whether it was *Dracula* or *Frankenstein*. I remember going up the stairs, my hand shaking like that. The flaming candle fell off and rolled down the stairs! [laughs]

VB: [laughs]

EC: My mother come running, "What's the doing down here? What's going on?" You know. Of course, I was dead... I was terrified she'd have stopped me. But them films were really frightening.

VB: Did you ever have nightmares after them?

EC: Oh yeah I did. My brother did one night. My brother had a nightmare, he was going mad, him. He'd been to see it, mind you like I said, he was a bit younger than me. So I thought, oh I daren't tell my mother, she's, I can't tell, I wont' tell her, she'd stop us going. Anyway that was it and we erm... and then we got onto... I never was really fond of Judy Garland. No. I don't know. I don't follow films. You know, like the eh... I just really wasn't very fond of Judy Garland. Think she'd probably be a bit older than me. Not much. So erm I didn't like her films. But I liked her singing. Some of the songs she sang, 'You Made Me Love You.' And 'Dear Mr Gable'. 'Cause I liked Clark Gable.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Yeah. But as for the films I wasn't really erm... much. Eh I liked older, older people in films. You know like I was that way myself. I was older than I was. And then there was the erm another lovely film. *The Great Ziegfeld*. I used to love that song, 'A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody.' Do you know it?

VB: No.

EC: [sings] "A pretty girl is like a mel-oh-dee!" I know, I know all the words even today. And that's how it went on. 'Course I'm nearly into '38 now. Just before the war you know. But that was it. There was all different things you know. But that was my picture house what showed in the back. Because we used to sneak in. We used to sneak in when the men went out for a pint. But the place itself it was such a, it was when I think about it, it was like a shack. You know. The two, the forms went right across--

VB: Mhm.

EC: From one side to the other. Just one, you know, just dipping down the screen you know. And there was a divider. Then the posh seats. Then there was you know, they were threepence. Threepence to go in them. But eh you know if I had the money. Say I had fourpence old money I'd rather go two nights to the tuppenny. You know. For tuppence. Where it'd have meant one night. Now like I told you, nobody came round selling sweets or ice cream, oh no. No. On our... on our picture house we went up two steps. Now on the bottom stair a chap used to stand with an attaché case. And erm his name was Charlie Webb. Still remember. Charlie Webb. And he used to have this attaché case. And there was nothing over a penny in it. There was little ha'penny bars of Cadbury's chocolate. They weren't wrapped. They were just in a box. You know.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Cadbury's box. They weren't wrapped. And there was just about that big, and it had on it Cadbury's. Oh I loved those. But, there weren't enough for ha'penny. You know what I mean. You wanted more so eh he used to sell what you called everlasting sticks. And then they used, they used to sell what we call gobstoppers. They were like a big round ball of toffee. And you used to suck them and they used to change different colours. And they used to last nearly all night. You'd start off and you were sucking.

VB: [laughs]

EC: Those were only ha'penny. And then there was a shop that sold erm they made their own sweets. And all the bits that fell off. You used to put them together and you could buy ha'p'orth of what we call waste. And it was all different pieces of toffee all mixed together but they were all sort

of stuck together you see. 'Cause they were, you know, sticky and whatever. So, that's what we went for. You know. But poor Charlie Webb. Sometimes he'd let you have them one weekend, you know, on tick [credit]. I never went for that. I thought No. No, I'm not doing that. If I get ha'penny I'll go and get some. You know, buy it there and then. But that's how he used to have a little attaché case on the step. And you used to buy it before going in. Nobody came round. And before it was modernised, we didn't get a ticket. We got like a round metal, you know like a polo mint.

VB: Uhuh.

EC: It was sort of a round flat metal like that. And they used to give you one of them. And you used to just hand it in to the, what we call the check girl.

VB: [coughs]

EC: Like a metal thing, you know. But when they went modernised then they had the tickets, you know, we used to have a ticket, you know just like a... So, it didn't really modernise very much the place. It didn't modernise. It just was the same old screen you know.

VB: Mhm.

EC: And erm, well, they did their best, like erm, when it was breaking down, you know, we accepted it because we thought, well it might be off about ten minutes then it'd come back on and the films'd be flashing. [laughs]

VB: Ah.

EC: So we settled for the right one.

VB: Yeah.

EC: You know the films used to be coming down till we settled. Because it was only going to be them wind-up things you know. In the operating room [projection booth] 'cause [you had the?]. And the lads you know. When there was a light shining right across, they used to throw little bits of orange peel into it and it used to sparkle.

VB: [gasps]

EC: It was, I can see it now, you know. They'd break little bits off and throw it up. And it used to sparkle. [inaudible] orange peel. And they used to really have some fun, you know. And I didn't mind if the film wasn't up to the mark. But I made it my business. I never went when the films were you know not my taste--

VB: Mhm.

EC: Or whatever. So, it didn't bother me. But erm, like I say there was, there was erm so many films. He did a lot of films, Robert Taylor. He did *Quo Vadis*. And eh *A Yank At Oxford*. *Waterloo Bridge*. They, they came later. But I made it my business to see every one of these. Those were all my heartthrobs. Robert Taylor. Cary Grant. Cary Grant. Clark Gable. But those were the main ones. Yep.

VB: It's interesting. 'Cause as you say, they're all sort of quite similar in looks as well. Is it the dark men that you liked?

EC: Yeah. Seemed to be, yeah. There was others like, blonde like eh Nelson Eddy. Jeanette [Gay?], he was blonde. No. Wasn't my scene. And eh Gene Raymond and different ones you know. I liked them but, no, I was mad on, seemed to be--

VB: Yeah.

EC: Them with black hair and swarthy. Lovely. But there was so many lovely films. Here's Spencer Tracy. Oh--

VB: Mhm.

EC: Now in his way he was a rough type. He wasn't. But there was something about him. I went to see him in *Captains Courageous*. And he was with Freddie Bartholomew. Oh I loved that film. I think I put that down on erm, you know, I think I put that down. Have you had those by the way?

VB: They may have arrived while I was away.

EC: Mhm.' Cause there was two more chaps came--

VB: Mhm.

EC: Last week and they filled them in. But *Captains Courageous*. That was a real weepie. Oh I cried about that. I really cried. They got drowned at the end. You know. Freddie Bartholomew's looking at the sea, breaking his heart. And there's [the child?] you know. And the tears and I was, I was crying about that. I used to always be crying in bed. Yeah. But no, they never took us. Ever. To the pictures. No, my mother never went. She couldn't afford it.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Couldn't afford it. And I could've only managed to go only the way I did. I could never have gone. We never got any spending money.

VB: Mhm.

EC: It wasn't, you know--

VB: Did your father go at all?

EC: No. He never went.

VB: No.

EC: He wasn't working. Was a labourer.

VB: Yeah.

EC: My father was only a labourer and whatever jobs he got, he'd only be a few weeks and then he'd come off and he was [pause 2 seconds] going to what we called then the Board of Guardians--

VB: Mhm.

EC: Means test, whatever. And sometimes he'd just come home with a food ticket.

VB: Aw it must've been quite a struggle for them.

EC: Aw, it was awful. My poor mother--

VB: Yeah.

EC: I don't know how she managed. And eh that's why people went to the pawnshops. They went to the pawnshops. That's another thing, I used to go to pawnshops for people and get money.

VB: Mhm.

EC: And if they'd send me to the pawnshop with something. And if they didn't accept it, you know, sometimes they never accepted it, I wouldn't get nothing then for going. But if they accepted I'd perhaps get a penny or something you know.

VB: Mhm.

EC: So I even did that. Just to go, I'd have gone every night. I really loved. We had nothing else. We had no entertainment in the home. We didn't have any television. We didn't have no wireless. I remember once we did get a gramophone given to us. One of them wind-up things with the big arm-

-

VB: Mhm.

EC: And we only had six records. And eh we used to squabble about winding it up. You know. And it went on so we had to take it in turns. And we only had six records. And they were played that often, they were worn out. So, we couldn't afford them. However you could go to Woolworths and buy a record for less than sixpence a week.

VB: Mhm.

EC: You know, at that time there was nothing over sixpence at Woolworths. And they sold records. But erm [pause 2 seconds] we couldn't even afford [inaudible].

VB: Mhm.

EC: It was only the pictures that we could, you know, rely on. It was just that. But eh...

VB: What were the six records? Can you remember them now?

EC: [pause 2 seconds]. One was 'Tiptoe Through the Tulips'. Another was erm 'When The Red, Red Robin, Keeps Bob, Bob Bobbin'. Those were out at the time because Al Jolson, he used to sing them. Yeah. Erm. 'When the Red Red Robin', 'Tiptoe Through the Tulips'. 'In a Monastery Garden.' Eh, what was the others? 'In a Monastery Garden,' eh, [pause 3 seconds]. 'In a Persian Market'. These were the records that was given us. They weren't our choice. 'In a Persian Market.' 'The Drinking Song' and 'The Laughing Policeman.'

VB: Mhm.

EC: 'The Laughing Policeman' and 'The Drinking Song'. At the end it goes, 'Drinking, drinking, drinking'.

VB: [laughs]

EC: Very very low. The bass. It wasn't our choice but [we used to put them on?]. They was given to us. And eh they got worn out eventually. But my father erm, well, let us. Used to put them in the oven and warm them up and make plant pots or other things with them you know. So that was, and then they wanted a box of needles.

VB: Mhm.

EC: The needles'd wear out. Couldn't afford a box of needles. And so that was never in use. We had nothing. We had nothing. That was my, that's why I loved the thirties. And the twenties. I loved the thirties 'cause that was all my entertainment and what I loved. And, you know, all that came with it. It was lovely. Just never forget the thirties. Although they were really poor and poverty-stricken. We

had nothing. And I think, when I started work I didn't have a coat. I just started work with, and I didn't have anything... we didn't have nothing.

VB: Mhm. I mean how did you feel when you went to the pictures?

EC: In regards to what?

VB: Just, I mean you're talking about erm you know your life at home and then going to the cinema.

EC: Yeah.

VB: Was that--

EC: That's when I felt on top of the world because I'd see them beautiful dresses and smart clothes! And I used to be, I really, I was absolutely eh obsessed with it. [I saw them lovely?] Even them days, the actresses you know. And you see eh Betty Grable and eh, you know, all that were going them days. And the beautiful, they had pads, they had their pads then you know, they had their padding on. They were tight, you know. And erm Bette Davis, and all these beautiful... Aw that was, to me, it was something to see you know. And eh a really erm tch, oh, how can I say? I was, I was really obsessed with it. And I had my head in it. You know. I had my head in it, and whatever, 'cause I... Probably me mother'd bought me a dress off somebody or somebody had given me one you know. That's why I never could go dancing. I didn't have the clothes. Couldn't go dancing. I had to go to the pictures. I couldn't go dancing. Because, I remember going up one time and I borrowed a dress off a girl I worked with you know. And eh that was it.

VB: Mhm.

EC: 'Cause we had such a big family. My mother had ten. I was the eldest of ten. And there was no hand-me-downs for me, you understand, I was the eldest of ten. There was none for me. There was no hand-me-downs. So eh in that way it spoilt me a lot. But like I say, I made my own way. I went in the shops. Asked them if they were gonna use their free pass. And erm, I done errands. I'd take a bottle, anything. I just did anything. I made it. Done it. Like I said, I was like a little old woman.

VB: [laughs]

EC: I was a little old woman! You know. And erm and then we'd talk with girls in the school yard. We used to sit, sit down in the school yard, in a group, talk. They were all as bad as me, you know. All as bad as me. Wanting to know. Who. If I didn't go [to the pictures] the night before, somebody did. Talked about it all the time. And that's how our life was then. In the thirties. I lie in bed now sometimes of a night thinking how thrilled I used to be. And how envious, when I seen all these lovely things and all that. And I thought, I wonder if I ever, you know. I wonder if I ever will get better and sorted out. But then the war came and erm [pause 2 seconds] that made matters worse really. 'Cause you'd be... [pause 2 seconds] in the pictures, I remember going to see Deanna Durbin one night in *One Hundred Men and a Girl*. That was after the thirties. And erm then the air raid sirens went and so after the thirties that was six years of... So I used to often wonder you know, will I be like that, will things get better you know. And you always had visions of being like them. [inaudible] You know, seeing them. It was just lovely. I loved that thirties. I really, I was pleased when I heard that you wanted to know. I was really pleased. That's why I said to Fred, I said, "Ooh I'll come Fred." And Walter, he wanted to come. Well, I have brought a piece for you--

VB: Ah!

EC: If you want to take that erm, erm, you know that what I shown you in our book.

VB: Yes. Yes.

EC: Walter's brother. I have brought. I've brought you one. If you want that book, the part out of it.

VB: That would be great. Yes.

EC: What Walter's written.

VB: That would be great. Yes.

EC: I've got it here. There you are. I've got a book and it was printed, erm, the place that printed them for us, he put a couple extra. Because he'd made a mistake--

VB: Right.

EC: So I've taken it out. So I thought well you may be glad.

VB: Oh that'd be great. Yes.

EC: That part that Walter's wrote about the films. You can... [rustling; pause 3 seconds] Is that yours?

VB: These are mine. Yeah.

EC: Yes I specially brought it in case erm... [rustling; pause 2 seconds]. I put it in somewhere. Oh I think I know where it is.

VB: Ah.

EC: I think I know where it is. I brought some magazines for the lady tomorrow and it may be with them. [pause 3 seconds] Yeah. There it is.

VB: Oh that's great.

EC: You can have, I thought well I'll take that out of an old book. And that was what Walter has written.

VB: That's wonderful.

EC: Yeah.

VB: Thanks very much.

EC: It says, "Entertainment in my lifetime to date, 1921 to '93". But it's mostly the thirties. We write about the thirties. "As varied from the very simplest, to the miraculous. For that in my estimation is what is what radio, and later, television are." But it goes on then to the eh, to the pictures erm--

VB: Oh that's great. Thanks a lot.

EC: Mhm. This is only about radio, going on to wireless. Eh, oh! "We must not forget other forms of entertainment in between years that enjoyed tremendous booms in the '30s and '40s and are still with us." Erm, "The theatre of course," eh. [inaudible] It's talking about... "This followed by variety, a form of entertainment to suit all taste in the form of dancing, comedy, speciality acts." Erm, starts from the music halls there. "I have not forgotten one more miracle of the age of the cinema, the pictures, the talkies or whatever name it enjoyed in its progress. Suddenly upon this world, a new dimension was revealed to us."

VB: Ah.

EC: "Moving pictures commenced as a very primitive media, both in quality of film and projection, being both jerky and, of course, silent. Here we had people actually portrayed on a screen and moving." See it goes on from there. There and there. There. Oh that's a little bit of, see, I've taken this out of the book.

VB: Yeah.

EC: There's a little bit of Fred Dean's there, what he's... That's nothing. These are just on nothing. Style, what somebody's written. Erm somebody's written that, you know, but that was the main thing.

VB: Oh that'll be great.

EC: See. I had to take them out 'cause it's the way that someone--

VB: Yeah. Oh I'll enjoy having a look through that. Erm, I'll maybe take a note of the title of your--

EC: Book.

VB: Book as well. Erm I brought along a book which I thought you might like to see which is an annual, 1938, from the films.

EC: [gasps] Oh Norma Shearer! Aw that is lovely.

VB: I was really pleased to find that.

EC: Oh Ross Alexander'll be in it!

VB: You never know actually! That's what I was just thinking. [laughs]

EC: Ross Alexander. 'Cause June, I told June... [pause 9 seconds]

VB: That's great.

EC: How did you find out about our group?

VB: Erm I was actually given your number by the Central Library.

EC: That's right. We're on the computers.

VB: Yeah.

EC: We're on the computer. Yeah, because we've had a few people coming erm and eh they, that's another one. June's just brought that to me. She said if it's erm, if it's any... see they were all called picture houses as you know. But ours was called the 'Royal Cinema' so we call it 'the cinny' [possibly referring to the Royal Osborne]

VB: Mhm.

EC: Always called it the 'cinny'. Or 'We're goin to the cinny.' Or the 'flicks', like I told you. And that is all different pictures actually of the eh, you know, little advertisements.

VB: Mhm.

EC: I think, there's Gracie Fields there. She eh... [looking through book] Missed it now.

VB: Did you ever go into the centre of Manchester to go to the films?

EC: I went a couple of times erm but I think the first time was when I got married--

VB: Ah I see.

EC: When I got married my husband used to take me. Used to go with my husband, you know. And I used to see erm, [pause 2 seconds] one particular film that I loved. I've seen it since on the eh television. And I was crying. Erm Lana Turner. And erm *Ziegfeld Girl*.

VB: Mhm.

EC: It's eh, where she sang erm, [voices in background; inaudible]. Specially, I'd only just got married. I went to see that in the Odeon. And erm 'You Stepped Out of a Dream'. And she's coming down the steps. And er, eh I'll tell you who's in it. Fred MacMurray. And she was coming down the stair and they was playing that. Tony Martin was in it and he sang it. [gasps] Oh! That film I'd see it every... watch it every day now. It's Lana Turner. She's coming down these steps. 'Course that was after the thirties. That'll be forties.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Beginning of the forties. And there Tony Martin was singing 'You Stepped Out of a Dream.' And she was dressed that beautiful! And she looked... Oh God! I just don't believe it. It really took my breath away.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Well half of the films did when I seen them come on. You know these musicals. Eh Ginger Rogers dancing. Fred Astaire. If any kid, if any kid was sat there, "Shurrup!"

VB: [laughs]

EC: "Shurrup! Be quiet!" Do you know I used to go mad. Oh.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Oh yeah. I know every one of these. This is a good book isn't it?

VB: Mhm.

EC: Oh [whispers something inaudible].

VB: [laughs]

EC: Oh Errol Flynn! Aw he died and all didn't he? I used cry: "Aw Errol Flynn's died!" 'Cause I seen him in *Captain Blood*.

VB: Mhm.

EC: With Ross Alexander. [gasps] Oh! A captain he was definitely. *Captain Blood*. I just seen him in the two films. I don't know what that one was. That was when I first seen him. And he had a dress suit in, a dress suit on and he walked in this big place. You know, they were all dressed up. He stood for a minute, you know, looking round and I thought, [gasps] "Huh! Who is he?" My God. The first time I seen him. He was honestly from out of this world.

VB: Mhm.

EC: To me. Nobody else knows him. Nobody else. You've never heard of him.

VB: I haven't.

EC: No.

VB: But I can almost picture him when you say in *Captain Blood*.

EC: Yeah, he was in *Captain Blood*.

VB: Yeah.

EC: 'S'good book this, isn't it?

VB: Mhm.

EC: Oh! Look at that. Oh there he is! That's Bela Lugosi. Used to frighten me to death, him.

VB: [smiles]

EC: Was it Bela Lugosi. Oh I was terrified of him in *Dracula* with them two big teeth! Oh eh, I was [inaudible] terrified. Isn't it lovely this? Oh, oh! 'You'll Never Know.'

VB: Alice Faye.

EC: [sings] "You'll never know just how much I miss you." Oh I used to love Alice best. That was her song. 'You'll Never Know.' That's Warner Baxter. Tyrone Power. Tyrone Power. He was another one. He died and all. Yeah. And John Garfield.

VB: Mhm.

EC: They all died. Oh these are 1938. I was married then.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Was going to the pictures though.

VB: Mhm. Was it 1938 you were married, then?

EC: No. No, no, no, I'm mixed up.

VB: Ah.

EC: No, I wasn't married. I got [a new?] husband after, just after 1938. No. I didn't get married till around 1942. No, it was just after then.

VB: Ah. Did your husband like going to--

EC: Yes.

VB: Cinema as well?

EC: Oh he was a dancer.

VB: Ah.

EC: He was a great dancer. I've got all his certificates. Got certificates for dancing. You know. And erm I erm, there's a chap came in here, he used to be a big band leader. And he was at the Ritz in town. You know the big dance place. The Ritz. Well known to everybody. And his name was Phil Moss. And he was there for years. Well he's retired now and he came in here one day to give us a speech. Well, anybody was invited. And eh he was talking about the old band days when eh, and he was telling us about the people he'd met, you know. Different ones. Actors.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And I brought them to show him. My husband's certificates. And they're about that big. And all round is dancers. Like Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, you know. And in the middle it says like, 'John Casey'. Certified that he's passed for the, and eh, I think it was the Manchester 'Chronicle' in them days. The 'Evening Chronicle'. They put the dances on. And I brought them and shown him. Eh, 1937. Just before he met me he was went in for all this dancing. Because I told you I never went. I didn't have the clothes. And erm, I brought them to show Phil Moss. "Oh," he said, "I've never seen this. You're going back days. They're marvellous. To see these," you know.

VB: Mhm.

EC: And eh I've got about four or five, you know. One for each dance, you know. Slow foxtrot. Waltz. Tango. And, erm, they're great. So he was a dancer but when he got in with me, he just didn't go any more. He used to take me and, I was getting dressed a bit better then. A lot better, you know. Getting smart. And I used to go with him then. He taught me how to dance. So I was getting... although all our wages went on clothing coupons. You know. Black market clothing coupons. So my wages, you know, whatever money--

VB: Mhm.

EC: I got. Was going on all the coupons for silk stockings and eh, oh! I got very smart. I did. Smart.

VB: [coughs]

EC: Now she was an English star. Ann Todd.

VB: Ann Todd.

EC: I liked, I liked her sort of films—

[End of Side B]

[End of Tape One]

[Start of Tape Two]

[Start of Side A]

EC: Ooh, that was, that was the biggie.

VB: Vivien Leigh.

EC: That was the biggie. That was it. Wasn't it? That was it erm with Clark Gable. *Gone with the Wind*.

VB: Oh-h!

EC: Oh that was the biggie that. Gosh! That was '38. 1938! Seen that about four times. [inaudible]
[Out of this world?] [gasps] We had an interval, we had an interval for, it was that long, that film. We
had an interval. I seen that at the eh picture house down there. In the posh picture house.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Oh aye. I always remember that. That was the biggie. *Gone with the Wind*.

VB: Leslie Howard as well.

EC: Oh! Leslie Howard! Yeah. He was British. But I liked his films. Now he was British. Yeah. There was the odd ones. But as for the comedies. Like erm The Three Stooges. I used to like them. The Three Stooges. The Marx--

VB: Mhm.

EC: The Marx Brothers. And erm different ones, Charlie Chaplin. Those, you know. But I saw him in a straight film, it was beautiful. It was erm *City Lights* I think it was called, *City Lights*. Have I got it written down? And he was with erm ooh who was he, she was blind and he fell in love with her and he erm, yeah, Charlie Chaplin. Oh yeah. It was called *City Lights*. And erm he was a tramp in it. Like he is usually. That was his usual. But it was a straight, he wasn't like you know, acting the goat like he did. I loved that film with eh Charlie Chaplin. Yeah, *City Lights*. But on the others there was little cartoons. And Laurel and Hardy. Oh we used to love them, didn't we? We loved Laurel and Hardy and we loved the Marx Brothers. And I tell you who else I used to love watching. Betty Grable. Million Dollar Legs. Used to call her. Betty Grable. She was Million Dollar Legs. Well she had her legs insured, didn't she? Thousands and thousands. Yeah. She had her legs insured didn't she? So those were erm... And I like *42nd Street*. That was a beautiful, I thought that was a beautiful musical. Dick Powell and Ruby Keeler. And erm oh I used to be eh, oh I admired those dresses. Oh gaw, they seemed to be all furs and fluffy, you know. And there'd be loads of yards of material and er... Gosh! So that was it. But erm like I say this was when I got a lot smarter. This was erm--

VB: Mhm. Did you try to look like the movie stars when you got--

EC: Yeah. Yes because I always remember I erm in thirty..., '38 I started working on war work in 1938. I was a machinist and I was making anti-gas suits. Now some German refugees came over, girls. And I worked for a Jewish firm. So they came, working near me, you know, they'd fled out of the, you know, the Jewish... They fled out of Germany. So they came working with me. And eh, I bought some beautiful dresses off those. They were really lovely. They let me have them cheap. Eh

they could speak broken English. These two in particular, nice girls. And erm I remember once, she saw me once and what was all the go was diamantes. Diamantes, you know, are eh like little erm, [pause 2 seconds] coloured, you know, whatever on the... And erm, I always remember one. It was all in the waist, all in the waist. So I always remember them. And they were similar to what they used to wear. And that one that eh, I think in old money, I think they were about one and six, the lot. Two shillings.

VB: Mhm.

EC: And they had some beautiful dresses, these German girls. And that one in particular. It was all like studded. Studded in the waist. It was tight. You know. And erm so I began to get, that's, thank God, that's when it's, I got in with me husband. He used to look a bit, you know... the girls we worked with, we used to borrow things off one another.

VB: Mhm.

EC: And it's a funny thing. He must have seen me many time and wondered "Only ever seen her in one, where it's gone? [inaudible]"

VB: [laughs]

EC: "It used to be done up lovely one night, never see 'em again!" Well he never, you know, nothing was commented about but--

VB: Mhm.

EC: We all did it. We all did it. Borrow off one another.

VB: [laughs]

EC: Joan Bennett was lovely. She was lovely. That was her sister, Constance Bennett--

VB: Oh right.

EC: That was her sister, Constance Bennett. Yes. There was two sisters those. Constance. Called her Connie. Connie Bennett. Constance. Yeah she was lovely. Joan Bennett. And I tell you who was nice and all. Marion Davies. I always thought that was Bette Davis's sister. We had an argument once and I wrote up about it to some place to ask.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Was they sisters? I think it was the 'Weekly News'. And eh anyway they wrote back to me saying no. They weren't sisters. So I lost the argument.

VB: Aw. [laughs]

EC: I was saying to them they was, they was sisters! No. I lost the argument.

VB: [laughs]

EC: They weren't sisters. I always thought they were. Don't know her. I don't know her. Marla Shelton. What was she in? [pause 2 seconds] Walter Wanger. Oh, it's *Walter Wanger's Vogues of 1938; 52nd Street*. I must've seen her. I must've seen her.

VB: Mhm. [coughs]

EC: Oh *Journey's End*. Oh! *Mutiny on the Bounty*! Oh my God! Charles Laughton. Oh Charles Laughton! *Mutiny on the Bounty*. And I tell you what another one that I seen him in. *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. [gasps] Oh! did I cry at the night when he got whipped, they was whipping him on his hump! I said to somebody I said, "Aw! They was whipping him, whipping him all the time on his hump!" I said, "It must've hurt, really hurt!" And they said, "No it wouldn't hurt, it wouldn't hurt. Because it'd be all fat, that!"

VB: Aw. [laughs]

EC: [laughs] It'd be all fat. I said, "No it wouldn't! His poor hump!" [laughs] Yeah I used to go very often but 1938. Is the book 1930s?

VB: Yes it is. Yeah.

EC: Is the one 1930s, the book?

VB: Actually I've got another one with me just now that's, I think this might be about 1932. Something like that.

EC: Oh.

VB: 1935.

EC: Ooh is Ross Alexander in it?

VB: He might be. [laughs]

EC: Oh this is the 'Daily Express' is it? [pause 2 seconds] I used to love Greta Garbo and all when she first came out. Greta Garbo. Specially when you know, she was erm... [pause 3 seconds] Aw there he is! Aw 'The Private Lives of', aw! I like that [referring to *The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex*]. I seen that. I liked that. I liked him and all. Now they were British. They were British. Clive Brook and Diana Wynyard. Yeah. They were British. Now I like anything like that. But like I say, they're British. George Formby--

VB: Mhm.

EC: Aw, no way! Aw, seen him in that one. And I thought, oh gosh! Playing that flaming banjo and all! And eh, [sings] "I'm leaning on a lamp post, at the bottom... at the corner of the street" Oh no! Riding in the TT races [referring to *No Limit*]. No. No. Not George Formby.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Jean Parker. Yeah. She was nice. She was going well in the thirties. Jean Parker. Do you remember, remember her? They didn't, they didn't make a lot of films these sort of people, but the films they did make was noticeable.

VB: Mhm.

EC: And erm you knew them, you know. A good film. All the [inaudible] I've seen him a lot but I didn't know his name. Maytheson, Matheson. I didn't know his name. Madge Evans. I've seen her. Oh Lionel Barrymore! Oh well Doctor Kildare [possibly referring to *Young Dr Kildare*]. He was Dr Kildare wasn't he? That was a TV series as well, wasn't it?

VB: Uhuh.

EC: Dr Kildare. Oh there they are. Their films. Jack Hulbert. Oh no! For God's sake! I remember him on a Saturday afternoon matinee once in I think it was, they used to call them 'following up' [referring to serials].

VB: Mhm.

EC: 'Following up' films. Used to say, "Oh! 'Following up' films." And I think he was in with his brother. He had a brother. And erm, I don't know where it was, it ended up where they was both killed or something. The next week we went they was sat supping tea! [laughs]

VB: [laughs]

EC: [laughing] That's how they used to be in the 'following ups'! You'd see them falling off the cliff! You know! The next week you'd go they was standing! If it was a cowboy you'd see him getting shot. He'd be on the floor. The next week they'd be riding off on a horse!

VB: [laughs]

EC: And oh! They weren't my, I just couldn't be minded with them. He was lovely and all. William Powell. In *The Thin Man*. There was a Thin Man series. With little dog Asta.

VB: Aw. I was going to say with the wee dog, yes.

EC: Aw! The little dog Asta! [It was proper old-fashioned?] We never had a dog and I used to think, Aw! I love that little dog! Oh now she was British, Jessie Mathews. Oh I didn't like her films much.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Didn't like her films much. Funny, summat [something] about the British films. There was the odd ones. There was erm, erm, [pause 2 seconds] oh Jean Simmons. I liked her in films. Jean Simmons. She was British. And also erm, who was that other one that was British, I liked her. She's still alive today and I seen her photo. She's so wrinkled. So... it was unbelievable. She was in *Madonna of the Seven Moons*. She's just died now: Phyllis Calvert.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Phyllis Calvert. And he was erm, he went to America and she was in *Madonna of the Seven Moons*. And eh, there was that song in it about earrings. He was a gypsy.

VB: Mhm.

EC: James, no, not James Mason. Stewart Granger. Yeah.

VB: Ah.

EC: *Madonna of the Seven Moons*. And eh, I think it was him that was the gypsy. And they sang that song. [sings] "Da da dee dee, dee dee dee de de. Oh when you wear those golden earrings." That's right. That's the one. *Madonna of the Seven Moons*. Yeah. Stewart Granger. [pause 2 seconds] Oh is that *Three Little Pigs* here? [pause 2 seconds]. Aw, I thought it was *Three Little Pigs*. Love that. [sings]. "Who's afraid of the big bad wolf?" [door slamming] There's Micky! There's Micky but where's Felix? And Pluto. Yeah it was Felix the Cat before erm... Felix. Used to always have his hands behind him, you know, walking. I told you they sang that song. "Felix kept on walking, kept on walking still. With his hands behind him." [pause 3 seconds; looking at book] She looks British. Oh what's her name? Erm Anna Lee. *The Dominant Sex*. Yes. Yes, yes, yes, yes. *The Dominant Sex*. These seemed to have all changed these a lot from the, Conrad Veidt. Oh I can remember Conrad Veidt.

VB: Mhm.

EC: He was great. A nice-looking bloke. Yeah. Conrad Veidt. Oh Jack Buchanan!

VB: [laughs] Not one of your favourites? [laughs]

EC: Not really. No. [chuckles] He wasn't bad but he weren't one of my heartthrobs. No. He wasn't bad.

VB: Mhm.

EC: I liked Robert Donat.

VB: Oh. He's good.

EC: *The 39 Steps*. Yeah. Robert Donat. Anyway, you say when you're ready to go.

VB: I'm in no rush. I mean it's--

EC: What time do you make it?

VB: About ten to twelve.

EC: Aw it's not bad is it?

VB: Yeah.

EC: I'm going on later on to Rivington Barn. Half past four.

VB: Aw.

EC: For a meal. And a dance.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And whatever. And drink. Mhm. Let's see what we can sort out.

VB: I'm gonna see if I can find erm Ross Alexander. 'Cause I know there's a bit at the back here where they have information about the stars.

EC: Ross Alexander. Yeah.

VB: Erm but no. Doesn't look like he's there.

EC: Well this is the earlier one isn't it?

VB: Yeah.

EC: He may be here.

VB: You might just be lucky. [coughs]

EC: Seen that. Aw my, I think my mother took me to see that once.

VB: Ah.

EC: *All Quiet on the Western Front.*

VB: Yeah.

EC: Aw that was! Aw God! That was terrible that. That was the First World War. Tch.

VB: Mhm.

EC: It doesn't tell you the names does it? Oh... here's erm, [pause 2 seconds] Leo Carillo. Yes. I remember him well. He was always in gangster films him. He was always in gangster films.

VB: Oh I see Madeleine Carroll. She was in *The 39 Steps* I think wasn't she?

EC: She was. Yeah. Madeleine Carroll.

VB: Yeah.

EC: She was in, yeah. Oh *Charlie Chan*! Used to be terrified of him.

VB: [laughs]

EC: Charlie Chan and Fu Manchu. Ho! Used to have nails right out here! [inaudible] Oh Fu Manchu! That was, oh, that was... never seeing Fu Manchu again. Used to see it once and you'd say, "Oh I'm not gonna see that again!" [pause 5 seconds] Marlene Dietrich. I wasn't very struck on her. Don't know why. [sings] "See what the boys in the back room..." She used to sing that one. I always remember seeing her in a film, John Wayne's coming through the door and she's singing. [sings] "See them shoulders broad and glor..." Oh!

VB: [laughs] What about the gangster films? Did you like the--

EC: James Cagney.

VB: Cagneys and--

EC: Yeah. Yeah the erm, *The Bowery* and erm the Dead End Kids.

VB: Ah.

EC: Oh Leo Gorcey. I loved the Dead End Kids. Oh them I did love. Leo Geo, eh, what did you call eh Leo Georgie, Georgie I think [referring to Leo Gorcey]. And erm we used to say, "Oh go and see the Dead End Kids!" Oh yeah. I loved the Dead End Kids. And then they were in different things. You know. James Cagney. I think it was erm, [pause 2 seconds] 'Dawn I Die'.

VB: Oh.

EC: *Each Dawn I Die*. And eh, he was a real tough character. Is that where he goes to the [electric] chair at the end?

VB: Oh.

EC: And to give the kids, so, he screamed. So because they made a hero out of him and they thought he was, you know, tough and all this, and they loved him. So, at the end, when they was taking him to the chair. Just to te... alter the kids' opinion on him because they was going in his footsteps. And he's screaming, "No no! I don't wanna die! Don't take me. No don't take me." And when the kids knew, they come aw, he was a sissy. You know. [referring to *Angels With Dirty Faces*]

VB: Yeah.

EC: He weren't as tough as... And eh that was great.

VB: Is that one of the ones where Pat O'Brien's the priest in it?

EC: He's the priest in it.

VB: Yeah. I remember that.

EC: I think it was him that told him to do it.

VB: Yeah. 'Cause they were supposed to have been childhood friends and--

EC: That's right. They were both different characters you know.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Yeah. Pat O'Brien. I think he talked him into doing it.

VB: Yeah.

EC: He didn't want to do it. And he wasn't going to do it. But he talked, he said, for them. You know. "They're gonna go your way. They're gonna follow you," you know. And he talked him into doing it. To, you know, disillusion, the kids.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Yeah, that's it. It's a lovely film.

VB: It's very sad that.

EC: I wonder if that's been back on.

VB: I'm sure it has actually.

EC: I don't know. Because maybe these days now, the way things are, you know. It's all the kids isn't it, that they're thinking about now. There's so much violence--

VB: Mhm.

EC: And shooting in there. But there definitely is that Ross Alexander.

VB: Mhm. I'll have to keep a lookout for him.

EC: Definitely. Yes. Definitely. Ross Alexander.

VB: Right. These are probably just a wee bit too late I think to--

EC: Well. No. I must've, which is the one, this is the one erm, just a minute.

VB: I was looking for *Captain Blood* as well but,

EC: Oh Yes. *Captain--*

VB: But I can't see anything about it. Must be just a bit too late.

EC: Well let me see. Have I got the year down? [pause 7 seconds] Tell you what turned me off Clark Gable a bit. When he went in that musical. He went in a musical and he was dancing, singing.

VB: Mhm.

EC: I didn't want him in a musical.

VB: Mhm.

EC: And I think that was called 'Putting on the Ritz' [referring to *Idiot's Delight*]. And that was 1939. Latter end. He went in a musical. Same as James Cagney!

VB: Yeah.

EC: HE went in a few musicals, didn't he?

VB: Mhm.

EC: Yeah. And that put me off. I thought, aw!

VB: **I can't think of him dancing, actually. It's not really, his build and everything.**

EC: No, no. Well he erm, he was dancing with a chorus, you know, girl. They used to have a girl. And that put me off a lot, that. Put me off him, that. Didn't want him. I wanted him to play like in *Red Dust* and, and eh, *Gone with the Wind*, you know, and all them. But erm, no, didn't want, I didn't want James Cagney in. And yet he was good. He was really good you know.

VB: **In *Yankee Doodle Dandy*.**

EC: Yeah. Yeah. He was really good. That was another thing in the pictures, when we were sat really quiet. But all round the picture house it was like corrugated iron. Metal. And the kids used to run along with sticks. Aw you'd be sat in the pictures and you thought, "Aw, no." Well the men used to run out there to stop them. As soon as the men disappeared somebody'd slip in then. You know. Used to stand waiting at the entrance, then they'd come out [inaudible]. But they did used to run like along with sticks oh and you could hear it in the pictures! It was only corrugated. You know.

VB: **Uhuh. I'll bet it was at the romantic bits as well. Quiet moments. [laughs]**

EC: No, no. Used to be like, aw no! Not again. I thought. I'm going to [kill 'em?] myself. So that was something else. That was some more noise, that.

VB: Mhm.

EC: This flaming corrugated. But I don't ever remember a carpet on the floor, even when it was supposed to have been modernised. But I never thought they'd be able to ever afford talkies in that picture house. You know what I mean, it's so eh, you know, so drab, and the prices, they were only tuppence, you know, at the front. Threepence at the back. But it all seemed to be well, there was many a romance started in there. 'Cause I know my friend, she got in with one of the boys in there and she married him! There was many a romance started in the cinny.

VB: Yeah.

EC: I was with her the night when she got in with him. I didn't like it, I didn't like his pal. No. I didn't like his pal, so I... But anyway, she carried on with him and she married him.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Yeah.

VB: I was going to ask. I mean did they get the latest films in the picture houses round here or were they--

EC: Eh, they weren't straight away. Oh no. Town always got the first. They'd maybe follow up a month after, you know. They didn't get them right away. If you wanted a film right away, you'd go... you went to town, you see.

VB: Right.

EC: And the poor cinny. I think it was a while, really. Eh, the Rivoli when that opened, and I think that opened about 1933, or 1934. And eh, they were really, well it was erm like more sold the pictures. The erm... they went in a group. Like Essoldos and whatever. Eh, like there was one on [Cheesemore?] Road. That was when that was first... that was called Rivera [possibly referring to the

Rivoli]. Well after that one called the Odeon. So they started going in groups, you know. That was more modern. And erm, it got the films quicker.

VB: Uhuh.

EC: You know. They seemed to get them quick. But that poor place I went to. [laughs] How many times I don't remember! [laughs] It amazed me when it was going to get talkies. I thought they'd never, never get round to it. But when I was... if I didn't like a film much, I used to sit watching the woman playing the piano. I used to sit on the front, you know, watching the woman. That fascinated me. 'Cause we didn't have a piano. We didn't know piano. And when the baddies come on, she used to go on the long notes, you know. When it was the nice and high notes when the hero come along, you know, I used to be like this, watching her playing. And, do you know, some of the lads used to get bored at some of the films you know. They used to be throwing... [laughs]

VB: [laughs]

EC: [inaudible] I used to feel sorry. I used to be a terror me. [whispers something; inaudible]

VB: [laughs]

EC: This is what it was. But till I got older, then no way! I never entertain that. I wouldn't. Like I said, I only went when there was a film, you know. 'Cause I thought, if I love that and I've got tuppence left, I'll go the next night to see it.

VB: Yeah.

EC: 'Cause they changed. It was only on three nights. And then they changed after the three nights. The picture went on to another, you know. Changed.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. That was one film. But, if it was extra good I think it'd be on the week. But more often than not they changed on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

VB: Yeah.

EC: So, I used to do my best, you know, to get the fourpence. Tuppence for one and tuppence for the other.

VB: Yeah.

EC: So if I went twice a week I was very lucky.

VB: Yeah.

EC: But if I got a free pass I used to save it for Saturday night. Used to save it, if I got a free pass off them. And you could go in the best seats!

VB: Oh. Luxury! [laughs]

EC: Yeah. You could go in the best seats with a free pass. But I used to cha... like the billing for the week, you know, what was on. And I used to look up and I'd think, oh I'll save it for eh, Saturday night. And it was lovely. Oh, I used to keep looking at that free pass coming home, you know. And it was only like a... it wasn't a ticket. It was only like a piece of paper sort of, which was the free pass, they said title of person, you know, there [inaudible] I used to hide it. Hide it.

VB: [laughs]

EC: Hide it, you know, so my brothers wouldn't find it. I used to hide it.

VB: [gasps]. Really! So you kept it secret from your brothers as well.

EC: Oh yeah. Kept it a secret from everybody! Thought, they'll all be doing it! 'Cause I used to, if I... I used to go errands for a woman pretty regular. And if they could get there before me, I never used to tell them who I went errands for because if they could get there before you, they used to, you know. Used to do all that, so--

VB: Yeah.

EC: Everything I did was secretive. Just, you know, to get... Now I had that matchbox. Empty matchbox. Used to put them in the matchbox. So this is how you had to just cope you know.

VB: Yeah.

EC: But I did it and I loved it. I mean what an experience, that! You know, when you think about it. And experience what we did. You know. You managed. And how you got through.

VB: Ingenuity. Yeah.

EC: Mhm. But only for my gran like I said, it's a shame. The talkies just came in. She was only fifty-eight. And she died.

VB: Mhm.

EC: So that was one night that I wasn't, you know. 'Cause she used to take me. She always used to take me. Even when it was [inaudible] and talkies, she still took me. But erm, she died, so after that that was tuppence, that was tuppence I had to struggle out.

VB: Mhm.

EC: I never expected it anyway off my mother. She never ever went out. She never went anywhere. So, this is the story of the thirties. It's lovely. That's all her book's based on. You know, twenties and thirties, you know, we erm... [rustling noise; inaudible] 'Course this is about [inaudible]. You're not interested. You're only interested in the part what I've given you, you know.

VB: Mhm.

EC: But this is the thing that Walter does. It's very nice isn't it?

VB: Oh it is. Yeah.

EC: And erm, this what he does, you know. That's the pawnshop.

VB: The pawnshop.

EC: And I wrote a little article about the pawnshop so that's the finish of my story. About the pawnshop. [name?] pawnshop.

VB: Yeah.

EC: It's still there. Down there now. Still there.

VB: Ah I think I passed that on the bus. Yeah.

EC: Yeah. That was it. It was different then.

VB: The illustrations are fantastic.

EC: Yeah. He's done them lovely.

VB: It gives that that extra--

EC: He's done some erm... [pause 2 seconds] he's done some very good ones. Wait a minute. In particular. We're on another book now. That they used to do in the old days you know.

VB: Oh.

EC: Queens. May Queens. Mori dancers [probably referring to Morris Dancers]. May Queen.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Oh that chap that comes to our group. He was a boxer. That's him.

VB: Right.

EC: So he's wrote a story and all the names of boxers. And this is our group you see. He's done that. I don't know who that's supposed to be. [laughs]

VB: [laughs]

EC: That's George Raft! [laughing] George Raft! [inaudible] George Raft, come again. It looks like him! George Raft. Used to wear a black long overcoat.

VB: Yeah.

EC: George Raft. Used to like him and all. My husband had a look of George Raft.

VB: Ah.

EC: Ah. He was like George Raft. He's done another one there and all!

VB: So he has. [laughing]

EC: That's another picture house! [laughing] Look at the old films he's put. *Mark of Zorro*. Can you see the old films?

VB: Oh yes.

EC: *Mark of Zorro*. Here's some other old films he's put. [pause 3 seconds] That's the woman that used to sit in the box and--

VB: Oh right.

EC: See he's put two steps up. This one, we all nearly went up two steps. But as it was, it was [inaudible]. It was funny. They lived up at this end where these picture houses were. But I lived right further down going towards town.

VB: Ah I see.

EC: Going down to mine, that's where I lived, further down to Collyhurst. Nearer to town. So my picture house, you see, Walter didn't know it. Well that was Dickie Banks's. And nowhere. Twice was enough for me. And that was when our picture house closed down. Well they had talkies. I remember going to see them, it was a lovely film. Lawrence Tibbett. Lawrence Tibbett was a beautiful singer. And he sang eh, the 'Pea'... 'Peanut Vendor', something. And it's a lovely song. I know it. But I don't know what the film was called [referring to *Cuban Love Song*]. I liked that but you were squashed up. You could hardly breathe. And it was only three ha'pence in there. It was tuppence in the cinny. That was very cheap. But you could hardly breathe. Squashed up, you know. And the fellas'd come behind. Pushing [along up?] the forms. Oh I just... no, I thought, you know, no, that's not me. I'll wait till our cinny opens. So eh that was almost erm, that was one of my photos.

VB: Aw, it's lovely. [laughs]

EC: [laughs] That was one of my photos, that.

VB: So who are they?

EC: That's a couple of kids that was in our street, you know--

VB: Ah I see.

EC: That's how it was them days. You'd the old tin bath--

VB: Oh it's beautiful that.

EC: Kids used to wash one another like that. I used to wash our kids like that, sat in the bath. And erm... Oh there's a good one.

VB: It is. Yeah. He's very talented isn't he?

EC: Yeah. Oh he does some lovely, he does some, he's very good. So this is how the book... We've sold erm, three hundred. We've had to get another, they keep coming in. A woman's coming for three tomorrow. Somebody else wants three, you know, so we eh, that's further down there. That's the bridge. Well this is the part I lived. I lived just behind here.

VB: Right.

EC: Yeah. This is just part of Collyhurst I lived. And er, that's right, just behind there. This is a railway bridge. A bridge this where the railway, the trains used to go under across.

VB: Right.

EC: Like that. Yeah. I lived just at the back. Just down there. Where it's rounded off. There was a sort of erm, an entry. And you went down there and I just lived down there. And erm. See that big building there?

VB: Yeah.

EC: Well that, as you just went down there, there's a, there's like a street there. If you went down there the cinny was next to this building. My erm picture house, the cinny, was next to this building.

VB: Aye.

EC: And his train's done very good isn't it?

VB: Mhm. Very much so.

EC: So this is it, you see. We erm we all get on well together. It's a great group. We have some good thing on what's gone on and what hasn't. So that is the first, that's the fire alarms. That's how we used to have them at each, every other corner. That's how we used to, you know, fire.

[End of Side A]

[Start of Side B]

EC: So for our next book he's done that, he'd done one of them Wordsearch [puzzles].

VB: Oh right.

EC: Yeah, Fred. Yes he's done that. Wordsearch. [inaudible] Public houses on Rochdale Road.

VB: [laughs]

EC: Yeah he's done this himself. It's very good that, isn't it? To be able to do that.

VB: It is.

EC: Oh this is one of our books. These are for our next book. My son's done these. See now, my son's done these. Like I've just written that out.

VB: Right.

EC: And he's done that. 'Cause we've got a photo to put in there. This is Queen's Park.

VB: Right.

EC: Used to play in there as kids. And put a photo, we've got a photo there of the parkie. The park attendant.

VB: [laughs]

EC: So my son's done them, you know. He's done a lot for us on his word processor.

VB: So that was where you went for--

EC: Aw! Yeah. Every--

VB: It's a lovely park.

EC: Oh! It was. You know if you'd have passed there--

VB: The thirties.

EC: Aw! That would be packed out. It would. They'd be hundreds and hundreds in there. And it was one mass of flowers.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And there wasn't one flower ever touched. There was never a flower lifted. You'd see that. There was a paddling pond. There was a paddling pond in. And you would have never have got in that.

VB: Yeah.

EC: You were squeezed tight in the paddling pond.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And it was just coming past your ankles!

VB: [laughs]

EC: [laughing] Mind you I always wore clogs and I got them free from the eh... like in school. I always wore clogs. My poor, my poor ankles used to be erm all the skin--

VB: Oh. [coughs]

EC: You know, picking it off [inaudible] So that's how it used to be at this park.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And I've wrote something about it, you know.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Well, written. I should say written. Speak wrong.

VB: 'Cause I was walking, walked through there on the way up and I see there's the big house there, that's all boarded up.

EC: Yeah. That was the Museum.

VB: Yeah.

EC: It was beautiful that.

VB: Seemed a shame that--

EC: Oh! It was, it was beautiful in there.

VB: Yeah.

EC: It's unbelievable. We had an attendant. And I used to go in perhaps, sometimes to take my brother. I'd have to take him to the park. And he used to be behind you watching you all the time. You know. You had to be well-behaved.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And he was watching all the time. You couldn't step out of line for a minute, you know. It was just marvellous and well kept. Then they started vandalising it and smashing the windows.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Not our time. Not in our time.

VB: Yeah.

EC: It was just lovely. Just noticed the name here now. Guy Kibbee. Guy Kibbee. He was in a lot a things Guy Kibbee. Oh! I've just seen Alexander.

VB: [gasps] Ah!

EC: But it's not him!

VB: Aw, it's not the right one.

EC: S'Alexander Korda.

VB: Aw.

EC: Oh gosh! Well his name was Alexand-ah! It finished with an A.

VB: Ah.

EC: It didn't go Alexander. It finished with an A.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Ross Alexandra. It was Dra. D, R, A. Yeah. [referring to Ross Alexander]

VB: Yeah.

EC: Ross Alexandra. Yeah. And he was in eh with Errol Flynn. I only seen him in the two films and I read in the 'Picturegoer'--

VB: Yeah.

EC: That he was dead. Died.

VB: I'm definitely gonna keep a lookout for him. Sounds good.

EC: Yeah. What a shame. He was a smashing bloke and all, him. Oh Richard Tauber. Oh yes, he was in a film. But I didn't see it. Oh! There's Robert Taylor! Oh Robert Taylor! Oh I went mad. He was married to Barbara Stanwyck. For years and years and years. He was married to Barbara Stanwyck

and they split up. Think after about twenty years. Yeah. I used to go mad about him being married to her.

VB: [laughs]

EC: He should've been married to me!

VB: [laughs]

EC: That's what I used to think. Mhm.

VB: Ah.

EC: Heart's Desire. Leslie Henson! Oh my god! He was, he was British. Leslie Henson! Oh no! Katharine Hepburn. There, there she is. She was in that *Little Women*. She was marvellous. *Little Women*. I think she was Jo, in it.

VB: Ah.

EC: Ann Harding. Remember her. Ann Harding. Very well. Always had her hair put up in the middle, tied right back. Always. Never seen her any different. Parted in the middle. Right back. Yeah. Ann Harding. Oh I tell you who I used to love and all erm, [pause 2 seconds] Kay Francis. Oh-h! She was, she was... she was beautiful, Kay Francis. Oh! She was lovely her! Funny I've not seen her, I've not seen her in erm, in a film for, I don't think she made a lot of films. But she was gorgeous, Kay Francis. I used to love her. I used to try and have my hair like her.

VB: Ah.

EC: And some of the kids used to say, "Aw, you're trying to be like Kay Francis!" [laughs] "Aw, you're trying to be like Kay Francis aren't you?" you know.

VB: [laughs]

EC: No chance! [laughs] There he is. Robert Taylor.

VB: Aye.

EC: Broadway. Don't tell me he was in Broadway. Does it say what he was in? [pause 2 seconds] No I don't think it was him. No. [pause 2 seconds] Oh look at him. Wasn't he gorgeous. Robert Taylor.

VB: Aw, he is. Yeah, he is.

EC: Oh Robert Taylor. Oh I seen him once. *Waterloo Bridge*. With Vivien Leigh in *Waterloo Bridge*. Oh he's dancing. There he is. Dancing! Aw!

VB: Aw!

EC: Although I didn't want to see him dancing. I didn't want to see him dancing. He was good. Buddy Ebsen. You remember him, seeing him a few years ago in the television series, *The Clampetts*?

VB: He looks familiar, actually.

EC: They struck oil.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And they become eh millionaires.

VB: Oh-h.

EC: They only lived in a shack.

VB: Yeah. I think I know the one you mean. Yeah.

EC: And they struck oil.

VB: Yeah.

EC: The Clampetts. He was with his grandmother.

VB: Yeah.

EC: She was a right eh, yeah that's Buddy Ebsen. Oh there's Robert Taylor dancing. Ho-oh! My God! Who's he dancing with? That is awful. [pause 2 seconds] June Knight. June Knight he's dancing with. Bloody 'ell. I'd have gone off him. [clattering noise in background; inaudible]

VB: [laughs]

EC: Yeah, he was in a musical. They must've put them all in a musical. Eventually. Must have run out of eh... She was nice and all, Miriam Hopkins. Lee Tracy. That's lovely. Yeah, Lee Tracy. Lovely books these aren't they? Ida Lupino. Oh that don't look like her! That don't look like Ida Lupino. [clattering noise continues; inaudible] [pause 3 seconds] There's Ginger. There's Fred. Oh, [to other person] I was gonna wash them, James. [James: "No you're all right."] Oh thanks very much. Thank you. Erm, [pause 2 seconds] 'I'll Be Hard to Handle'. What was the songs in that? Oh *Roberta. Roberta*. That was a lovely film. *Roberta. Roberta*.

VB: Mhm.

EC: [pause 5 seconds] She sang in that film. Yeah, she sang. [I'd never heard her sing?] It's not long ago she's died is it?

VB: That's right. Yeah. Just a couple of months ago.

EC: Yeah. Exactly. Yeah. Irene Dunne's with them and all. Oh she made loads of films Irene Dunne. She made loads of films. Do you remember Loretta Young? Now she, I only learnt that off the television a few months ago. Loretta Young had a little girl to erm Clark Gable.

VB: Mhm!

EC: They were in a film together. And they got intimate. And eh she had this daughter. And the daughter was speaking on the television. And she was saying that he never recognised her because Loretta Young kept it secretive. It'd have spoilt their careers--

VB: Yeah.

EC: So she kept it secret. And erm she was saying, the daughter, she said er, “When I seen him in *Gone with the Wind* and how he was with that little girl. Oh!” she said, “It should've been, I thought it should've been that way with me.” You know. And she said that she used to be heartbroken when she seen the way, you know, you remember seeing *Gone with the Wind*.

VB: Ah yeah.

EC: How he is with his little girl.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And she was saying she was really upset. She said, “I thought that's how it should've been with me.” But it was kept a secret about him being her father.

VB: Mhm.

EC: Did you ever see that?

VB: Oh yeah. I remember. He's just, he's lovely with the wee girl in that.

EC: Yeah well, did you see the daughter when she was saying about him?

VB: No, I missed that.

EC: You missed that.

VB: I missed that. Yeah.

EC: Yeah. Well that come to light--

VB: Yeah.

EC: And the daughter was saying about it, you know. Saying that he erm, it should've been that way.

VB: Yeah.

EC: He never, she never had the love of the father which she should have done.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And eh, it was a shame. Loretta Young. They made a film together. And they got intimate. But it'd have spoilt the, you know, the career.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Or whatever, you know--

VB: Yeah.

EC: So it was all hushed up. She kept er, kept her secret.

VB: Mhm.

EC: But I thought, mhm. Lovely that. It only came out years after.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Nobody knew at the time about it. And I think it was in the thirties that film that they were in together [referring to *Call of the Wild*].

VB: Yeah.

EC: So there you are. Is there anything you want to ask me now? Other than--

VB: Erm, well I think we've covered a lot.

EC: [inaudible] I hope, I hope I've been some help to you.

VB: Oh! Hugely.

EC: Yeah.

VB: Oh, Massively.

EC: Because I've told you about the hardship and what I did and... You know. A lot of people were fortunate. They didn't have to do that. But I did.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And I erm, pleased with myself. I did it. And I worked it out. I worked it out for myself, what to do and how to get by. Though like I said, I'd have loved to have gone to the pictures every night.

VB: Yeah.

EC: But it would've been too much of a struggle. I was happy to go maybe two times, you know. Sometimes it was two, twice. Sometimes. You know.

VB: Yeah.

EC: But I'd have loved to have gone eh every night. If I could've done. I mean not only to the cinny. To another picture house, where there was another film on.

VB: Yeah.

EC: You know. 'Cause we walked everywhere. They weren't all too far away. But I just couldn't do it.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Not being in that position. They were very hard times. But not only that, the Depression was on wasn't it?

VB: Yeah.

EC: The Depression. And that's why I thought the cinema'd probably close down. But it didn't. It kept going. Little popular place it was. But I had a share in it eventually.

VB: [laughs]

EC: Anyway. We've not done so bad have we?

VB: Not at all, no.

EC: So there's nothing else then. But I thought I'd give you that piece what Walter's written.

VB: That's great. Yes. I'll enjoy having a look through that.

EC: Yes. It starts, it doesn't start off about the films but it leads up to it. I think there's things like, we all had the same stories really. But, like I said, we didn't have the same struggles, how to... Like, you know, I did. And er...

VB: Yeah.

EC: What did Fred tell you? Did Fred tell you anything interesting?

VB: Well, he was mainly showing me where the cinemas were and telling me a bit about what they were like.

EC: Mm.

VB: So that was very useful for me to get an idea of--

EC: Yeah. Well, I'm glad--

VB: The area.

EC: That was some use to you.

VB: Yeah. It was good.

EC: I'm glad. Because eh, he would. But I thought, oh! Knowing Fred, he'll walk her all over Manchester!

VB: Well he did actually. He showed me the railway and... [laughs]

EC: Well I said to Walter the next day, 'cause I knew you spoke to Walter. "Walter. Wherever did you take her?"

VB: Right over.

EC: "To the park," he said. And that was miles out! He walks all over. He does it. That's his life now. He walks everywhere. Walks for miles and miles and miles. And it was a warm day wasn't it?

VB: Oh yes. And I had these high, quite high. Don't say that to him of course but, I had these quite high shoes on as well, so I was really sort of--

EC: And he walks a bit quick doesn't he?

VB: He's quite fast. Yes. [laughs]

EC: I know. 'Cause we were going to somewhere--

VB: It was good though.

EC: Yeah. We was helping some other young students out. They was putting plays on for old people about eh, just before the war. During the war.

VB: Mhm.

EC: And er, well we were going to this place called Corpus Christi. And eh, so he said, "Come on. Come on with me and I'll show you the way." Properly. The quick way and all that. And I had a bit of a Cuban, what we call a Cuban heel.

VB: Mhm.

EC: You know. Cuban heel. Oh and I thought, oh blimey! Oh and it was pouring rain that day. Absolutely throwing it down. And I had my umbrella. And I'm trying to keep up with him. And I thought, oh, Fred, for God's sake! Ease off a bit, ease off. Well he had me there in from here, we'd been here watching a play at the morning, somebody dramatic, whatever. From here, well I think we'd done it in ten minutes! Done it ten minutes!

VB: [laughs]

EC: He had me going through all sorts, through pools of water, puddles and all sorts! I was trying to keep up with him.

VB: Amazing energy.

EC: Oh, he's a character him. He's a right character Fred. He is. I had some photos of his, did he show his photo of his family?

VB: No he didn't.

EC: I'll show you their family. There's was a big family, bigger than us. Here you are. Just look at this. [inaudible] There's his family.

VB: Oh, wow! [laughs] Oh!

EC: Look at all them lot.

VB: That's amazing, isn't it?

EC: That's his father.

VB: Yeah.

EC: There was his mother.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Look at his brother with blue shoes on.

VB: That's amazing. Yeah.

EC: I bet them were hers.

VB: I bet they were. Yeah.

EC: Oh that was Fred. There's Fred.

VB: Oh.

EC: That was Fred.

VB: A wee tyke [cheeky or mischievous child]. He really is. Oh and the baby at the back as well.

EC: [inaudible] baby, that was their [Sandra?]

VB: They look, they were all quite close together in age as well, aren't they, I mean...?

EC: Yeah. Yeah. That's how ours was. Every two years. Or every three. I mean my brother, he was a year and seven months younger than me.

VB: Yeah.

EC: But they were like that you know. What they call steps and stairs.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Yeah. Well that's Fred and his family. He's very proud of that photo.

VB: It's a great one. It really is.

EC: But look at his brother with his [girl?] shoes on.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Oh no. That's his brother isn't it? There, there's his feet [inaudible]. Has he got clogs on. Yeah.
He's got clogs on.

VB: Ah, so he has. Yeah.

EC: [laughs]

VB: That's a lovely one. It really is.

EC: Yes. Great. It's a nice, a very good family photo. Did you see that photo of Fred and his family?
You know Fred who comes here.

[Other person]: No.

EC: Have you ever seen that photo? [laughs] [clattering; inaudible]

OP: [laughs]

EC: Look at his brother with those shoes on! [laughs]

OP: [laughs]

EC: That's Fred! That's Fred. Look at his tie. It's curled up a bit. Bet he wipes his chin on it! [laughs]
That's his dad.

VB: That's great.

[dishes clattering in background]

EC: He's proud of that.

VB: Mhm.

OP: [inaudible]

EC: Yeah eh, Stan'll be here. And Eddy. But I won't be because I'm going out for a meal tonight. Half past four. Rivington Barn. So I won't be here. I'll be here tomorrow with the other group. Definitely. Oh yeah, happy with that group. Now where can I put these in a very safe place for tomorrow? This place keeps getting broke into.

VB: Does it?

EC: Keeps having the tinkers over there. You know, on the green grass, over there.

VB: Mm.

EC: That's all the mess opposite, what they make. And they're always breaking in. [pause 4 seconds]
I'll pop them in there. I hope I've not wasted your time.

VB: No! Far from it. No. It's been great.

EC: You can tell I was obsessed, you know, I know it all so well, I could've, I could've done a lot more and whatever but I thought I'd just do the main points for you.

VB: No, that's great. Erm, the only other things I was wanting to ask just to get a wee bit more of an idea about yourself was if you had any strong political views? Have you been a member of a political party or anything like that?

EC: No, not really. Because, you see, we were in a very poor neighbourhood and we didn't know much about anything.

VB: Yeah.

EC: You know, it was further down the road. Well Collyhurst was really a very poor area.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And er, we never saw anything other than outside. We didn't know.

VB: Yeah.

EC: We knew voting day, like and whatever. We all voted Labour.

VB: Yeah.

EC: We always voted Labour because we thought maybe they'd help the poor you know and erm... But other than that we never knew, we never knew any news. We didn't have any news of anything. We only got the news off the... when we went to the pictures.

VB: Yeah.

EC: We got some news you know. The *Pathe News*, you know. Or R.E. Jeffrey. He was the one that used to, he was the one, R.E. Jeffries, that used to come on and tell you the news, you know. And they used to show you the films of it, you know. 'Cause, when we got the talkies it was better. Because you could learn, you could hear more of the news you see.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And we didn't know any news on anything. No wireless. No televisions.

VB: Yeah.

EC: We just didn't know anything only other than what... soon as we went in the pictures, the news used to come on. And it was R.E. Jeffrey. He was the one. The *Pathe News* you know.

VB: Yeah.

EC: So, so we didn't know anything about it other than when we started getting a wireless and then we knew when the war was gonna come about. We just didn't know anything about folk.

VB: Yeah.

EC: We had no contact. Other than they used to sell newspapers and if there was anything, anything that come about in between they used to come round shouting. Specials. You got it that way you know. If you could afford a special. They'd tell you what.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Same as when Princess Margaret was born. Specials comes round. Anything like that you know, that was special, you know. Princess Margaret's been born, you know. And erm, that was after the Queen you know. And then all things like that you know. So eh, we didn't know anything other than that.

VB: Yeah.

EC: It was only through the war when things started to, you know, come about.

VB: I see.

EC: You know. We got to know more and whatever.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Got wirelesses and that, you know. But I don't think, I think it was about 1937, '38 before we got a wireless. And that's just before the war. And I know we paid eh, [pause 2 seconds] I don't know whether it was we got it on the weekly. It was one of them Bakelite things. Two valves, you know, two valves. And I think that was about sixpence a week.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Or a shilling a week. When we got it we thought it was marvellous you know. Used to listen to it. And that's how we started coming in con... other than that, we was in our own little world.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Collyhurst. Like a little bit of news off the pictures. So there was nothing really to bother about.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Nothing to bother about [inaudible]

VB: I know. You say your mother was a Catholic. Was your father a Catholic too?

EC: No. No.

VB: 'Cause I was wondering when you said that.

EC: No, my father wasn't eh, my father was a Protestant. It didn't bother us because I'm half and half. I went to a Protestant and a Catholic school.

VB: Oh really.

EC: See what I did, I was christened at St Patrick's which is just down, down there, yeah, St Patrick's, in Livesey Street.

VB: Yeah.

EC: I was christened there. But when I was three, I wandered into school when I was three. And that was a Protestant school because it was just near, and I went in with all the kids. And they never bothered. They just let me go in. So I started going there. And erm, [pause 2 seconds] I loved it. I used to... went there from being three. And my mother left me. But the priest started coming round to see my mother saying that it's not right to go to the Protestant school. The Catholics, they should be there.

VB: Mhm.

EC: You know, you're doing wrong. Letting them go. So my mother was a bit worried about it. She asked us did we want to go to St Patrick's Catholic. So I knew some girls up our street went. Said, "Oh yeah! I'll go. Yeah" So, we went to St Patrick's. I was only there I think about 18 month and I hated it. I absolutely hated it. I hated the nuns. They were awful. The nuns were awful. I had to go to the, well they had a convent next to it--

VB: Mhm.

EC: And I had to go every night to learn the religion that I'd lost out on. You know what I mean?

VB: Mhm.

EC: To pick up on the religion. I didn't like that. You know. Kids were going to play centres, watching magic lantern, and I was going with the nuns.

VB: Mhm.

EC: And I hated it. I was broken-hearted. So eh, I said to my mother, I said, "Oh," I said, "Mam. Don't like it." And I used to cry so. I said, "Give me a note and I'll go back to the headmaster at St Catherine's? and ask if he'll have me back." So my mum said all right. She writ me a note. And I went and I says to him, I said eh, "Mr [Womack?] Can I come back? Please." I said, "I don't like it there," I said, "I do hate it," I said, "And I don't want to go and it's making me ill." So he read the note off my mother and he eh, "Yes," he said, "You can come back." He said, "When you want to come back. Tomorrow or Monday?"

VB: Mhm.

EC: I said, "Tomorrow."

VB: [laughs]

EC: So I went back to the Protestant school. So, that was me. I was really, nothing bothered me. I used to do anything. I wasn't a timid child. I wasn't, you know. I'd just do any... I had the willpower to do anything.

VB: Yeah.

EC: So that's me back [inaudible] a Catholic. Protestant Catholic. Protestant. I wasn't bothered you know. So that's eh, [rustling of paper; inaudible]. Then the war came then I got married, and like I said all my wages went on clothing coupons, rations and trying to keep nice and smart. Which I'd never had you know. So erm--

VB: Yeah. And do you have a family yourself?

EC: I've only got one son.

VB: One son. Yeah.

EC: Yeah. Got one son. Yeah. He's works at, he's got a good job. He's been there about [40?] year. British Telecom. He's got a good position.

VB: Ah.

EC: He's erm, [pause 2 seconds] a road supervisor and surveyor you know.

VB: Yeah.

EC: I only had the one. I'm sorry I only had one but that's the way it goes isn't it? What's got to be. My mum always said if you've got to have them you'll have them. She was always covering herself up because she had ten!

VB: [laughs]

EC: I had to cover up for her. Anyway I have enjoyed talking to you.

VB: Oh it's been great.

EC: I've really enjoyed it.

VB: It's very kind of you to...

EC: Aw no. Don't. Like I said, I was wanting to talk about it. And with that era, I really love it. And I was glad to talk about it like, you know. That somebody else takes an interest.

VB: It's been really good. I've thoroughly enjoyed it.

EC: I've enjoyed it, but I just hope I've been some help. You know.

VB: Very much so. I'm looking forward to listening over to this again.

EC: Well. I know I talk a bit sometimes. I go on. I'm not very good at speaking. It's awful.

VB: I don't know about that.

EC: But, like I say I've given you that what Walter erm--

VB: That's great. Yes. I've got that here. Yes.

EC: Yes. You'll see what Walter erm--

VB: Yeah.

EC: Has got to say--

VB: That'll be interesting. Yeah.

EC: About erm, he's done a little wireless and whatever. And the pictures. You've got the pictures and George Raft.

VB: Yeah. Yeah.

EC: [laughing; inaudible] George Raft. The overcoat tied at the waist. That's how they used to have them in the thirties you know. Oh I'll just take this. These are all down so as you wouldn't, so as I could just, you know, bring [inaudible] back.

VB: Sure. Yeah. The only other thing I was wanting to ask was because I'm taping this and the tape's going to be kept in the university erm, would you object if people, if anyone listened to that in the future? Say someone that was doing research on the cinema.

EC: No. Not really. Because I'm really proud of it. I'm not, I'm not... You know, it don't bother me in the least. Because that's how it was and that's how I eh, you know, survived it and how I got through.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And I think it's great to be able to do it. I'm proud.

VB: In that case could I ask you to sign this form just to say that you don't mind eh--

EC: Ah-ha-ha, I'm a bit, I'm a bit sheepish about the way I'll sound on that.

VB: Och!

EC: And I mean it's all, it's upside-down really isn't it? 'Cause I mean, I'm backtracking aren't I on it? Instead of...

VB: Och not at all. It all makes, it made sense when I was listening so I'm sure it would for anyone.

EC: That's the only thing you know. I'm a bit ashamed, you know--

VB: Och!

EC: The way I speak and all that, you know.

VB: I wouldn't, I wouldn't be at all. It's lovely. It's nice to get, you know, you're so lively when you're talking about it.

EC: Well that's how it was then.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And I still say if it was then and whatever. Yeah. Well, they've all erm, on the forms you've got [inaudible]

VB: That's right. Yeah. The other thing as well, it's possible that some of this material might go into a book. So, you know, it's to say that you've got no objection to--

EC: No. Not really. Because there's nothing to be ashamed of.

VB: Nothing incriminating. [laughs]

EC: No. No there's nothing there to be ashamed of. I didn't, erm, I didn't need to get, you know, anything like that, no.

VB: No.

EC: All I, all I got, I earned the money, you know, from hard work, and honestly like. A little bit I didn't tell you what another thing I did. There was a big market, Smithfield market it was called. And on a Friday night, oh no, Saturday night. They didn't have nowhere to store, they used to throw all

the flowers out. Throw the flowers out that eh, you know, that wasn't sold. 'Cause there was nowhere to keep them or anything. They used to throw them out. So me and this girl used to wait and erm they'd throw them out. We used to collect them. And then we used to take them home and put them in bunches. And we used to sell them for a penny a bunch. The flowers. That was something else we used to do. Yeah. So one day one fella was nasty. And eh he said erm, "You waiting for these flowers?" So we said, "Yes. Yeah." And do you know what he did? This is the truth. We never went again [inaudible] He got all the flowers, and he put them on the floor, and he pulled all the heads off!

VB: Tch! Aw that's horrible!

EC: Yeah. Pulled all the heads off.

VB: Yeah.

EC: And I thought, oh that was, that was really terrible that. And we never went again. Said not going any more.

VB: For all it would bother them. I mean that's so pathetic.

EC: Yeah. That was one. Yeah. We was doing fine.

VB: Thanks very much. [presumably to stall holder]

EC: You know and we used to sell them, you know, penny a bunch. That's how we used to...

VB: How horrible.

EC: So, there you are now. So are you going to get a bus now?

VB: Yeah. I'm just gonna get one down into the town.

EC: Are you going into town now, yeah. I'm going that way, you're going that way. So you can either go up the road here.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Up this way. Do you know where to get to?

VB: I think so. Yeah.

EC: Yeah you just turn round by the park.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Just over the road.

VB: Right.

EC: Or you can go further down to the other one.

VB: Do you think it's better going that way?

EC: Yeah.

VB: Yeah.

EC: Well they shut at one. Put these in here. So erm, anyway, what I'll do now is go. There's nothing there to bother me, really. It's only what went on.

VB: No that's great.

EC: What I did and what I didn't do.

VB: As I say, thanks very much for...

[End of Interview]