

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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- * Ipswich, Suffolk, 10 November 1995: Valentina Bold interviews George Turner
- * Transcribed by Joan Simpson/Standardised by Annette Kuhn
- * GT=George Turner, OP=Other Person, VB=Valentina Bold
- * Notes: Second interview of two with George Turner; Sound Quality: Poor

[Start of Tape One]

[Start of Side A]

[VB tape introduction]

VB: So you were telling me that erm, the cowboy films were something you went to more, when you were smaller.

GT: Oh yes. But when I got into more or less the teenage and course money was really hard to come by in those days 'cause... I mean when I first started work, I was only getting ten [shillings] and fourpence a week. You see. And of course, mother used to give me a little bit of pocket money and of course, you used to make more or less the most of it you could--

VB: I see.

GT: Going to the cowboy films. Well fourpenny and tuppenny, I mean was a sort of a big pleasure for you. Big boost for you to go. I mean, living in the country, it was exciting, you see, as well.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Oh yes.

VB: And you were saying that you used to go to follow a serial.

GT: Oh yes. We used to. Because when you went there used to be a serial on and then, course, and then you used to see how the serial went and see, before it finished, he used to get caught in some type or other. And you used to have to go the next week and see how he escapes and all that.

VB: So was that part of the appeal then?

GT: That was part of the appeal as well, but I think that also was a part of getting people into the theatres. You see. Because most like me at that age, I mean there was even elderly people used to go in because they used to like to go and see what happened in the serial.

[**Other person** comes in]: Can you move those things along?

GT: Yes, dear. Yeah.

VB: Ah that's great.

[OP puts out tea/coffee]

VB: Oh lovely, thanks very much.

OP: If it's too strong, you'll have to let me know.

VB: Oh, it looks perfect. [laughs]

OP: Oh right, [laughs] okay, right. [leaves room]

VB: Thanks.

GT: Have you still got it on?

VB: Yes. Yeah. So you were saying that even older people went to?

GT: Oh yes. Older people. Oh yes, older people used to go.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Yeah. Cause really erm, that was the best, that time of day, really.

VB: Mhm.

GT: I can't say that I went to any other ones. Only cowboys and those types of films. There used to be one or two others that eh, really after a few years I couldn't afford. I mean that was another point about it.

VB: Mhm.

GT: And then of course, as you grow older you've got more money and of course then you used to more or less come out of the junior stage and get into the, be the young man, you see.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Taking a lady friend and all that. And of course you used to go and see, we used to sort of say together well erm, what would you like to go and see, you know.

VB: That's interesting.

GT: Yeah. There used to be Fred Astaire. "Shall we go to the [inaudible] tonight?" Because there used to be about five or six cinemas in Ipswich at that time.

VB: So was it a different sort of experience then going when you were, as you say, at the junior stage? Erm, and when you went with--

GT: Well yes. Oh yes. It used to be, my experience for me 'cause I mean erm, as I said, you used to have a young lady and you more or less wanted to take her to see [inaudible]. Perhaps she didn't mind going to see a cowboy, you see. I mean, I suppose it's like that now. You know, I'm not in that stage now. But erm, I mean, if she said, shall we go to so and so tonight, oh, I'd like to see that 'cause I'm very fond of perhaps, Deanna Durbin or Fred Astaire if they were particularly on. So that's what we used to do.

VB: A-ah! So your taste was--

GT: Oh yeah. The taste would be better then, oh yes.

VB: Based on what your girlfriend wanted to see.

GT: That's right. Yeah.

VB: Ah, I see.

GT: Mhm.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Yeah. And of course, and then 'course erm, Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. They was dancers, and 'course, that used to be another thing you used to think 'cause he was very good really. Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Oh yes. They were.

VB: What was it about them, do you think, that made them so special?

GT: Well, the dancers and the scenes and all that used to be, you know. 'Cause they were something different to what the cowboy films were. That was going up another stage, you might say. Erm. [pause 3 seconds] You know it's like erm, saying to myself, well, I can afford something better and that's a better film to go to. And course, Ginger Rogers and all at the time were very, very famous. Very famous actress.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Very famous. And sometimes, of course, we used to go and see [Humphrey] Bogart, you know. And all those ones. 'Cause you--

VB: Sorry, it just occurred to me when you were saying that. You think that the, the acting was different in the--

GT: Oh yes. All the acting was different. Oh yeah, much better. Oh yes, much better because, well of course and then there used to be more film, more film and more glamour in that time of day, you see. I mean the cowboy films eh, used to be quite good in their way. Where they were in the Rocky Mountains and all that, you know. But then, course, you come to where there's a beautiful stage in cinema and the lovely scenery and all that. And the music. I mean, that used to be great.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Mhm.

VB: So a lot to do with the way they looked then as well as the acting.

GT: Oh yeah! Oh yes! Oh yes.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Very good. And sometimes there used to be a little story attached to it, you see. Where erm, I suppose somebody very young that used to start off at an early age, coming into, being an actress

towards, all the way through the film. From the time they grew up, Deanna Durbin used to. There's one or two others.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Used to, she used to grow up a little girl and she used to grow up a little bit more as the film went on. In some of them.

VB: That's interesting. So erm, would you say that the cowboy films weren't quite as strong in their plots? That they were more the adventure.

GT: Well there was in their way because that's more adventurous, you see.

VB: Yeah.

GT: The cowboy films.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Because they used to eh. Somebody used to be a Sheriff of Dodge City or, whatever it is. And then 'course, they used to become famous by say, catching all the outlaws and all. Or the gold mining days and all that, you know.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Oh yes.

VB: It's very interesting, what you're saying though. The different sort of appeal of these types of film.

GT: Oh yes. Oh yes. Oh yes.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm.

VB: Yeah. I mean it sounded like, from what you were saying before that eh, the musicals were something that you did particularly enjoy.

GT: Oh yes, I did! Oh yes I used to. I enjoy music now. I enjoy a lot of country and western.

VB: Mhm.

GT: More than what I do the other one. 'Cause, that's another different stage, isn't it, really, you see.

VB: Yeah. Yeah.

GT: Mhm.

VB: Did you enjoy erm, I mean when you mention Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Some of the songs in those films are just wonderful.

GT: Oh yeah! *Top Hat*. *Top Hat* used to be a good one. Yeah.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I remember *Top Hat*. I remember that one, yeah.

VB: Did you listen to the music, apart from the films?

GT: Oh yeah! Oh yes. Mhm.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I mean, now sometimes, something comes on the television and you think to yourself, oh, 'course, we know where that comes from. That comes from... [stops abruptly]

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm. Then course there's eh, there's the other series that came up. One that erm, *Oklahoma!* was one. 'Course, you know more about those than I do, probably.

VB: Mhm. I don't know. [laughs]

GT: D'you remember *Oklahoma!*? No? I mean he was down here at the, eh, Howard Keel,

VB: A-ah!

GT: Was down at the Regent a little while back.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Yeah, singing at the Regent. Yeah. 'Course he's getting on.

VB: Mhm.

GT: He's seventy now, you see. And Miriam, she went to see it. 'Cause a friend of hers couldn't go. She had to go into hospital. So she took her place and she went to see him.

VB: Oh, I bet he was good.

GT: Oh yes. He was good. Oh yeah. And she bought a tape. I think it cost [pause 2 seconds] ten or eleven pounds the tape when she bought it.

VB: [laughs]. Oh well.

GT: [laughs]

VB: I'm sure she'll get a lot of pleasure out of it. [laughs]

GT: Yeah, but we played it, you know. We played it but there's something wrong with the tape.

VB: Aw dear.

GT: Well of course, you see, you don't know where you could change it then. 'Cause you've bought it when he was there.

VB: Yeah. Aw. I mean then, another kind of film you were telling me about was the gangster films.

GT: Oh yeah.

VB: E-erm. What sort of appeal did they have, do you think?

GT: Erm... [pause 7 seconds] Well, some of it was based on, [pause 2 seconds] based on something that happened some while ago. And they took somebody else's place. I mean like eh, somebody who'd passed on which was quite a gangster in his day. Same as Edward G. Robinson. He used to be quite a gangster. And that was a, well, shouting and finding out erm, how they used to capture his [loot ?] and gamble it away and all that. One against the other, you know, really.

VB: Yeah.

GT: That's what happened.

VB: Yeah.

GT: 'Course, that used to happen, you know. There used to be gangs against gangs and all that. And 'course now one chap used to be eh, he used to be the boss.

VB: Uhuh.

GT: And course, there used to be another gang and they used to kill each other off and all that kind of thing. Mostly like they do now.

VB: Yeah.

GT: You get one or two films that come that way now.

VB: Was that part of the appeal at the time that the--

GT: Well it was really. Only that was something different. That was a little bit more exciting, you know. More exciting, the gangster films used to be.

VB: Mhm. Mhm.

GT: Oh yeah. 'Cause the other ones used to be more a love scene. Ginger Rogers and that. 'Cause sometimes you didn't always like to go and see a love scene. You'd like to see. "Let's go and see a gangster a bit more."

VB: Yeah.

GT: Specially when your old mate used to be with you and that.

VB: A-ah, I see.

GT: And of course you used to go and see that. It would be more exciting.

VB: Yeah. I mean did it make you... 'Cause I was wondering as well, eh, do you think that you got a good idea of what life was like in America?

GT: Oh yeah!

VB: Through these films.

GT: Oh yes, yes! Oh yes, oh yes. Oh yes.

VB: Mhm.

GT: They used to, you did find out about what it was like in America those days.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Oh yeah.

VB: Did it ever make you want to see it yourself?

GT: Well, I did but you see, the point is, we couldn't afford it, to go to America then.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I mean, I've never been to America at all myself. No-o.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I mean I'd like to go and just see what. I've asked several people what it is like over there, you know. Several people used to say various different things.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm.

VB: 'Cause it's, I mean the whole way of life you see in these films must've been very different,

GT: Oh yeah! Very different.

VB: From what life was like for you then.

GT: For me, you see.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Cause I was only a country boy, you see.

VB: Mhm.

GT: That was most exciting for me, to see a thing like what happened in America. Or, for any other place, really.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I mean you eh, like to see what's happening. And I mean eh, when you got a little older, of course, that just, you'd found out something that you'd never seen before. Never looked at before.

VB: Mhm.

GT: It's a little difficult job to explain really.

VB: I mean did it, did it seem like a type of life that was erm, real? Or did it seem like something that was out of your reach or something that you didn't want to experience?

GT: Ah, well eh, well it's something that I wanted to see.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Really. To see what it was like in America--

VB: Mhm.

GT: You know. And how these people did act. 'Cause some of them, they used to play it as, nearly as good as the true story, didn't they? You know, somebody's life that eh, Al Capone and one or two of the others. How they were, you see, in those days.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm.

VB: Yeah, 'cause I mean, you mention Mario Lanza. And I mean the film I think of him in is *Caruso*.

GT: Yes, yes. Of course, we used to go and see Mario cause he was a terrific singer, wasn't he?

VB: Mhm.

GT: Oh he was. He played, I think he played the part of somebody that eh, that was a terrific singer.

VB: Yes! Yeah.

GT: And he actually, I believe he died in one of his films, I believe.

VB: Really?

GT: Mario Lanza. I believe. I'm not quite sure.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Because he died at an early age, didn't he, Mario Lanza did.

VB: Yeah, I'm sure.

GT: Yeah, he did, yeah.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm. Aw yeah, he was terrific. He used to be, what a tenor, was it? Mario Lanza.

VB: Yes, I think so.

GT: I think so. A tenor, yeah. He was quite good, Mario Lanza. Mhm.

VB: And then you mentioned as well, some of the erm, women stars like Bette Davis and--

GT: Oh yeah, Bette.

VB: Joan Crawford and people like that.

GT: Bette Davis and Joan Crawford, yeah.

VB: Yeah. Were they favourites of yours?

GT: Beg your pardon?

VB: Were they favourites of yours?

GT: Well, yes, one or two of them was, you know. They used to be favourite because in those days, I mean, they always got people say, oh, she was lovely an nice, and all that, you know. Because eh, how they used to perform and so on.

VB: Mhm.

GT: [coughs] Because you was only eh, coming up in the world, you know. I mean you had different stages in your life that eh, you used to try to do the more things as you got older, you know. Some people erm, don't more or less eh, what shall I say erm, look at it the way that erm, same as a boy. I mean me coming to work and just starting work. And I got a bike my mother bought me and I used

to think to myself, well that's very good. And you generally work up so that you'd think to yourself, I won't go there. I can afford to go to some other good film and all that, you see.

VB: Mhm.

GT: An there's something I'd like to see. [coughs] Pardon me.

VB: Yeah. So your tastes were changing, really all the time.

GT: Oh yes! Oh yeah, the tastes were changing all the time.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Oh yes, all the time. Well 'course and then you got so that either you married or war come on, you see.

VB: Mhm.

GT: And I got married during the war. Joined the war in 1941.

VB: Mhm.

GT: And then of course I got married in '42. And then 'course, things begin to change. 'Cause I mean you got a family soon after that. 'Course and then you couldn't go the films quite so much. Because I mean money was still on the tight side, you know.

VB: Mhm

GT: Just like you are now. I mean you're getting more money now but still, you're still paying tax. Well we didn't pay quite so much tax and money was nothing then, at all.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Mhm. 'Course I mean later on if you were lucky you got into a good job and then you could afford to go to films. But me, I was only what erm, lorry driver to start with. Poultry boy to start with!

VB: Mhm.

GT: Then a lorry driver and a Model T Ford, had those days. And then when I come out of the Army I went back to it again. Well, 'course, money wasn't much. I had to find a different job because I was a married man!

VB: Yes.

GT: 'Cause in the Army you used to get Army pay, your wife used to get and then you used to get so much. It was only about seven shillings a week, you know.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Or seven shillings a day we used to get. That's just about all.

VB: Mhm. No, it's not a lot.

GT: No. You couldn't do it, you see.

VB: Yeah. Because another thing I was wondering about was erm, I mean obviously it must've been quite expensive. Although, not expensive by today's standards. But going to the pictures on the sort of money you had then--

GT: Oh yes!

VB: Was quite a--

GT: Oh yes. You see, you used to have a regulator. How you done it, you see.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I mean, there's different types of people that don't look after tomorrow.

VB: Yes.

GT: Spend all the money. They used to get themselves in debt. I never used to like to work it that way. I used to like to think to myself, I must hold a little bit of money, [whispering voice] because something's coming up next week, you see.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Because being married you had to do that!

VB: Yeah.

GT: Otherwise, well things wouldn't be quite so good. The children used to have clothes to go to school and all these things. So really, actually, you couldn't afford a luxury that you'd afford earlier on.

VB: The luxuries. Yeah. Yeah.

GT: Sometimes you would go. You used to go, sometimes you were well off. Then you used to go to the pictures.

VB: Yeah. Yeah. 'Cause I mean, I was wondering as well eh, when you were going as a boy and later on erm. I mean how did it actually make you feel? When you were going to, say, a film with Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire in it?

GT: Oh it used to make you feel great.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Really. Oh yes. Used to make you feel great to go and see Ginger Rogers. That was something way up that used to be then. Really exciting, yeah.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Ooh, definitely.

VB: So when you were watching it you were--

GT: Oh yes! 'Course. Oh yes.

VB: Yeah.

GT: All the movement and everything else, you know. Well things that you hadn't sort of experienced then, you see, had you, you know. Because, I mean, you was in the stage you wondered what the world was like and what was going on the world, really, didn't you?

VB: Ah, I see. So I mean you were actually learning--

GT: Oh yes!

VB: From the films as well.

GT: Oh yes.

VB: Yes.

GT: Oh yeah.

VB: That's interesting.

GT: Mhm.

VB: And I mean how about afterwards when you were coming out? How did you feel then?

GT: Well you used to go home enjoying. You sometimes used to talk about it, you know.

VB: Ah!

GT: Wasn't that marvellous how Ginger done is [sic] tap dancing and all that, you know. Oh those were very good films.

VB: Yeah. So you were getting pleasure out of those.

GT: Yeah! Oh yeah, oh yes. You used to, yeah.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm. Because, you see, there used to be, catch the bus home in the early stage. Or you used to cycle home.

VB: Yeah.

GT: 'Course, I mean, sometimes you used to call at the public house and have a glass of beer on the way home.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Or something like that. And 'course, that used to be the subject of the evening more or less.

VB: Ah, yes, I'll bet. And you must've been when you were going home as well. It was all these--

GT: Oh yes! Oh yes. Quite a pleasure. 'Cause, we used to work all the week, you see. Six days a week and Sunday used to be a day when you eh, you know, take a little bit of pleasure. Then, 'course, on

the Sunday when you was a boy. I'm talking about the boy stage. I mean I used to have to go to Sunday School--

VB: Mhm.

GT: With some people down the road. I remember going down the road to a little family that I used to walk down there, and I used to have to dress up. And I used to go to the Sunday School.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Oh yes. Not like it is now. They don't go now.

VB: It sounds like your life was quite eh, sort of, I don't know how to put it. Sort of set out. You know, certain things you did.

GT: Well it was really.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Those days because I mean, that used to be a regular thing. You used to go to Sunday School. And I used to have to go to school. Because if you didn't go to school there used to be somebody come round and ask why you hadn't gone to school.

VB: Yeah.

GT: To your mothers and fathers in those days.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Oh yes. That was very, very strict it was, in those days. You had to go to school. And then, 'course, mother used to say, well you better get your [inaudible word] on. Sunday School after Sunday School. And away you used to have to go.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Oh there was no point in saying you weren't going. You had to go. Because otherwise, you know what's happen.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Father used to get his belt off. Not to, he just used to threaten you.

VB: Yeah.

GT: And that was it.

VB: Yeah. So there was quite good discipline then within the family.

GT: Oh yes. Quite good discipline to what it is today.

VB: Yeah, yeah.

GT: Oh yes, it is. I think today the thing is, the discipline's not enough today.

VB: Mhm.

GT: 'Cause [coughs] I think really we got too many do-gooders.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Really. I think when all's said and done, I mean. Erm, I suppose you used to get a smack in the face or you used to get a kick in the backside or something like that. I mean, which you deserved. That never hurt me.

VB: Mhm.

GT: I was never hurt. We learned something by it, you see. Oh yes. Mhm.

VB: Yeah. I mean do you think that the, 'cause you were talking about learning things from the films. Do you think that the way people behaved in films affected, erm. I mean did you learn things from that as well?

GT: Well yeah. I suppose so, really. Eh, dressing up and things like that, you know. I suppose, you used to. I mean eh, fashion-wise, I suppose you used to try and sort of take a pattern more or less of what the people wear.

VB: Mhm.

GT: And what you could afford. You used to try and make yourself look smart in other words.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Because you learned from that. Otherwise you couldn't learn from other people. Not really.

VB: Mhm. That's interesting. So I mean they were, as you say, sort of models of eh--

GT: Oh yes, yeah. Oh yes.

VB: How people liked to look.

GT: Mhm.

VB: Yeah. Was there anyone in particular that, you think, made a big influence on you in that way?

GT: Oh no, I don't think there was anybody in particular. Not really.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Erm, 'cause I used to like apparently all of them, you know. The ones that eh, the sort of famous. Cause I know Fred Astaire. There used to be Clark Gable. He used to be quite a, quite a smart. I don't think there was anybody in particular. Not really. And those of course that you looked at something that they used to wear.

VB: Mhm.

GT: I mean would you think yourself that they used to look nice?

VB: Yeah. It is interesting because I mean I'm sure, as you say, you could get a lot of ideas and eh--

GT: Oh yes! You got a lot of ideas--

VB: Yeah.

GT: To what you used to wear. 'Course the fashions used to come out, didn't they?

VB: Mhm.

GT: I mean like there is now. I don't suppose in those days, the early part of the days. I suppose there used to fashions for men and so on that used to attract you. I remember when I was about fourteen, mother bought me a nice new coat. I'd never had a smart coat. 'Cause they couldn't afford it.

VB: Mhm.

GT: [laughs] And then, 'course she used to be a little bit of a swank then because some of the other people didn't have that, you know and that's it. 'Course there used to be a fashion that time of the day.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Trilby hats used to be very, very fashionable. At that time. Oh yeah. Trilby. Mhm. I used to think I was really posh, wearing a trilby. Mhm.

VB: Yeah. I mean did you enjoy the way the, I mean obviously not in the sense of a model. But did you enjoy the way that the women dressed in the films?

GT: Yes, oh yes.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Oh yes. I used to watch things like that. Oh yeah. I used to watch things like that. What they used to wear. 'Cause I mean you was coming up in the world. Because it was something that you more or less wanted to find out in other words.

VB: Yes.

GT: You know. See what people did wear. And how smart they did look.

VB: Yeah. It's interesting. Sort of curiosity about--

GT: Well yes, because, I mean, I don't know whether they do it quite so much now.

VB: Mhm.

GT: But eh, I always liked to see how I could dress to appeal to people. Specially if you were going out. [pause 2 seconds] Mhm. We used to be the same, well, I should say more so, because you hadn't got the eh, the fashion as what you've got now, really. I mean, suits used to be quite good, I think. Even better than what they are today.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Suits used to be. Oh yeah. And shoes. Oh yeah. Shoes and suits now, I mean, they're not made of the real old wool. Not like what they used to be years ago.

VB: Mhm.

GT: No.

VB: So the quality was much better.

GT: The quality was much better. Yeah. But of course people were dedicated when they made them.

VB: Mhm.

GT: I mean, you'd have to find an old boy if he's a tailor now, to be anywhere terrifically good.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Aw yeah.

VB: I'm sure you're right. 'Cause I mean when you see the sort of way the clothes are cut an someone like Clark Gable wearing a suit it's--

GT: Oh yeah, yeah. It was the fashion, you see. People used to be more dedicated. They're not dedicated now.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I don't think people are dedicated. I mean 'cause years ago people used to start the work somewhere and they used to stay for about fifty years.

VB: Mhm.

GT: I mean, I know I haven't been so good but I've had a job twenty years.

VB: Mhm.

GT: I mean I used to do my job properly an all that. And try to keep my job. But they don't do it now. I don't think they do it all now.

VB: Mhm. It's interesting. It sounds like from what you're saying that the whole attitude has changed.

GT: Well I think whole attitudes have changed.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I think. Towards work or. There is some people now about that like to dress up. I mean, just the same as I did. You particularly notice it now. Someone on occasion.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Mhm. 'Course I mean, there's more to choose from now than what there used to be. I mean there used to be long dresses because of fashion and all that comes in now. There used to be the miniskirts and all that. And 'course they all come in because that used to, [coughs] used to more or less set you alight, you know.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Otherwise you're not human.

VB: Yeah. Yeah.

GT: Ah. [clears throat]

VB: I mean that reminds me as well. The other thing that I erm, I brought along that I thought you might to see was a book from our office on the films from 1938. Eh--

GT: Ooh! Ah!

VB: 'Cause a lot of the stars you mentioned of course, are in here. Eh--

[End of Side A]

[Start of Side B]

GT: I'd like to, before we start,

VB: Yeah--

GT: There is a place very close to here--

VB: Mhm.

GT: But this is a mechanical music museum [referring to a museum in Stowmarket].

VB: Right.

GT: It's in a place called [name?], just outside of Ipswich. It'd be about fifteen miles, twenty miles.

VB: Mhm.

GT: 'Course, I don't think it's open now. It used to be open at half past two in the afternoon till about five.

VB: Right.

GT: And that used to be a mechanical museum--

VB: Mhm.

GT: Music museum. But at the finish, they used to have an organ and they used to come out through the floor.

VB: A-ah!

GT: And does it for you. And music and everything. Have you ever seen one come out the floor?

VB: I haven't, no.

GT: Well. I know the phone number of it. I've inquired about this. But there is a phone number we could call.

VB: Mhm.

GT: But I don't know whether the chap, or whether you could get to go there to have a look at this. But on the whole there's all types of records and everything and there's various pictures of various films and film stars.

VB: Oh wonderful.

GT: And it starts from the old penny organ. You know the one you used to put your pennies in.

VB: Mhm.

GT: But that's not open now.

VB: Ah.

GT: We have visitors there.

VB: Yeah.

GT: And of course, as I was saying, it might be nice if you've never seen one. I can tell you exactly where it's from. It's from some theatre or other--

VB: Yeah.

GT: Where it used to be, it used to come out of the floor and you used to play it.

VB: Oh, I must try and see that erm, if I'm down again maybe in the Summer.

GT: Oh yes.

VB: Yes. That would be great.

GT: But it's not open now at the moment, as far as I know.

VB: No.

GT: Unless, of course, that do open for a special occasion.

VB: Yeah.

GT: But I don't suppose that would open for you. I mean, I don't know.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Being an [enthusiast?], perhaps they might.

VB: Yeah. Yeah. Well I'll definitely try and find out about that 'cause that would be great.

[pause 6 seconds; looking at book]

GT: Charles Boyer. Robert Montgomery. Spencer Tracy. Bette Davis. Tyrone Power. Errol Flynn.
'Course he was in a different series, wasn't he?

VB: That's right. Yeah.

GT: He used to be in erm, 'Robin Hood' [referring to *The Adventures of Robin Hood*].

VB: Of course.

GT: 'Robin Hood'. Yes. Errol Flynn used to be quite a well-known person. I used to go and see Errol Flynn. Yes. 'Cause as you say sometimes [he used to try to do more than what others used to?] 'Cause he'd be the swashbuckler with the old sword and everything. And there used to be Ronald Colman,

VB: O-oh!

GT: *The Prisoner of Zenda*. And all that, have you got it on still?

VB: Yes. [laughs] I have.

GT: [laughs].I could tell you more about this one.

VB: Yes. Did you like that sort of film?

GT: Oh yes! Oh yes!

VB: Aw-w!

GT: *The Mark of Zorro* and all that, you know.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Oh yes. It used to be something exciting, you know. Something exciting.

VB: Mhm.

GT: That you would like to see. You might as well say, make your blood boil, you know and...

VB: Yeah.

GT: Yeah.

VB: I mean when you were small, did you ever play at the characters from the films and pretend to be them?

GT: Well, no. I don't think, I don't think we did really.

VB: Mhm.

GT: No, I don't think we did play on the films. 'Cause we didn't. The men didn't.

VB: Mhm.

GT: One or two of the women probably used to. The girls used to, you know, dressing up--

VB: Yeah.

GT: Like they did and all that.

VB: Yeah.

GT: And they did but the men never used to very much because eh, we were different, you see. Erm, there used to be eh... [pause 2 seconds] You used to play at erm, darts and all those things in the evening, you see. Darts matches and all that.

VB: Mhm.

GT: [looking at book] Robert Donat. Robert Taylor. Oh there's some wonderful pictures here.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Paulette Goddard. Charlie Chaplin. Mhm. [pause 4 seconds] Oh! Lovely. Well you can see what I mean. How they handled themselves, you know.

VB: Oh yes.

GT: Oh yes. 'Cause that's how they used to be professionally, you know. That's how they used to get more films. [turns pages]

VB: So do you think the stars were conscious of being stars then?

GT: Oh yes! I think they did because they were in a state of erm, they wanted to get in the films, didn't they? I mean, things weren't so numerous then. I mean there weren't so many film stars about.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Not really. I mean I think they used to handle themselves better. Oh yes.

VB: Do you think there was a difference between the films that were being made in Britain and the films that were being made in America?

GT: Oh yes, I think there were.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Oh I think there were. The America's ones used to be the film, really, didn't it? But of course there used to be one or two good English films as well.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Because they haven't got the eh, what shall I say, the space to do it here. I mean they couldn't do cowboy things in this country but they can in Am., they practically got everything there, haven't they.

VB: Yeah. Yeah.

GT: You see.

VB: I think you're right. They didn't have the sort of resources.

GT: No, no. They used to have everything there. I mean even, if they want, they could have a river scene. They've got fast rivers there, haven't they? But still, in the English way, they used to have one or two good films--

VB: Mhm.

GT: They used to make.

VB: Mhm.

GT: I mean, like Will Hay used to be in quite a good film. The [old school character?]. Graham Moffatt and all these. You not remember these?

VB: I know Will Hay. I don't know Graham--

GT: Graham Moffatt. Used to be one of the schoolboys, you see.

VB: Ah, I see.

GT: The fat tubby one.

VB: Right. [laughs]

GT: The big fat one. 'Course, the old one with the beard, the little old chap with the beard. With the squeaky voice. Have you ever seen one of these films?

VB: I think actually, when you say it, I can almost picture it.

GT: Yes. He's a little old man, he's 'bee, bee, bee, bee, bee'. You know. He was the older one. Yeah. [looks at book]. I don't know very much about this chap. Anton Walbrook. No. Joan Blondell. Yeah. [pause 4 seconds] This is an old book, is this.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Thirty-eight. Ooh! You've kept well, whoever had this.

VB: Yes.

GT: Where did you get this from?

VB: Eh, from a bookshop in Glasgow.

GT: Did you?

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm.

VB: It's wonderful to see all these photographs.

GT: Yes. Marlene Dietrich.

VB: Ah.

GT: Oh yes!

VB: Was she one of your favourites?

GT: Oh yes, yes. She used to be one of my favourites. Mhm. Mhm. Oh Doug, is this Douglas Fairbanks, is it?

VB: Ah it could well be.

GT: Douglas Fairbanks Junior this is, I believe. [pause 8 seconds; turns page] Charles Laughton. 'Course he used in a different type of film really, didn't he?

VB: Mhm.

GT: He used to be in eh, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *I, Claudius*. Have you seen that?

VB: Oh yes.

GT: It was a different type of film.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Flora Robson. She used to be quite good, didn't she? Mhm. [pause 5 seconds]. Victor McLaglen. He used to be another, quite a character.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Boxing, that used to be his game.

VB: A-ah!

GT: Victor McLaglen. Oh yeah. Frederick MacMurray. He used to be another type of gangster, didn't he? He used to be, yeah Fred MacMurray. He's gone now. [He was a bad lot?]. He's gone now.

VB: Ah. I'm sure.

GT: Yes. He's gone. Mae West. Of course, she's gone.

VB: Mhm.

GT: "Come up and see me sometime."

VB: Yeah. [laughs]

GT: [laughs heartily] There he is.

VB: Ah-h.

GT: There's the glamour boy.

VB: Errol Flynn, yeah.

GT: Yes, he used to be one of the ladies' favourites.

VB: Yeah.

GT: He used to be, specially the little moustache. Aw! One of the ladies' favourites. Yes. Mhm.
[pause 5 seconds] I can remember something about *Little Women* but I can't remember about it.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Loretta Young. She used to be quite good. [pause 11 seconds] Ah, there's Deanna.

VB: Aw.

GT: She was lovely, she was, too.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Specially in her early teens. Yes. Yeah.

VB: What was it about her, do you think, that made her as good as she was?

GT: I would say her looks and they way she used to handle herself. In everything, she used to be very smart, very smart. Mhm. Yeah. How she used to handle herself.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Yeah. 'Cause she used to be a good child star. She used to be very, very good, she used to be.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I don't think that she was a good when she got older.

VB: Mhm. So her early films were the ones that you--

GT: Yeah, yeah. Oh yes the early ones.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Because, you see, as I said eh, things used to get very, very dear and you couldn't afford to go.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Not really.

VB: Mhm.

[pause 5 seconds]

GT: Gary Cooper.

VB: Mhm.

GT: That's Clark Gable, I'm sure it is. Yes, that's Clark Gable. Judy Garland. But it says...

VB: Mhm!

[pause 8 seconds]

GT: [Surely that's a lady there?]

VB: Mhm.

GT: This must be him ere. Surely.

VB: He's very young if it is, yeah.

GT: Yeh. Gary Cooper.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I can't see why they got Gary Cooper in here cause that's Gary Cooper.

VB: No.

GT: That said right, which is here.

VB: Yeah.

GT: That must be him there. He's very young. That must be him.

VB: Yeah.

GT: [turns page] Tyrone Power. He used to be quite good, didn't he?

VB: Mhm.

GT: Mhm. He was a very smart chap too, Tyrone Power. [pause 3 seconds] Have you still got...?

VB: Yes. I'm still running. [laughs] Bette Davis.

GT: Bette Davis. She used to have a particular name. Bette Davis, used to.

VB: Mhm.

GT: I can't just think what it is now. [pause 14 seconds; turns pages] David Niven, is it?

VB: Looks like him anyway.

GT: It does look like David Niven.

VB: Yeah it does.

GT: Does. 'Course he died of [Meniere's?] disease, didn't he?

VB: Oh ah. Yeah.

GT: David Niven. [Name's?] husband died of that.

VB: Terrible.

GT: Terrible. Didn't know much about these, these ones. No, no.

VB: But were you interested much in the directors and the technical side of things?

GT: Well yes. Erm, we never used to take much notice of the directors really.

VB: Mhm. Mhm.

GT: 'Course Albert [Alfred] Hitchcock used to be one of the famous ones.

VB: Yeah.

GT: And eh, course eh, the film, Metro Goldwyn Meyer, whatever they call it then. Then eh, there used to be eh, the filmmakers used to be quite good, didn't they?

VB: Mhm.

GT: Erm, the early ones used to be. What's that one with the big eh, Arthur Rank.

VB: Oh yes.

GT: James Arthur Rank. Well he used to hit the old gong with a big hammer. Mhm. [pause 8 seconds; turns pages] Gracie Fields.

VB: A-ah!

GT: Mhm.

VB: Was she someone you liked?

GT: Well, as a singer, yeah.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Gracie. As a singer. Because she done a lot for the Forces, didn't she? Gracie Fields.

VB: Yeah.

GT: She used to sing a lot for the Forces. Our Gracie. Used to call her 'Our Gracie', didn't you? Oh yeah. She was born in Rochdale.

VB: Ah yes. Yeah.

GT: Mhm.

VB: Yeah not too far from George Formby, [laughs]. You were telling me about.

GT: Yeah, George. I haven't found George. Is George in here?

VB: Yeah.

GT: [turns pages; 6 seconds] There you are, a thing like that, you see. This fella performed a lot of things.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Different films of different makes.

VB: It's amazing the amount of skill really that went to these films, isn't it?

GT: Oh yes, there is. I think they used to take time and patience in those days.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Very, very thorough.

VB: Yeah.

GT: 'Cause things change ever so quickly now. From one thing to the other.

VB: Mhm.

GT: You see somebody and before you know it, their marriage. They don't bring it up gradually.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Dorothy Lamour. [pause 8 seconds]. Never used to know much about Fredric March.

VB: No.

GT: He wasn't one of my, one of my famous film stars.

VB: Mhm.

GT: [turns pages; 7 seconds] Myrna Loy, William Powell. Mhm. Course they used to be in some terrific love stories, didn't they? Oh yes, there used to be some terrific love stories. [pause 4 seconds]

VB: Yeah, it's interesting what you were saying about these--

GT: Ans then of course, I mean eh, there's things here, the make-up, I think used to be a lot, far better--

VB: Mhm.

GT: Than what it is now. 'Cause they used to be eh, well I don't say more experienced but erm, they used to take more time in those days. [pause 9 seconds; looking at book] No, I don't know much about this one. Ah, there's George!

VB: A-ah! [laughs]

GT: I've got a film of him, you know. I've got a tape of him--

VB: A-ah!

GT: In there, yes. The ukelele George. I've got eh, what was he in? I've got a film in there. I recorded it. George, George Formby. He used to come on Radio 4 in the afternoons.

VB: Oh yes. Yeah.

GT: And I used to sit and I would tape it, you see. On tape.

VB: Yeah. That's right. I remember that. A couple of years back. They put on loads of them, didn't they?

GT: Oh we had several films there. We had some of George Formby. We had some, what's his name with the buses? I've even had one of eh, these eh, sort ones.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Half an hour. It was eh, and eh she's dead now. Erm. I've lent it out as a matter of fact. Erm, [pause 4 seconds] Can't think of the name. You?

VB: No.

GT: Who was it. 'George and Mildred'.

VB: Oh yes.

GT: Cause she's gone, you see.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I've got several of those.

VB: Yeah. What was it you think, made George Formby so good?

GT: Well I'd like to say his ukelele. Because I'd never heard of one until George and his old ukelele.

VB: Ah.

GT: And course he really used to play it. There's a lot of people try to play it but they can't play it as good as him.

VB: Mhm.

GT: No-o! George, he used to be quite a card, didn't he? George.

VB: Mhm.

GT: I think there's a chap about now. Tried to play like George again but he can't play like George.

VB: No.

GT: 'Leaning on a Lamppost on the Corner of the Street', and all that.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm. I'm afraid I don't know much about these.

VB: Mhm.

[pause 5 seconds]

GT: The stars used to keep their figures, you see.

VB: A-ah! [laughs] I think they started off a bit better, [laughing] than most of us.

GT: Well! Yes, you know. Yes, that's the thing I was talking about. How they used to dress.

VB: Mhm.

GT: How they looked and everything else. How they used to handle themselves. I mean, I think they used to be a little bit more graceful then, than what they did now.

VB: Yeah. I think you're right. Just looking at these.

GT: D'you think the styles, I mean, are better then than now? I know they look nice but--

VB: Mhm.

GT: The clothes are not up to the standard of what they are in these.

VB: Mhm.

GT: I don't think so myself.

VB: Certainly a lot more elegant, I think.

GT: They don't, yes, elegant. That's the word.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Because people don't really, unless, course, you're a businessman.

VB: Mhm.

GT: And got plenty of money. Because you can't afford to buy these things. To make yourself look smart. But today people, it doesn't matter if you don't pay anything dear. How they dress, they used to look smart.

VB: Yes.

GT: I mean [name?] was ninety-one yesterday. Was it yesterday or the day before? We'd to pick her up in the car. She dresses in style and everything about her, you know. Nobody tells her what to put on. She's ninety-one!

VB: That's amazing.

GT: Yeah, it is. Mhm. Expect you find that where you are.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Where you live in Glasgow. The people surrounding, round you. I dare say you know, think to yourself, oh he's always looked smart.

VB: Mhm.

GT: I mean you must know so much.

VB: Mhm. That's right.

GT: There you are. James Cagney.

VB: A-ah.

GT: There you are. He was quite a lad, wasn't he?

VB: Oh certainly.

GT: Oh he was in all sorts of things, James was. Oh-h!

VB: Did you like him as a dancer?

GT: Oh yes, I did. I used to like him. James Cagney. Specially in eh, gangster films.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Oh he used to be a real rascal, didn't he, he did. Yeah, I know it's because his image that does it, but he used to be very good.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I can't remember the films now he used to be in. Because he used to do dancing as well.

VB: That's right. Yeah.

GT: James Cagney, yeah.

VB: I always felt you couldn't help but like him even although he was a rascal, as you say. [laughs]

GT: No, no. You couldn't help but like him. 'Cause he was in a different kind of thing. And you would never have thought that he would be in that. Or take that type of film.

VB: Yeah.

GT: There he is. Mr and Mrs Fred MacMurray.

VB: A-ah.

GT: There he is. 'Course Fred Astaire. There he is. He could dance though, couldn't he?

VB: Mhm.

GT: He certainly could, yeah.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Joel McCrea. Ray Milland. [pause 4 seconds] Claudette Colbert. That is Claudette Colbert, isn't it?

VB: Mhm. Did you like her as an actress?

GT: Well yes.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Never used to see much of her. Not really.

VB: Mhm.

GT: No. [pause 7 seconds]. It would be nice to sort of read this, see what it says here.

VB: Yeah.

GT: That's very smart there.

VB: Beautiful, yeah.

GT: Beautiful that is. I mean that's real classy stuff.

VB: Yeah. As you were saying, the time it's taken to make something like that.

GT: Oh yes.

VB: It's beautiful.

GT: Beautiful, they are. Barbara Stanwyck. [turns page] Charles Boyer. 'Film Parade of 1938'. Course, this is more or less my area, really, 1938.

VB: Mhm.

GT: I mean cause I was seventeen then.

VB: Yes, of course.

GT: There you are. Metro Goldwyn Meyer. Sam Goldwyn. Those were filmmakers, weren't they?

VB: Mhm.

GT: Mhm. *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Oh yes. We've seen all those. Mhm. Those are quite nice for a character film, wasn't it?

VB: Oh yes.

GT: Seven eh, Grumpy, Bashful and all those.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm. Charles Boyer.

VB: A-ah.

GT: He was very elegant, he was, in is day, you know. And so was Claudette Colbert.

VB: Mhm.

GT: 'Course there's Joan Crawford ere as well. Spencer Tracy. Yeah. He was quite a character, Spencer Tracy, wasn't he?

VB: Mhm!

GT: He used to in, some days he used to be in, 'Master of the Ship' or some title like that [possibly referring to *Captains Courageous*], he used to be, didn't he? Yeah. Mhm. [pause 6 seconds; looking at book] Ah, that's erm, the little child. What they call her, erm. Shirley Temple.

VB: Oh yes. Yeah.

GT: Shirley Temple.

VB: Did you like her?

GT: Oh yes, I used to like her. Yeah. Yes, in her junior days.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Oh absolutely! She'd be very good in her junior days. Shirley Temple. 'Course there's Gary Cooper again here.

VB: Ah.

GT: Mhm. There he is again. Now there's Randolph Scott here. Which one is he? Ah. Shirley Temple. That's Randolph Scott.

VB: Ah, right. Yeah.

GT: That's him. He used to be a cowboy as well. He'd be a well-known guy. I used to like him.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Oh, very good cowboy Randolph Scott was. He never used to say much. He was very, very quiet. But what he did say and what he used to do, definitely used to be him.

VB: Yeah, yeah.

GT: Do you remember him?

VB: Oh yes, yes. I know what you mean. Very sort of controlled.

GT: Very controlled.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Whatever he used to do, he used to carry on doing it. Because that's all in the film you see.

VB: Yeah.

GT: He's got to be the top man. I mean.

VB: Yeah.

GT: [looks at book] Jessie Matthews was another one. She used to be very nice, Jessie Matthews. I used to like er. Jessie Matthews. Yeah. She lived to a ripe old age, did Jessie Matthews.

VB: Ah! Yeah.

GT: I think, was she in her eighties, I believe?

VB: That sounds about right.

GT: A year or two, didn't she? She passed on.

VB: Yeah.

GT: [pause 5 seconds] Are we still?

VB: We're still going. [laughs]

GT: Oh! [laughs] I just wondered whether [Miriam?] could just have a look.

VB: Of course. Yes. Of course. That'd be fine.

GT: If you've finished our little interview.

VB: Yes.

GT: I'll just look through it first.

VB: Right.

GT: And we'll let her--

VB: Of course, yes.

GT: Just to talk about it 'cause eh, mmmm. [looks at book] Samuel Goldwyn, you see.

VB: Mhm.

GT: [looks at book] 'Course there used to be all the dancers, didn't there? All the years.

VB: Yes.

GT: Mhm. 'Course another thing used to be the live entertainment. They used to come to the Palladium. With all the Tiller Girls and all those. That used to be more or less exciting, didn't it?

VB: Mhm.

GT: I mean for me, I'm saying, yeah. Mhm. Mhm. [turns pages]

[End of Side B]

[End of Tape One]

[Start of Tape Two]

[Start of Side A]

GT: There used to be as I say, Nelson Eddy.

VB: Ah!

GT: Another good singer, wasn't he? Nelson Eddy.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm.

VB: Erm, 'cause he made a few films with Jeanette MacDonald, didn't he?

GT: Yes. Yes, he did, yes. Yes he did.

VB: Yeah.

GT: And Eleanor Powell. And of course see, Victor McLaglen, you see, is here.

VB: Mhm.

GT: There he is there, look. That's him. Mhm. Victor McLaglen and Brian Donlevy. 'Course in his later life he used to come into the boxer series, didn't he?

VB: Mhm.

GT: If there was an [edition?] had to be done, he used to do it. Yeah. Mhm.

VB: I do see what you mean about the clothes actually.

GT: Yeah.

VB: They're quite something.

GT: Fred Astaire. [looking at book] 'Fred Astaire without Ginger Rogers this time.'

VB: Ah!

GT: Says here. The new version of the Wodehouse story. Mhm. Joan Fontaine. George Burns. Mhm.

VB: Was Joan Fontaine, she was Olivia de Havilland's sister, wasn't she?

GT: I believe she was.

VB: Yeah, yeah.

GT: I think she was. I'm not quite sure. I'm not very well up with it, eh. No.

VB: 'Cause they're quite similar in looks.

GT: Yeah.

VB: Well except one blonde and one dark.

GT: That's right, yeah.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm. Course Fred Astaire, I mean he could take all types of parts, couldn't he?

VB: Aw.

GT: Really.

VB: Yes.

GT: Mhm. I mean I think some of these films, at his early age, the dance routine used to be done by somebody else.

VB: Mhm.

GT: They used to [photograph?] it differently. The feet, I mean, that's what happens now. I mean the eh, somebody else sings and they mime it and all this.

VB: Yeah.

GT: But these time of days, they used to do it all themselves. That time of day, didn't they?

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm. 'Tom Sawyer', I remember that. 'Tom Sawyer' [referring to *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*]. Tom Sawyer used to be a schoolboy, didn't he?

VB: Ah, yes!

GT: Tom Sawyer's schoolboy days. Mhm. Ginger Rogers ish ere, look. And Douglas Fairbanks Junior.

VB: A-ah!

GT: Yeah. Mhm. Mhm. [turns pages] Ah there's another fella here. Dick Powell.

VB: Aw yes!

GT: Another one used to be a [rare?] guy too. Very smart. Always got his hair done nicely.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Absolutely. Yes. And who is this? It's a band. I'll have to have a look to see who the band is. [pause 4 seconds] Mhm. Rex Harrison.

VB: Mhm!

[pause 8 seconds; looking at book]

GT: Charles Laughton.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Never did see any of these. Not really.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Not those ones. Not these films. I never seen any of them as far as I know.

VB: Yeah.

GT: 'Ten Points an Actress Must Know'. [reading from book] Bette Davis. There used to be a nickname for her. Is it in here? They used to call her, 'cause she used to use a whip. She was very firm, did she? Oh yes. She used, get her way in her films.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Mhm. [pause 7 seconds] There she is again.

VB: Uhuh.

GT: Yeah.

VB: 'Cause she was supposed to be quite a difficult person, wasn't she?

GT: Oh yes, she was. Very difficult person.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Very difficult person.

VB: D'you think that came out in her films or?

GT: I think it did--

VB: Yeah.

GT: Really. 'Cause she used to, used to be eh, as I say, very firm. And seemed to be very difficult to get on with, didn't she?

VB: Mhm.

GT: But they may be all part of the film, really.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Taking part of somebody else's life perhaps.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm. [turns pages; pause 11 seconds]. A-ah. Cary Grant.

VB: Ah!

GT: That's right. Mhm. As I say, a little after this time, there used to be a film called *The Robe*. Did you ever see it?

VB: I don't think so. No.

GT: Oh that used to be a marvellous film that was. It would be about three-and-a-quarter hours. *The Robe*. I think it was either, erm, what was it something to do with now? Like Julius Caesar or something like that.

VB: Right.

GT: They did have music. Like eh, [pause 3 seconds] what did they call him? They used to have [arena?] years ago. *Spartacus* and all those type of things.

VB: Oh yes. Epic films.

GT: Oh! Oh they were really good films!

VB: Yeah.

GT: They don't make. They can't make a film like that [*The Robe*]. And of course another used to be *Gone with the Wind*. That used to be another one for three hours.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Mhm. They were really good films. You could really get to grips in them, could you. As I say, I think they used to be better. 'Cause you used to get a grip on it, you know. And, like it better. I couldn't enjoy films they do now. I wouldn't go now.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Do you go to films?

VB: I do, yes.

GT: Do you?

VB: Yeah, yeah.

GT: Do you like to see the old ones?

VB: I like the old ones. [laughs] Yeah.

GT: Who is your favourite now?

VB: Aw-w. It's hard to say really. Eh, I mean I think most of the people in that book [laughing] are really good.

GT: But what is the one that you like now?

VB: Of the modern films?

GT: Do you like the erm, the type of erm, what shall we say? The big brawny men. What's he called?

VB: Not really. The sort of eh, I don't know. The sort of Arnold Schwarzenegger.

GT: Oh, Arnold Schwarzenegger and all those!

VB: Yeah, I'm not too keen on all that! [laughs]

GT: [laughs]

VB: I like something with a bit of a story to it.

GT: That's right. Yes, oh yes.

VB: Erm, that's nice to look at. [laughs]

GT: Yes. [looking at book] Nervo and Knox. Flanagan and Allen. I've seen those.

VB: A-ah!

GT: Seen these.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Oh yes. Used to be on at the erm, Victoria Palace. Nervo and Knox and all these.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Yeah. There you are, look. Naughton and Gold, Flanagan and Allen, Nervo and Knox. Alastair Sim, Sim. They used to be very good. They used to play it on the stage. When I first started to drive up to London.

VB: Ah, I see.

GT: Yes.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Victoria Palace.

VB: A-ah!

GT: Yeah. *Alf's Button Afloat*, look. See, 'The Crazy Gang of London Palladium Fame.'

VB: Mhm.

GT: Oh yeah. Mhm. Gor, does go back some, this does.

VB: Mhm.

GT: My word it does! Yeah. Mhm. Oh it certainly opened my eyes has this.

VB: [laughs]

GT: [pause 5 seconds] Wallace Beery.

VB: Aw.

GT: *The Bad Man of Brimstone.*

VB: [laughs]

GT: I didn't used to see that, but he was a good cowboy fella too. Oh yes. And then, of course there's another one here. Gene Autry.

VB: A-ah!

GT: Used to be 'The Singing Cowboy'. Yes. He used to be, in that day, he used to be very famous. Specially with his horse. What was it called? Was it Trigger? Trigger.

VB: Ah.

GT: Trigger, I believe the name of his horse was. Yeah, the westerns. You had 'The Singing Cowboy'. Mhm. 'Course Gene Autry was after Buck Jones. He used to be someone who was very familiar.

VB: Ah, I see.

GT: Yeah. As I said before, Tim McCoy. And there used to be Frank Merriwell, the *Undersea Kingdom*. That were a different type of thing. And then there was eh, Hopalong Cassidy. Used to be done by Bill [William] Boyd.

VB: Right. [laughs].

GT: Yes. They were the early days. But that's what films I used to see when I was a boy.

VB: Aye. [laughs]

GT: Mhm. Yes, I believe I did see the [name?]. He used to be a very stern fella this.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Yeah. Raymond Massey.

VB: Right.

GT: Oh! He used to be very stern. Specially in that film called *The Drum*, with Sabu the boy.

VB: Mhm.

GT: The Elephant, the Elephant Boy. Sabu. Mhm. [reads from book] 'And So "Victoria" - But Now What?'. Herbert Wilcox. He used to be a good film director, didn't he?

VB: A-ah, yes.

GT: He used to be. Yeah. [pause 5 seconds] There's Ginger Rogers.

VB: Ah.

GT: Anna Neagle. Anton Walbrook. I'm very glad you brought this.

VB: Aw, I'm glad you've enjoyed it.

GT: Oh! I have.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Yeah. Mhm. I wish I could get one like this myself.

VB: Ah.

GT: Mhm.

VB: I was certainly very pleased to find it 'cause there's--

GT: You was, was you?

VB: Yeah.

GT: How much did it cost you?

VB: I think it was about eh, seven or eight pounds.

GT: Is that all? Somebody must've been wanting to get rid of them.

VB: Yeah. Not bad.

GT: 'Course, not bad. That's worth keeping on to, this is.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Oh! You'll never see the likes again.

VB: No.

GT: No. Never see the likes again, you won't. No. I'll get Miriam to come in and have a look at this.

VB: Yes. That'd be great.

GT: Oh, Greta Garbo. "Come up and see me sometime."

VB: [laughs]

GT: Yeah. Oh! Mhm. She'd love to have a look at this. Gor, it's ten to four.

VB: Goodness me! [laughs]

GT: Ah! Oh! Mhm. 'Course a lot of these, some of these people used to take erm, up teaching, didn't they? Being a teacher in some films.

VB: Yeah.

GT: I don't know this fella. Leopold Stokowski. Now *One Hundred Men and A Girl*. That's Deanna Durbin in that.

VB: A-ah!

GT: She was fifteen years old. I can remember that. There she is there.

VB: Mhm.

GT: You just look in these films here how she took it when she was a teenager.

VB: Mhm.

GT: How she used to be like. Another one here, look.

VB: Lovely.

GT: Lovely. Shirley Temple of course as well. She was very good in her young days, wasn't she?

VB: Mhm.

GT: Shirley Temple. Mhm. Jack Hulbert!

VB: Ah.

GT: There used to be Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge. Do you remember them?

VB: I know the names but I've not seen their films, I must say.

GT: Yeah, I've seen them. They used to be in a film, he wasn't in many films.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Jack Hulbert. Mhm. *Ali Baba Goes to Town*. Eddie Cantor.

VB: A-ah!

GT: Eddie Cantor. [turns pages] *The Prisoner of Zenda*. Ronald Colman.

VB: Oh yes!

GT: I've seen that. Oh, I've seen that.

VB: That's great.

GT: Have you seen that?

VB: Oh, it's a great one that.

GT: Great film that was.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Douglas Fairbanks Junior.

VB: Good bit of swordfighting as well, as I say.

GT: Oh yes. Very classy.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Very, very good film. 'Course that's a very old film that is.

VB: Mhm.

GT: Yeah. Mhm. [pause 6 seconds] This is all about him in ere, look. Cor! Have you shown anybody else this today?

VB: Erm. No, I haven't really actually.

GT: Ooh!

VB: It's eh--

GT: It tell you even when they were born, look! Born in 1908 and everything! Ooh!

VB: Aye.

GT: Humphrey Bogart. He was another tough old [brick?]. Oh yeah. 1899 he was born, look. They've all gone. [turns pages] Mhm. Mhm. They've all gone, haven't they, now.

VB: Mhm.

GT: [pause 14 seconds] Oh this is a marvellous book this.

VB: Well I'm glad you've enjoyed it.

GT: Oh, I have! Who did it belong to? You never did know?

VB: No. Never found out. No. Oh there you are. It was ten pounds. Ten pounds, yeah.

GT: In 1938.

VB: Well, that was erm--

GT: Now.

VB: Now.

GT: Now.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Oh when you bought it.

VB: Yeah.

GT: Ten pounds.

VB: Yeah.

GT: That's worth a lot more than that.

VB: Not bad, is it? [laughs]

GT: Have we finished now, have we?

VB: Yeah, I think so.

GT: Yeah.

[End of Interview]