

Disclaimer: This interview was conducted in 1994 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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* Glasgow, 5 December 1994: Valentina Bold interviews Margaret Young and Mollie Stevenson

* Transcribed by Valentina Bold/ Standardised by Julia McDowell

* MY = Margaret Young/MS = Mollie Stevenson/VB = Valentina Bold/JY = Jack Young

* Notes: First of two interviews with Margaret Young and Mollie Stevenson; Sound Quality: Fair; this interview was originally transcribed in a phonetic manner; the original phonetic version can be accessed through our physical collection - please contact Lancaster University Library for details.

[Start of Tape One]

[Start of Side A]

[tape introduction by Valentina Bold]

[general conversation about setting up tape recorder; VB voice faint in background]

VB: OK, em, the other thing before we actually get started talking about cinemas. I was wanting to ask a couple of details about you, just to make sure I've got your background right that sort of stuff.

MY: Yes.

VB: And it'll simplify things of course [laughs] 'cause a lot of it will be the same for both of you. So can I ask what your dates of births both are?

MS: [day and month redacted] 1923.

JY: [inaudible] [laughter]

MY: That's what you're supposed to fill it up with! [date and month redacted] 25.

VB: [inaudible]

MY: Thank you, yes.

MS: Having your arm twisted up your back helps. [laughter]

VB: And were you both born in Glasgow then?

MS: Yes.

VB: Whereabouts?

MS: Well I was eh'm, born at Broomhill.

MY: And I was born at Riddrie. In the same house my sister still stays there.

VB: Does she? And can I ask what it was that your father did?

MY: Commercial traveller.

MS: Commercial traveller.

MY: Probably a rep nowadays, but commercial traveller we knew them as.

VB: And did your mother work at all?

MY: No, no, no.

VB: Em, do you have any other sisters and brothers or...?

MS: No, just the two of us.

VB: And, can I ask a bit about your education as well, what schools you went to?

MY: Well, Riddrie Primary.

MS: Yes.

MY: Both of us, Riddrie Primary and Whitehill Senior Secondary. That's in Dennistoun.

VB: And, how old were you when you left?

MY: I was seventeen. What age were you? Fourteen.

MS: Ah, I must've been, uhuh.

VB: And did you go onto any education after that?

MS: Margaret did.

MY: Ah, well that was in my forties so I didn't do anything.

VB: I see.

MY: Uhuh. I went to a college of education and became a teacher in my forties.

VB: I see.

MY: You were in the army.

MS: In the army, uhuh.

MY: A.T.S. [referring to Auxiliary Territorial Service] for three years.

MS: But we were both eh'm, secretaries and shorthand typists.

MY: Well no, you were a secretary, I was a shorthand typist, I didn't become a secretary--

MS: Oh, well I didn't become a secretary when I came out the army and joined the Burma Oil Company.

MY: See there was a difference. I mean, a secretary's a wee bit higher than a shorthand typist
[laughs]

VB: [laughs]

MS: Ah, they're just the same [laughs]

MY: [laughs]

VB: [laughs] **So it was office work.**

MS: Office work.

MY: Yes, yes, uhuh.

MY: You went to a legal place, I went to--

MS: I was the lawyer first of all, a lawyer's office first of all and then the Burma Oil Company.

MY: Uhuh.

VB: **Right. And was that right through your working life then?**

MS: Well I was thirty-one years with them [pause 2 seconds]. The Burma Oil Company.

VB: **Right. And you were saying about the...**

MY: I left when I, I left when I had the first baby. That would be 1950 [sic]... 1956 I left work. And I didn't go to college until eight years later. I was in my forties anyway.

VB: **And how long have you been teaching?**

MY: For about [pause 2 seconds]. Eighteen years.

MS: Eighteen years, nineteen years.

VB: And can I ask if you have any strong political views or...?

MY: No. No I can vote for anything, as it comes up my [hum?] [laughs] Depending what I think's best for the country at the time, having voted for all three political parties at one point in my career, so I'm a floating voter.

VB: Right. And...

MS: Well, I've always voted Conservative.

VB: There aren't any, any wee arguments there? [laughs]

MY: Oh, we always argue about different things, but nothing that would upset us.

VB: And can I ask were you raised in any particular religion?

MY: Yes, Church of Scotland.

MS: Church of Scotland.

VB: And have you always lived in Glasgow?

MY: Yes.

MS: Yes.

MY: I think I've lived my life in a five mile radius.

MS: [laughs]

VB: But it's a nice part of the town, isn't it?

MY: Yes, uhuh.

VB: Em. And can I ask when you were married then?

MY: 1953. The year the Queen was crowned and they got up Everest and we got married. So that's the three main things in 1953!

MS: [laughs]

VB: [laughs]

MY: The coronation and Everest.

VB: And can ask what sort of work you've done yourself?

[other person, male, laughs]

JY: Pardon? Oh, yes. I was eh, a [brasser?].

VB: Right.

JY: [inaudible]

VB: And, how many children do you have?

MY: Two, a boy and a girl.

MS: I'm not married.

MY: One of life's untrained, un, un, un, what was it, unclaimed treasures.

MS: [laughs]

VB: The other thing that I'd like to ask is, before we get started, is because I'm taping this today and these tapes are going to be kept in the University and I was wondering if you would have any objections if say in the future if someone else was doing research about cinema in the thirties, listen to that material.

MY: Not a bit.

VB: And if they read through the transcript.

MY: None, whatsoever, no.

VB: Can I ask you then if you'd sign this declaration. [laughs] It's just one of these sort of legal things.

MY: In case we sue you for defamation of character!

MS: [laughs]

MY: I'll get my glasses.

VB: So, it's... there.

MY: This here? Right.

VB: Thanks very much.

MY: Sorry, sorry, sorry.

VB: I mean if there was any time in the future that you thought, well I've thought twice about this and...

MY: Nothing whatsoever.

VB: It can be changed.

MY: Yeah. None whatsoever.

VB: That's great. [pause 2 seconds] I always think it would be shame if they didn't.

MY: Well, it's living history as they call it.

MS: Uhuh.

VB: Absolutely.

MY: Eh, fifth of the twelfth?

MS: Fifth of the twelfth.

MY: There we are.

VB: That's great. Thanks a lot.

MY: It's no bother. [pause] Is that your pen?

VB: Aye. [inaudible] Eh, the first thing that I would like to ask you both about, eh, are your earliest memories of going to the cinema because I know you were talking about going to the cinema, sort of the age of five.

MY: A lot!

MS: [laughs]

MY: Is it on just now?

VB: Yes it is.

MY: Well you start with yours.

MS: Well, there's a funny one that I can remember. My earliest one was going to the Picture House in Sauchiehall Street with my mother, my aunt and yourself. But the film I can remember was *The Chain Gang* with Paul Muni [referring to *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*] but I can't imagine mum and dad, I think that must've been a second feature, it must've been a funny film. 'Cause I can't imagine them taking us to *The Chain Gang* but that is my earliest recollection.

MY: Yes.

MS: And of course, we always went to the Saturday morning ones, you know, in Dennistoun. You know Buck Jones and Ken Maynard.

MY: I can't remember anything like that. No. I can't remember...

MS: Going to the Marne?

MY: No. My earliest recollection is in town somewhere with mum, and it was a comedy, and I think it was a Harold Lloyd film and he got his foot into a spittoon and I got so upset, I cried and cried, and my mother had to take me out 'cause I thought, he'll never get his foot out of that spittoon!

MS: [laughs]

OP: [laughs]

MY: Because everybody was rolling about and I'm having an absolute [annie?] and eh I was taken out the picture house so that's my, it must have been a Harold Lloyd comedy, which I didn't find funny at all!

VB: So was it comedies that you mainly went to with your parents, then?

MS: Not, well if, aye, I think they would've had quite a wide range. But not, eh, I'm quite sure, why *The Chain Gang*, 'cause I remember crying and my head being more or less between my knees most of the time.

MY: Uhuh. Well the films we went to see were the Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers ones. The Andy Hardy ones, Deanna Durbin's.

MS: Oh, yes.

MY: Eh, Carole Lombard, the sort of zany ones.

MS: Judy Garland.

MY: Eh, what d'you call that? Katherine Hepburn, Cary Grant. Light ones.

MS: Light, light eh, entertainment.

MY: In the thirties, anyway. We might have broadened out a wee bit in the forties but definitely the thirties it was [pause 2 seconds] to take our mind from the horrible thirties, but we weren't aware of the horrible thirties. We thought that was normal. [laughs]

MS: Yes.

VB: Can I ask you about the cinema that you mentioned then, the Picture House in Dennistoun, was it?

MS: Yes, there was the Parade, which is now a restaurant. And the Marne, which is away. And then our two local ones, 'cause we were the district next to Dennistoun, going out of town. First of all it was the Rex, and then it was the Vogue. The Rex is away but the Vogue is now a bingo hall. These were the four local cinemas.

MY: And we didn't go into town very often on our own.

MS: No.

MY: No. Not in the thirties.

MS: We were quite... Not, definitely not in the thirties. No, 'cause we saw *Gone with the Wind* in the Odeon. Uhuh. Was it the Odeon?

MY: Aye, it was the Odeon. No. it wasn't the Odeon. It was the Green's Playhouse.

MS: The Green's Playhouse.

VB: Can you tell me a bit more about these local cinemas, what they were like?

MY: Aw, they were lovely! They really were. Except the Marne was looked upon as the little [bunkhouse?]

MS: It was like a wooden, eh, construction, but eh, the Rex was very, very new then.

MY: Uhuh. And the Vogue was even newer.

MS: Oh, yes, uhuh.

MY: I've got a book about the cinemas, you might want to take with you. Which I wouldn't mind as long as you sent it back to me again. All the different cinemas. Have you seen it?

VB: I think I have actually. Is that the brown one? It's very good isn't it.

MY: Yes, oh yes.

VB: Yes. Eh I like this because it does give you the, eh, you can get an idea what they were like inside.

MY: Yes, uhuh.

MS: Yes.

MY: And they had people standing outside. What were they called? Doormen.

MS: Yes

OP: Commissionaires.

MY: Commissionaires, that's right, commissionaires.

MY: Uhuh. But it was a big thing to go the pictures. I mean it really was.

MS: Well the Rex and the Vogue were the two newer ones. The Dennistoun and the Marne were definitely older but I think the Rex was an ABC.

MY: Yes.

MS: But eh, the Vogue was tied up with the, eh?

MY: Singleton.

MS: The what d'you call the one? Rose Street.

MY: Ah, the Cosmo.

MS: Cosmo, uhuh. It was linked with the Cosmo.

MY: And then it changed.

MS: Well it changed because Singleton was either the first owner and then was it West, did I say, West?

MY: Can't remember.

MS: Well he was a Lord Provost. He would be the first, Singleton second, you know.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: But it was with the Cosmo.

MY: They changed the name from the Vogue to the Riddrie, didn't they?

MS: Yes, it was the Vogue first of all and then it became the Riddrie.

VB: What was that one like inside?

MY: Oh, it was lovely, it really was.

MS: It was very, well it was—

MY: More art deco than the other one.

MY: Yes, very much so. I would say that the Rex was a traditional...

MY: Uhuh. [inaudible] [laughter]

MS: The Rex was a traditional cinema, I would say. But the Vogue was, oh they thought it was, it was so...

MY: I don't think the Parade was up to much.

MS: No. It was old as well 'cause it was older than the Rex.

MY: Uhuh, yeah.

MS: But it was so brightly coloured. You know, you were into the reds and the greens and things like that.

MY: Uhuh. Isabel said something about the stars up on the ceiling. I don't remember that.

MS: Yes. It was as though you were looking at the sky.

MY: Uhuh. It makes you wonder what would happen if the rain came on.

MS: [laughs] It really was. It wasn't like the Pavilion Theatre, which does open up.

OP: Was there any organs there?

MS: No, we didn't have any organs there, no. That was more the town that you would have got the music.

OP: [inaudible] The Paramount but that was the only one that had one.

MY: The La Scala had an organ.

MS: It had an organ and a restaurant.

OP: [inaudible].

MY: Possibly but I don't remember it.

MS: Was the Paramount before the Odeon was that, the Paramount become the Odeon. It definitely had an organ.

MY: Uhuh.

VB: I've just found that as you were saying that. The organ.

MY: Yeah, there's the organ, there, that's right, yes.

VB: That looks very grand.

MY: Yes and round here, was it both sides that you had this, that you could eat? Both, up the sides?

MS: Yes. Up the side. And the balcony.

MY: Just one, just one side?

OP: Just one side.

MY: Uhuh.

VB: Someone was telling me about that. Was it right that they used to bring [tea at the cinema?]

MY: Yes, yes, yes. You were down the sides.

MS: Uhuh. If you had enough pocket money.

MY: [laughs] We never did that but I could see.

MS: Oh, I've done it, yeah. Elsie and I have done it.

VB: What sort of things did they serve then?

MS: Well, it was eh, sausages or, ham and egg.

MY: High tea.

MS: High tea! Fish 'n chips, and things like that.

OP: High tea?

MY: Uhuh. You know you'd have your scones and your cakes afterwards.

MS: Afterwards, yes, uhuh. It was... if you weren't eating, it was slightly annoying to hear the knives and forks go down, you know. You could... it would've been better with paper plates and there wouldn't have been such a clatter when the stuff went down.

MY: Yeah.

OP: [laughs]

MS: But eh, it was an awful...

MY: Well that's the only we know that had that.

MS: Yes. La Scala.

OP: I thought it appeared to be well...

MY: Attended. Yes.

MS: Yes it was.

VB; You were saying that was as you got a bit older you went into...

MY: Oh, yes into town. I that would be in the forties I would say.

MS: In the forties.

MY: But not the thirties. We didn't venture into town at all unless your mother was with you, or your father.

VB: I was wanting to ask you about that as well. I mean, did your parents go to the pictures a lot?

MS: Oh, yeah. They, they liked it.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: Yes, definitely.

MY: I don't remember them going as a twosome though. They took us, did they not? I don't remember them as a night out, going to the pictures. I don't remember them having nights out at all. They might go to the odd dance.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: But I don't remember them going.

MS: No, they probably just went...

MY: Oh, well, possibly they couldn't afford it! I mean, they managed to keep the family together.

MS: Yes.

MY: But I don't know if they had all that much money. Every penny was a prisoner in those days. You were lucky if your father had a job. But I don't think they went out all that often. No.

JY: I remember once standing in the queue for... I think it was Odeon at that time, and this fellow came behind me and asked for two adults and two children [inaudible].

MY: [all laugh]

JY: Over a pound to get into the cinema.

MY: That was something they had in the forties. They had people entertaining you outside, you know, they had tap dancers and they had singers, and they...

JY: Buskers.

MY: The band of buskers. And you gave them coppers and whatnot but I don't remember that in the thirties. I suppose it would be.

JY: [inaudible] I'm talking about [mention of seats]. So this fellow who came in with his wife and two kids and spent over a pound. Very expensive.

MY: Yeah.

MS: [laughs]

MY: I remember seeing *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* when it came out at first in the Parade and my mother, her price was threepence and mine was tuppence.

MS: Yes.

MY: And the Rex was dearer. It was fourpence and sixpence.

MS: Sixpence, uhuh.

MY: So we'd gather up the jeely jars.

MS: Yes [laughs]

MY: We called them the jelly jars, and take them round to the shops and get tuppences and threepences for them

MS: That's right.

VB: That must have been quite... [that was when they?] animated colour films, wasn't it?

MY: Yes.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: Oh, yes. It was really something, yes.

VB: Do you remember that being a special...?

MY: Oh yes... there was an Eddie Cantor film that finished off at the very end, just at the very end.

MS: Was that the *George White Scandals*?

MY: No, no, no. This was something and it came, and it was, they went into this factory, all the children and they're licking all these cones and things and that was the first time I'd seen colour.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: It was an Eddie Cantor film which was in the thirties. And it was really, oh that was phenomenal to see the colour. Although nowadays when you look at the black-and-white films, they were good but you never thought about it.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: In fact, some of them were better, not being coloured. I like them, the black-and-white.

MS: It was just what you were used to.

MY: It was quite a thing when the colour came in.

VB: These sort of queues that you're talking about, was that quite a common thing?

MS: Oh, yes.

MY: Oh, you stood for hours, stood for hours!

JY: If you saw a film at a picture house without a queue you were... [inaudible]

MY: [laughs]

MS: Oh, long, long queues!

MY: And you used to say, well if we get up to that lamp-post we'll stay and then you got up to the lamp, and then if we get up that lamp we'll stay, but you stayed for hours. I mean everybody went to the pictures. It was the thing to do.

MS: And as the evening went on, they would come and say, "Well, after here you haven't got a chance." That's where the commissionaire would come into his own, and he'd say "After that, you haven't got a chance, it's not worthwhile"

MY: Waiting.

MS: Uhuh. [pause] Had it all counted out, you know.

VB: Were he be quite strict with you?

MY: Oh, heavens, yes!

MS: Oh yes. Well, I mean they had all the gold, epaulettes and the hat and everything and--

MY: Like a general or something.

JY: [more discipline, generally, about] [inaudible]

MY: Authority.

JY: Authority. [inaudible] and, eh, they realised they were capable of keeping you out of the cinema.

MY: They were generally pretty big men, I mean they weren't just wee waifs that were standing around.

MS: Oh, no they were tall, well built. I suppose we would call them bouncers nowadays.

JY: They kept the queues, they controlled the queues... [inaudible] and formed the queues, and once it was formed [inaudible].

MY: And joined on at the end.

JY: [inaudible] Eventually you were in the right queue. [all laugh] [inaudible] the one that you wanted.

MS: No, they had a wee stand.

MY: Yes they had a stand telling you the price.

JY: You tried to judge which lot would go in first.

MS: But they really had a good programme, I mean they had the A films, the B films, the coming attractions, the news, the cartoon. You got your money's worth, you really did.

MY: I mean it was about three hours you were there anyway.

MS: And it was good. I mean you really got a lot.

MY: I don't think there was anything else you got.

JY: I don't think there were any adverts?

MS: No, you didn't have adverts.

MY: Coming attractions. That would be another thing. And occasionally there would be a bouncing ball, you'd sing songs to.

VB: Can you tell me more about that?

MY: Uhuh. Well they'd put up the words of the song and, so as you'd know what words you were at, they had a sort of tennis ball went from one word to the other. You know, and you all [laughs] got, called it the bouncing ball. [laughs]

JY: [inaudible] with an organ?

MY: Sometimes it would be, but occasionally you would get eh, a wee sing-song without, I mean the music would come out the screen, I suppose.

MS: But we had the wee singalongs.

VB: Did you ever see competitions in the cinema, because I've heard that some of them did, em, you know, singing competitions and they had turns and stuff like that?

MY: No, no. Would that not be before, way at the very beginning of eh, really before, even before our time.

MS: Yes.

MY: Between '25 and '30, maybe?

MS: Ah, that's when they had a pianist doing background music.

MY: Uhuh. That was before our time. No we didn't see the silents, no. That was after us.

VB: I think it was maybe some of the wee cinemas...

MY: No, I would imagine the Regal would have the competitions, maybe. The Regal Picture House Cinema in Sauchiehall Street. But I never saw any talent competitions.

JY: I think [inaudible].

MY: Yes, uhuh.

MS: Where was it that Dad was yanked off the stage?

MY: Oh, I can't remember.

MS: It was somewhere, like the Citizens Theatre in the Gorbals, he got the hook.

MY: [laughs]

MS: He wasn't very good, he got pulled off! [laughs]

MY: That wouldn't be the cinema though, would it?

MS: No, I don't know.

MY: That would be the Pantehnicon or something.

MS: Uhuh. That's right. Pantehnicon [referring to Panopticon Music Hall?].

MY: That was before our time.

VB: I was interested as well when you were talking there about, you know commissionaires and everything. I mean, how did children behave when the films were on. Were they quiet or...?

JY: [inaudible] children going to the cinema every evening.

MS: Oh, it was murder in the morning. Really.

JY: Well, was it not during the war [referring to Second World War] that the morning cinema started for children?

MS: No.

JY: With these cinema clubs.

MS: Well we were quite young when we went.

MY: It was very noisy. It was in the morning.

MS: Very, very noisy. It was only if there was something terribly exciting on the screen that you would get silence. But the usherettes would come with their torches, you know, and shine it on you and try and keep you controlled, but it was very, very noisy.

MY: Yeah.

JY: I [never?] remember going to the cinema in the morning.

MY: A Saturday morning.

MS: A Saturday morning matinee, yes.

JY: [inaudible].

MY: No, the mornings was the, they were the ones we went to.

MS: We went to, uhuh.

JY: [inaudible] [there was usually?] what do you call it, a follow-up, a follow-up...

MS: Aye, there was a continuing story of eh, Buck Jones, people like that.

JY: Buck Jones or something like that.

MY: The heroine was tied to the... railway line and the train was coming up and it would stop.

MS: 'Cause you had to go next week.

MY: The catcalls and the shouting was really something. As you say, it was only when it was really something, I mean if there was any kissing or anything like that, that was [laughs] nobody wanted to know!

MS: [laughs] Let's have some action, not that kind of action! But action.

VB: Were there certain kinds of films that you preferred as a child?

MY: Oh, yes. I would say the Andy Hardy films and the Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaires, I adored them. And the Deanna Durbin's. Loved them. Wizard of Oz. Loved it.

JY: [inaudible] [mention of cowboy films] [laughs]

VB: Was there a difference between, you know, the films that boys liked and...?

MY: Oh, yes.

MS: Oh, yes.

MY: They wanted the guns. Mind you, I liked, Errol Flynn, he was my hero at one point.

MS: Uhuh, but that was in the forties, was it not?

MY: Forties, do you think? Well coming up late thirties, forties.

MS: Yes, uhuh.

MY: We got all the film magazines of course and had our bedroom plastered in pictures.

MS: Our mother bought us a film magazine.

VB: [inaudible] [laughs]

MY: Well I've got some books here that you might be interested in.

VB: Oh! I'd love to have a look.

MS: Eh, but once a week mum, she would go into, our church was in town and she'd go to Woolworths and buy 'Screenplay' or, or, what was it, em 'Screen Stories'? Every Thursday she bought us back from the town a book.

MY: Here's all the films that I went to see the next [inaudible].

VB: I've seen a photocopy of them, it's amazing [inaudible]. [laughs]

MS: [laughs]

MY: I mean I obviously had eh... an idea of what I liked. I mean [inaudible] underlined and if it was an ordinary film it was just in pencil.

[End of Side A]

[Start of Side B]

VB: That's it. You can never tell, sometimes they cut out. [laughs]

MY: Of course, uhuh.

VB: But what about the clothes and things in these films as well. Was that an attraction?

MS: Oh, very much! Oh, yes. The make-up, the clothes. I was eh, a knitter and I knitted a jumper for, that Jane Wyman wore. I remember doing that. I only did it once.

MY: Uhuh. I don't remember that.

MS: I admired it so much that eh, I managed to make it. I got the stitches from another pattern and eh, I managed to make it up. I can always remember that was Jane Wyman. At that time she was married to Ronald Reagan.

MY: Yeah. Oh, I'd say the clothes were definitely.

MS: Yes. And we'd copy Deanna Durbin's. We tried to get a hat the same as Deanna Durbin's.

MY: Uhuh. The bobby sox. Oh, yes I think the clothes was very important. I really admired it.

VB: These sort of books are so interesting to look at. I mean, were these things that you pored over?

MS: Oh, yes.

MY: Oh, yes. It was the monthly magazines we got, wasn't it? The 'Picturegoer', the 'Modern Screen'.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: Oh, we loved the American magazines, just loved it! We must have saved up our pocket money to get that as well.

JY: [inaudible] Christmas annuals.

MY: Oh yes, that's right. We got that, yes.

VB: Was that something you got regularly at Christmas?

MY: I would say. Well I've got them from '38 up to '42 anyway. But eh, oh yes that was a big thing to get.

VB: I'm just looking through this. They've got eh..., 1938, there's Nelson Eddy.

MY: Oh, yes. We liked them.

MS: Yes, uhuh.

VB: Marlene Dietrich.

MY: Och, aye.

MS: [laughs]

MY: She was a femme fatale, was Marlene Dietrich.

MS: [laughs]

MY: And Greta Garbo was beautiful and oh, yes.

VB: What about Gracie Fields? Was she?

MS: Yes we liked Gracie, uhuh.

MY: Jolly, yes.

MS: Our Gracie was a bit eh, slapstick but eh, you know, we liked her. And also wee George Formby. Oh, yes. We'd go and see George Formby films too [laughs]

VB: What it was you liked about George Formby?

MS: Oh, well I liked his tunes 'cause they were always jolly.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: 'Leaning on a Lamppost' and things like that.

MY: And he would get up to lots of tricks and things. I thought he was funny. I would never want to see him nowadays, but, you know, we were a much simpler--

JY: The comedy of the, the humour of the time, which, er--

MS: That suited us, uhuh.

MY: Uhuh. We thought it was really very funny.

JY: You'd see it now, perhaps, on the television [inaudible]

MS: [laughs] What did we ever see in that? But we liked it at the time.

MY: Uhuh. We liked the musicals. As you say, the *George White's Scandals* and em, *Ziegfeld Follies*.

MS: The British musicals were never, they didn't flow the same way as the Americans. The Americans definitely had eh, a--

MY: Busby Berkeley and... the chorus girls.

MS: I mean, what did you call that eh, that 'Dancing in the Ceiling' [referring to the song 'Dancing on the Ceiling' in *Evergreen*].

MY: Eh, Jessie Matthews?

MS: Jessie Matthews, I mean she looked as though she was dancing with two wooden legs but we really thought that she went over the ceiling, it was fantastic!

MY: Mind you, when you see Ruby Keeler dancing nowadays, you fall about laughing.

MS: That's right. But she, Jessie Matthews, our type of, and even Anna Neagle. That tap dancing was--

MY: Aw well she wasn't really a tap dancer, she was really more of a ballroom dancer. Was she not in the forties, Anna Neagle?

MS: She might have been.

VB: She had that big success with that film about Queen Victoria, didn't she?

MY: Oh, yes, uhuh.

MS: Yes. Oh, she was good in it.

MY: Uhuh, that's right. Ah, she was an actress as well as being a dancer but she wasn't a tap dancer, I don't think. She certainly was the original one of the Cochrane girls. The Cochrane girls?

MS: Yes, that's right. C.B. Cochrane.

MY: But eh, she became a dramatic actress.

JY: Most films, from what I can remember [inaudible] during the war, you know, making war films.

MY: Yes.

MS: Uhuh.

JY: [inaudible] propaganda films [inaudible]

MY: Aw, they were propaganda, uhuh.

JY: [inaudible] English films.

MY: Well, Leslie Howard was good in the Scarlet Pimpernel, if I remember rightly.

MS: And eh, em, what do you call him, John Mills.

JY: [inaudible]

MY: Aw, they didn't stand a chance with the American films, they were... They were churning them out, mind you.

MS: Yes.

MY: And we were, we were really wallowing in them, weren't we? Couldn't get enough of them.
[laughs]

VB: I've just come to Errol Flynn. You were saying...

MY: Aw, I loved, I thought he was so handsome and when I think of what he was like in real life, it rather puts you off. Oh, I thought he was so handsome.

VB: And particularly like him in things like, em, Robin Hood [referring to *The Adventures of Robin Hood*].

MY: Oh, uhuh.

MS: Yes.

MS: Funnily enough, funnily enough... [shows picture]

JY: [laughs]

VB: Oh, that's wonderful!

MY: [laughs]

VB: A picture book with Robin Hood.

MS: Yes [laughs]

MY: It's a very good film. I mean it's still good.

VB: Yes, very much so.

MY: He had this lovely smile and lovely voice, a twinkle in the eye and... Oh, I thought he was the bees knees.

VB: Did you like the sort of storyline you got with a film like that with Errol Flynn?

MY: Oh, yes.

MS: Yes.

MY: *Dodge City*.

MS: Yes, uhuh.

MY: I can't remember what else but eh, *The Perfect Specimen*, was one of his.

MS: Uhuh.

VB: I remember you mentioning that.

MY: Uhuh.

JY: I wouldn't [inaudible] Errol Flynn [inaudible] acceptable, you know, I believe--

MY: Yeah, yeah.

VB: Of course the other actors in that were good as well.

MS: Well they had a good stable... of actors.

MY: Yes, yes. They kept using the same people over and over again.

MS: Especially Errol Flynn. He always had Alan Hale and quite a number of well-known faces. They were never, ever leading men but they were always very good as back up to any film that he was in.

VB: Do you think that's something that's true of the films of the time that there were good [inaudible] actors?

MY: Yes. Very, yes.

MS: Uhuh. Supporting. They had a good, as I say, good stable.

MY: Uhuh. You recognise them from one film to the other. You just thought he's good and--

MS: But when you, when you see them now you realise, you know, you might have as many as ten or twelve supporting actors, who stayed, for a long, long time in films.

MY: Yes.

MS: I mean you were really amazed when you'd say - oh he! He was in, he was in everything. You know sort of remembering the names.

MY: That was another thing. The Americans did the *David Copperfield* and the classics very, very well.

JY: Yeah.

MS: Yes.

MY: They really did. I thought... and *David Copperfield* is one that comes to mind. *Pride and Prejudice* I think was maybe in the forties, but that was very well done.

MS: It was very well done.

MY: But they seemed to be able to make the Dickens books really live, I thought.

MS: Did they do *Wuthering Heights* too?

MY: Yes, they would do. I think anyway. Merle Oberon and eh--

MS: Merle Oberon and Lawrence Olivier.

MY: I wouldn't be absolutely sure about that

MS: Or did she come over here to do it?

JY: [laughs]

MY: We also have a back-up book.

MS: [laughs]

MY: Talk amongst yourselves while I look up this book. *Wuthering Heights*.

MS: Would you have many people in for a course like this?

VB: Em, that we're talking to?

MS: No, no. You are studying this. Is there many people?

VB: Em, actually, it's not a course. What it is. Maybe I should have explained a bit more about it when I came in, actually. Annette Kuhn, who has been in touch with you, managed to get some funding, to set up a project so that we can look at this in more detail. So what's happening is she and myself are working on it and we're talking to people in Glasgow and we're also going to be talking to people down south in Manchester and London and possibly a rural area in England. So, we're going to try and see out of that if there are similarities, differences between people's experiences of going to the cinema in the thirties. So really it's a two-year project just looking entirely at this.

MY: What will the - will you be writing a book or...?

VB: There will probably be a book coming out of it and there might also be some broadcasts for em, with it being on through the Theatre, the Theatre and Film department at Glasgow, it's possible there might be some drama out of it as well.

MS: Yes, uhuh.

VB: So em, we're really thinking about that at the moment, these sort of things. To communicate the information in an accessible way so that... seeing what people can find out about it.

MS: I see, uhuh.

VB: Em, but in the short term it probably will be a book or some articles and, as I say, we're collecting all this information. I don't know if that makes it clearer or not? [laughs]

JY: [laughs]

MS: Yes, uhuh.

MY: *Wuthering Heights*, Samuel Goldwyn, so that's MGM. An American film.

MS: Uhuh.

VB: Ah well.... [laughter] [inaudible] I mean, you mention Merle Oberon and Laurence Olivier in their movie. Are there other stars that you like?

MY: Oh, yes, I would say so!

MS: Yes. We followed their films. Very much so. Ronald Colman.

MY: Yes, a lot of British actors went across to America.

MS: Greer Garson. Not that she was--

MY: She was Irish, was she not?

MS: She was Irish.

MY: Anyway... Close enough.

JY: [inaudible] what was supposed to be the star build up [inaudible]. I don't think that was--

MY: To be independent, uhuh.

JY: ... to same extent in English films.

MY: Well...they had the Ealing studios if I remember, Ealing Studios.

MS: Uhuh. Elstree.

MY: Elstree. But they had the Warner Brothers, MGM, Columbus--

MS: Paramount.

JY: It was marketed, as it were--

MY: Yes, by them--

JY: In America.

MY: Yes.

JY: The star quality and all the stars--

MY: Yes.

JY: To make it more acceptable to the public.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: Yes. But they built them up though. They took them in and built them up, I mean if your face fitted, that was.

JY: You'd be inclined to go to a film where you knew the actors [inaudible?] like Spencer Tracy and Clark Gable. You'd assume that the film itself [inaudible]

MY: Yes--

MS: Because they were in it.

MY: Of course, of course.

VB: Did you think about going to... I mean when I see there are a number of films going to... Did you more or less go to every film that was on or did you make a choice between...?

JY: Oh well, to answer your question, [inaudible], but eh, Cambuslang, Burnside, Rutherglen...

MY: That's where Jack came from.

JY: It's a fairly small area. It had eight cinemas in it, I think, at one time. You just didn't go to eight cinemas. At least I didn't. I would maybe go to the films about twice a week. And eh, you had eight to choose from, so eh--

MY: Uhuh. Of course some of the films were only on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and they changed it Thursday, Friday, Saturday. They didn't last a week. So you had really quite a choice.

MS: Choice, yes, uhuh. You'd probably go on a Monday and then the next time would be a Satur... a Friday or a Saturday.

MY: Uhuh.

JY: Just to show you how popular... invariably on a Saturday night, this was probably the most popular night, there'd be queues [up the walls?].

MY: Yeah.

JY: And eh, you just accepted the fact that [if you were going to?] a picture house on a Saturday night, you'd have to queue.

MY: Yeah.

JY: Unless you went really very early...

MY: Yeah, really early--

JY: [inaudible] long time. But if you were winning [kissing] [you'd have gone?] [laughter]

MY: That wasn't in the thirties. That'd be in the forties.

JY: Aye. And eh the meeting time was maybe seven o'clock, so you had to stand in the queue to get into the pictures. [inaudible] when you went to the ..

MY: Ah, but that's in the forties, Jack, we're talking about the thirties--

MS: Well in the thirties, I don't think we paid a great deal of attention to the radio, which was the only form of entertainment in the house, other than playing cards or--

MY: Oh, no, we listened to the radio a lot.

MS: But not as young as that. I don't remember listening to--

MY: Oh, Henry Hall.

MS: Oh, yes. I remember Henry Hall's dance night. But I'm just saying, you didn't sit around the...

MY: Well maybe not as young as that but eh...

MS: I mean it's not everybody was like you. I mean you learnt your lessons with the radio above your head.

JY: [inaudible]

MY: That's true, that's true.

JY: [inaudible] early.

MY: I suppose, we would be.

MS: I don't remember ever saying, "I can't go out, I want to listen to the radio."

MY: No, oh no, no. Any excuse to get out the house.

MS: But you tended to go to the cinema.

MY: Yes.

MS: Rather than stay in and listen to... I mean nowadays you'd probably say, "Oh no, I can't go the pictures tonight, there's an episode of Coronation Street that I must see." I mean, that's what we would do nowadays but you didn't do that then with the radio.

MY: No. [pause] No, we listened to the radio more in the forties, in the wartime.

MS: Yes.

MY: We listened to the plays and the [inaudible] and all that sort of thing.

MS: But when we were, as we were, in the thirties, seven upwards, I don't remember listening to the radio so much.

MY: Maybe not.

MS: We, in our house, we had em, what did you call that, the crystal set? I mean, I played about with that and tried to get programmes.

MY: Uhuh. But that was just... We were past that stage. We just happened to have one in the house.

MS: The house, uhuh. But I mean it was quite something to get somebody talking, you know, with a crystal and a bit of wire.

JY: [inaudible] [laughter]

MS: Well, I'm older than you [laughs]

VB: I mean, just moving on from that, did you, did you pay much attention to the news in the cinema?

MY: Oh, yes.

MS: Oh yes, to Pathetone, oh yes.

MY: Yes. We always. But it wasn't all doom and gloom in those days. I mean it was.

JY: It would be perhaps a week later that they would cover, if there was some sort of disaster, a train disaster or a shipping disaster, you would read it in the paper or hear it on the radio the next week. But I mean the week after that you would see it.

MY: Pictures of it.

JY: [inaudible] on the news.

MY: Yes, uhuh.

JY: You were [perfectly?] aware that something had happened [and this was the detail of it all?].

MY: Yeah. And it was the same fellow who was the background, you know, the commentator.

MS: The commentator, yes, uhuh.

MY: With a very distinctive voice.

MS: He lasted for years and years and years.

MY: Was it Leslie Mitchell?

MS: Yes, that's right, Leslie Mitchell, with the Movietone, wasn't he--

JY: You never got [inaudible] at least a week--

MY: Yeah, I never thought of that. That's right. It wasn't immediate as it is on television now. But it's too immediate sometimes.

MS: And in 1939 we weren't deterred by the black out. You still went with your torches.

MY: [laughs]

MS: Leading us down [laughs]

MY: We'd to cross over this waste ground and there was a little, a rail about that height and there was no lights on and it was moonlight and my mother stepped over the shadow and fell over the railing.

JY: [laughs]

MY: Well we thought it was the funniest thing.

MS: She really hurt her leg but we were in stitches! Absolute stitches. Even my father, [laughs]. He was doubled up as well. We had no sympathy for her because she had stepped over the shadow [laughing] and tripped over the railing. It just caught her right on her shin.

VB: [laughs]

MS: Oh, we were cruel. [laughs]

JY: I remember once going to [inaudible] our local cinema, my local cinema. It was an old picture house in Burnside which was [in walking distance?]. And eh, I was there on my own, it was during the war, and the sirens, [inaudible] it was an air raid, [single roof?] all patrons advised to stay, this air raid was going on and on and on, [inaudible] seeing the film again, and I reckoned it was time to go home. When I came out, and eh, I managed to get a bus, the buses were still running [inaudible]. At the foot of the road the bus went over some rubble [inaudible] bombs [inaudible], I could hear them, one, two three, [inaudible] about half an hour down the road, I found an air raid shelter, I came from the bus into the air raid shelter. The bombs had dropped [inaudible] [exciting?]

MS: You were in amongst it.

MY: That was the forties.

JY: [inaudible]

MS: Uhuh, because I mean it was just the '39 to the forties.

JY: [says something funny, inaudible]

[laughter]

MY: It's just that the tape's running. [laughs]

VB: I'll just take another check of that actually because I'm a bit nervous about using tapes.

MY: Are you OK?

VB: Right, I'll be fine for another five minutes or so. I mean you mention quite a number of cinemas, both of you, in your letters, em. You talked a bit about the, when you mention the Marne Street one [probably referring to the Marne, renamed to the Park cinema] and the Parade as well you mentioned.

MY: Yes. It wasn't on the parade. It was in Meadowpark Street.

VB: What was that like?

MY: Well, it wasn't as up to date as the others.

MS: No. It wasn't as up to date as the two that were near us.

MY: No.

VB: Right.

MS: It's still standing.

MY: It's now a restaurant.

MS: But it's still standing.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: But it was better than the Marne.

MY: Yeah. You can see the picture of it in that eh Louden book [referring to 'The Cinemas of Cinema City']. And it's not terribly, is that? [showing book]

VB: Actually that's the Rex you see on the front there.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: You can see by the look of them they were much [pause 2 seconds], there's a picture of the Parade in there and it really doesn't look all that much, no, on the outside. It wasn't as ornate or--

MS: Oh, no.

MY: And the entrance was nothing.

MS: And the seats weren't as comfortable.

MY: Yeah.

MS: Because it was a wooden one. The Marne was like a wooden, as I say, a wooden construction.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: The Parade was brick fronted.

MY: The local fleapit we called it. We didn't go in there very often.

VB: That didn't have wooden seats, did it?

MS: No, no, no. They weren't terribly well upholstered and they made a terrible noise, you know, when you stood up, and if you had to go to the toilet you weren't very popular because of the noise of the seat, you know, going back.

MY: There's a picture in there of wooden seats in one of the cinemas in Glasgow and I don't remember any wooden seats for all the children were just--

MS: No, I don't, I always remember eh.

MY: Uhuh. I don't remember that.

MS: And no back to them. Maybe if you had to go down right down at the front of the Marne there might've been. Don't remember it.

MY: But you didn't want to go down because your neck got really sore.

MS: Oh no, it was terrible if you went away down there.

VB: Another one you mentioned was the Rex as well.

MS: Yes, uhuh.

MY: Yes, it was rather nice, yes.

MS: As I say, it was more traditional as regards the Vogue.

MY: But they made them look terrific because they wanted people to come in.

MS: Yes.

MY: I don't know where they got all the money for it in those days.

MS: I don't know.

MY: Whether it was entrepreneurs who got the money.

MS: Well it must've been as regards the Vogue and the Cosmo because it was Singleton. I mean, we never knew the names of the Rex or the Parade Picture House, who owned them. But the Cosmo group, you knew that the head of it was either Singleton.

MY: Welsh, it wasn't West, it was Welsh.

MS: Uhuh, I don't remember that. And he was the lord provost, Welsh. But we knew their names.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: Because that was a Glasgow individual who owned it. But we wouldn't know--

MY: He was an eccentric.

VB: Did you go to the Cosmo later?

MY: Well that was when we were older. We went to the French films. 'Ici Paris' was the newsreel. 'Ici Paris'.

MS: Yes, uhuh. We liked going there.

MY: But that was, we were definitely in our late teens then.

MS: Uhuh.

VB: Yes. Can I ask you a bit more about the ones in town, out of interest? Did you notice a big difference yourself between the local ones and the ones in town?

MS: Oh, yes, yes, uhuh.

MY: Well not between the Riddrie and the Rex, they were as good as any in town.

MS: No they were. I suppose they were, uhuh.

MY: Yeah.

MS: But there again the ones in town were older than the--

MY: Yeah. I wouldn't say I noticed any difference, really, no.

MS: The, the I would say that the La Scala was definitely ahead of the Picturehouse and the Savoy which were, the two of them were across and round the corner.

MY: Yes.

MS: And I mean Greens Playhouse left a lot to be desired.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: I'm sure the Rex and the Vogue were above that. But eh, you felt you were really living it up when you went to the Odeon because, you know, you were paying more money in the Odeon. I remember saving up for *Gone with the Wind* to get into the golden divans.

MY: That was in the Greens Playhouse?

MS: Yes, Greens Playhouse. But I mean when we were in the golden divans you paid a pound for that. Now that took a bit of saving. But my friend and I were determined we weren't going unless we could afford the golden divan.

MY: I thought it was 12 and 6 but there you are, I won't argue with you. Which was very expensive, of course. Oh, we really thought it was terrific sitting in these big golden divans.

MS: It was as broad as that seat that you're sitting on.

MY: [laughs]

MS: Oh, it was really comfort, wasn't it? They had the golden and the red and then the ordinary seats.

MY: That was another thing when you went to the pictures you'd to watch out for some funny men that came in.

MS: Oh, yeah. You'd to watch out for the ones with their em, [pause 2 seconds] waterproof of course.

MY: They didn't do all that much but I mean, the knee would come up near you or they would touch your leg or something.

MS: Yes.

MY: Freeze! [laughs]

MS: [laughs] This was not eh--

JY: [says something funny, inaudible]

[everyone laughs]

MS: This was not in the thirties. I mean, it probably wasn't so very long ago but I remember going in to the Odeon Cinema and I actually thought I had touched a man's foot, and I thought "Oh, my God, he probably thinks'. And I mean I...

[End of Side B]

[End of Tape One]

[Start of Tape Two]

[Start of Side A]

MY: I suppose there must have but eh.

MS: Yes, but you just knew yourself you had to change your seat when you felt, you know, the hand or the leg coming across.

MY: Uhuh. But they didn't go any further than that.

MS: Oh, no.

MY: It wasn't child molestation, we were definitely in our teens.

MS: It was like a feel. Uhuh.

MY: I mean a touch, or a [foot?], but that's as far as it went but I mean you absolutely froze.

MS: Yes.

MY: And you sort of got nearer your girlfriend, you know, went over a wee bit. [laughs]

MS: [laughs]

MY: I mean nowadays we could give them a good kick but in those days you wouldn't dare do a thing like that to an adult.

MS: No, no.

MY: Didn't want to create any fuss.

VB: Was it mainly, I mean, obviously you went together because you had a family, to the cinema. Did you mainly go with friends or...?

MY: Oh, I went with my friends, uhuh, yes.

MS: We had separate friends so we went with them.

MY: Uhuh.

VB: Did you ever go on your own?

MS: Not, not as a youngster.

MY: No, not, never, never.

MS: No, we weren't allowed to do that. No you always went. And you had numerous friends that you--

MY: Ah, you wouldn't want to go on your own.

MS: No, not at that age.

MY: No, you wouldn't want to go...

[dog comes up at this stage]

VB: Lovely dog.

[everyone laughs]

MY: A big sook [softie]

VB: A good bark?

MY: Yes. Oh, the bark sounds awful.

VB: I'm just checking to make sure I ask you everything I want.

MS: Yes.

VB: I mean you were saying about em, getting film magazines. I was wanting to ask a bit more about that. Em, you mention getting things like 'Photoplay' and em...

MS: 'Screen Stories' and 'Modern Screen'.

MY: Yes. They used to write the most awful stories and we believed every word of it. But it was all publicity. You know, people were going with one another and then they'd fallen out and we, we just devoured them.

MS: Uhuh. And it was Woolworths that we got them from.

MY: Yeah. We devoured, we loved them. And the pictures were so glamorous and, aw they were just absolutely gorgeous

MS: It was a fight who was to get it first.

MY: Yes. Aw that was really something to get the American film magazines. I loved them.

VB: Were they quite cheap in those days?

MY: I suppose they must have been or we wouldn't have got them.

MS: Yeah. As I say mum brought them back after [the guild?].

MY: See everything in Woolworths was sixpence or threepence.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: So it couldn't have been much more that.

MS: That's right.

MY: I mean everything they sold there was sixpence and threepence, wasn't it at one point?

MS: Yes.

JY: And under sixpence.

MY: Uhuh, sixpence and under. Well maybe it was. I just remember sixpence and threepence but eh it could be in between I suppose.

MS: Uhuh. Threepence and fourpence.

JY: [inaudible]

MY: That's right, yes.

VB: And you were saying you cut these up.

MY: Oh, yes. We had scrapbooks.

MS: Oh, yes, we had scrapbooks but I don't have them anymore. [laughs]

MY: We had them up on the walls. Even I didn't keep them. I don't know why I kept them either. I just don't like throwing anything out. It's amazing all the stuff I kept during the war but I mean I've actually gone into schools twice and talked about my experiences during the war with things like a gas mask and... But I just don't know why I keep these things.

VB: You were saying you had pictures on the walls. Were they all round the room?

MY: Oh, yes.

MS: Yes.

MY: And we had, we had to share a bed. Although sometimes we wouldn't be speaking to one another.

[everyone laughs]

MY: And imagine a line [inaudible].

MS: We'd both go down the middle.

VB: I was interested when you said that you had your own, got the different pictures. Did you ever have any quarrels about this?

MS: Oh, yes!

MY: Oh, yes!

MS: That's what I'm saying. We had to go to... we had to keep a register so that we wouldn't get each other's photographs. "That's mine", "No, it's not!", "Well we'll go to the register and we'll find out. Look it says it there, that's mine!"

MY: [laughs]

MS: Spencer Tracy's mine!

JY: How did you [inaudible]?

MS: Well we didn't like the same people. I mean Margaret was daft over Errol Flynn and nobody could understand, well I mean it was only later that, em, my favourite was Raymond Burr but I can't remember who before that.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: My special favourite. Nobody could understand how I could like this big fat man. Little did I know he was a [laughing] homosexual. I didn't realise that.

MY: A lot of them were, of course.

MS: Yeah, I know, but he didn't seem...

VB: It sounds like you were really interested in finding out all the details.

MY: Oh, yes. But I mean, most of it was lies, but we didn't realise that. It was all publicity.

MS: Oh, we knew who was married to who and who was about to divorce, I mean everybody says that in company. Oh, we've got a question for you, can you answer? We say that Sarah Miles is not the daughter of Sir Bernard Miles. [pause]

MY: Is there any way of finding out for us?

MS: I even went down to the library to look up the Who's Who but neither of them are in the Who's Who and I thought Sir Bernard might be. But we have a little bit of an argument going on.

MY: Oh, I'll find out. Because she's written a book and she must. It was an autobiography, she must talk about her folks.

MS: Of course. So we just wondered if you had any...

VB: No. It sounds likely but I...

MS: I don't think so.

MY: I think it's just the second names are coincidental. We just wondered if you would know.

MS: I even looked it up, I think it's Bolt she's married to, I even looked up Bolt.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: To see if she [married twice?].

MY: Oh, we're a mine of useless information. [laughs]

MS: [laughs]

VB: 'Cause I mean, I was in... did you feel that you almost got to... What I'm thinking is, someone else was saying to me that they felt like the movie stars became like friends and I wondered if that was something that--

MS: Oh, yes. You felt you knew them, you knew so much about them you felt that you knew them.

MY: Yeah.

MS: You were an authority [laughs] on their private life as well as their acting life.

VB: I mean, did you talk about the movies a lot.

MS: Oh, yes, yes.

MY: I would imagine so, yes. We did do other things, I mean, we [pause 2 seconds] played games outside.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: As children, yes, yes. We were outside on the streets a lot.

MS: A lot, yes. Because there weren't so many cars.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: You know. We would play at beds, if you know what that is. Peever. [laughs] Three steps, three steps, one step, two steps, one step. [laughs] And balls up against walls. Oh, yes we did do other things.

VB: Did you find that em, that you tended to go the pictures more at certain times of year. I was wondering, for instance, if in the summer you'd be out more.

MY: Ah, I suppose we would be. We still went to the pictures.

MS: Oh, yes. If there was a picture we wanted to see. Y'see they turned them out so much, you know, that em, and as I say twice a week they were changed. So I mean having four cinemas [pause 2 seconds]

MY: Locally.

MS: Locally twice a week. We really had, you could go, six days a week, as I must have done in 1942. [laughs]

JY: It was always better to go to the cinema [when it was dark?], rather than mid-summer, when you came out in brilliant sunshine.

MY: Yeah.

MS: Uhuh.

JY: You felt as if you'd...

MY: Wasted your time, yes. Fresh air, sunshine.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: Then there were the park entertainers we went to see.

MS: Yes, we went to see them, uhuh.

JY: Very seldom [you were put off going to the cinema?] [inaudible] if it was raining, you'd got an umbrella [inaudible]

MY: Uhuh.

MS: Oh, yes. Nothing deterred you if you were wanting to see something. Uhuh. As Margaret said, if you didn't have the money, you took along the lemonade bottles or the jam jars and you got money for them. A halfpenny for a pound and a penny for two pounds?

VB: And do you go to see films much now?

MY: No, very seldom.

MS: Very seldom.

MY: Might go to the pictures about twice a year, that's about all. It's got to be a very special one.

MS: Uhuh. It's got to be a very big one. Like *Jurassic Park* or something.

MY: Aw, I wouldn't go to see *Jurassic Park*.

MS: Well, I saw it and I thoroughly enjoyed it! I didn't expect to.

MY: I'd rather watch the paint dry than see...

JY: The only film I've seen this year--

MY: *Schindler's List* you went to see.

MS: And was it this year you went to see the Kevin Costner one? *Dancing with Wolves*? Was that this year?

JY: Yes.

MY: You've actually been twice this year! [laughs]

MS: [laughs]

MY: The last one before that was *Gandhi* if I remember rightly you went to see.

JY: [inaudible]

MY: You're more inclined to wait until it comes out on video now.

JY: [inaudible]

MY: *Fatal Attraction* or something?

JY: *Basic Instinct*.

MY: *Basic Instinct*.

MS: *Basic Instinct*.

MY: No, I wouldn't say I was a film star [sic], a film fan now. Not really. Not unless it's a video you might get occasionally.

MS: Uhuh, yes.

MY: I don't go to the video shop very often.

MS: No, I, I'm inclined to go. Living alone I'm inclined to go and take one out if there's nothing, you know, if it's a Thursday night. A Thursday night to me's a rotten night on the television. I might take it out then.

VB: Has your taste in pictures stayed the same or changed?

MY: I still like happy ones, I must admit. I like a comedy or a...

MS: I couldn't have sat through *Schindler's List*. There's no way.

MY: No I didn't want to see that.

MS: And as regards eh, *Jurassic Park*, it was because I was in America and I didn't want to be left at home alone so I went along. There were three kids very anxious to see it, and just as a matter of interest, I paid less than them being an old age pensioner.

MY: Is that so?

MS: Yeah. Because the kids' tickets were dearer than me. And I found that I thoroughly enjoyed it although Richard Attenborough annoyed me, he couldn't hold his Scots accent at all. But I mean, apart from that I thought it was a very good film. Very good.

VB: Was there a time when you found that you were going to the pictures less?

MS: Aw yes, less and less.

MY: I think the 1940s and fifties [sic], no the 1930s and forties were our time for the pictures and after that it just...

MS: You were selective.

MY: Very selective, uhuh.

MS: Before you went to see a film.

MY: Uhuh. 'Cause the old stars were going and we didn't particularly like the new ones.

MS: Uhuh.

JY: Maybe you've matured a bit?

MY: Perhaps, yes. Could be, uhuh. We finally grew up. Eh, no I'd say the thirties and the forties were when we were really film fans and after that it just tapered off until it was practically nothing.

MS: Yes.

MY: As far as I'm concerned anyway.

VB: **Do you still watch films from the thirties and forties if they are on the television?**

MY: Not particularly, no. If it's something that I really like but occasionally I watch it and I'm so disappointed in it. I'd rather prefer to remember it as I liked it. And then I'm disappointed when I see how trite it was or, downright silly! But some of the, you know, the classics cannot be bettered, you know, *David Copperfield*, I don't think could have been better.

MS: Yes.

MY: *Pride and Prejudice* could not be better.

MS: Oh, no. And we have both said on different occasions that there is no way that we're going to see *Gone with the Wind*.

MY: 'Gone with the Wind II', the follow up. [probably referring to 'Scarlett', a novel written by Alexandra Ripley (1991), and the 1994 television mini-series of the same name]

MS: Uhuh. There's no way! 'Cause I mean they just cannot, they haven't got the same stars. We're not reading the book and we're not going to see the film.

MY: That's right. Nobody else [rest inaudible, laughs]

MS: There's only one Clark Gable. Only one Clark Gable and only one Vivien Leigh and all the rest of the stars. They couldn't [pause 2 seconds], they couldn't better them at all.

VB: Is that a film that's very special for you?

MY: Oh, yes!

MS: Oh, yes! Very much so.

MY: I must have seen it about four times. But even at the fourth time I suddenly saw that Ashley was such a wimp.

MS: Yes.

MY: Where before I thought he was a romantic figure but I think, you know you could pick faults in it once you see it a few times but when we first saw it really was, oh out of this world, *Gone with the Wind*. I love it.

MS: You couldn't read the book for crying.

MY: That's right, yes. [laughs] "I can't, I can't read any more tonight" [said with emotion]. [laughs]

VB: Did you read the book before or after going to the film?

MY: I can't remember.

MS: I think it was before.

MY: I don't remember. I used to sit up in bed at night with my gloves on and sometimes a hat on.

MS: [laughs]

MY: It was so cold.

JY: [laughs]

MY: So I could read my books.

MS: [laughs] Till she reached a part--

MY: That's a thing we did a lot, we read a lot.

MS: Yes, oh yes, we read a lot. We've always read a lot.

MY: Uhuh.

VB: 'Cause you were saying in your notebook then, you've got a list [inaudible].

MY: Yes, that's right, yes.

MS: Uhuh.

VB: [inaudible]

MY: A lot them were the sort of school stories. 'The Fifth at St Kilburn' or something.

MS: That's right. [laughs]

MY: [looking through book] I can see Errol Flynn was the [drowned out by laughter], lots of information about him. And Deanna Durbin, was that somebody you really liked?

MS: Oh, yes.

MY: Loved her, loved her!

VB: What was it about Deanna Durbin that you...?

MY: Aw she was such a bright personality and she was lovely singer.

MS: Yes, uhuh. And there again, her clothes appealed to us.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: As I say, we all wanted the Deanna Durbin hat with the wee feather. I got mine in Watt Brothers, I think.

MY: They were cheerful.

MS: Yes. And Judy Garland.

MY: The musicals with Mickey Rooney were out of this world. Such talent.

MS: We always liked eh, dancing pictures.

MY: Yes.

MS: You know, *Singing in the Rain* and all the Rodgers and Hammerstein.

MY: But they would, would mostly be imported.

MS: Oh, yes, uhuh. It's very difficult to keep your mind on the thirties.

MY: Uhuh.

VB: Yes, we're talking about one period of cinema so I can understand that. What about some of the child stars like Shirley Temple?

MY: Oh, she was a great favourite, oh yes.

MS: They tried to bring in Binkie Stewart as a British Shirley Temple, but--

MY: No chance. No, she really was something else, Shirley Temple. I used to have these cut-out dolls that you had and you dressed them, you know in the wee Shirley Temple clothes. Oh, yes she was a great favourite. Shirley Temple. [pause 2 seconds] She always was an orphan or something and she

always had this spunkiness about her and she always won through in the end. It was always a happy ending. But she had, I mean she really was.

MS: Yes.

MY: Had a hard time and then her bright personality won people's hearts over. They were all the same!

MS: Yes. [laughs]

MY: Loved them! I was a simple soul!

MS: [laughs]

VB: It sounds like you enjoyed them.

MY: Oh! I loved them. Very much so.

MS: Yes, uhuh.

[pause 2 seconds]

MY: Yes, I liked Shirley Temple. [pause 2 seconds] 'On the Good Ship Lollipop'.

MS: [laughs]

[pause 5 seconds]

JY: [musicals?] were very popular.

MY: Oh, yes, uhuh.

MS: Yes.

MY: They all had sort of the same story as well, you know, behind, the hoofers and... [pause 2 seconds] Practically every one that came out was exactly the same as the one before. The same with the Ginger Rogers, Fred Astaire.

MS: Yes.

MY: Their storyline was trite. But we knew what was coming, but we didn't mind.

MS: [laughs] The dances were always different.

MY: Yeah.

MS: And the clothes were always different.

MY: Great tunes, great melodies.

VB: [inaudible] gangster movies as well, was that?

MY: Yes. That was Warner Brothers. They were in with the gangsters. Warner Brothers.

MS: They controlled it.

MY: Edward G. Robinson.

VB: Did you like them?

MY: Yes, yes we quite liked them as well.

MS: Yes.

MY: The 'Dead End Kids'.

MS: That's right. Billy Halop

MY: Yeah.

MS: [laughs] We also liked *Our Gang*.

MY: That was really away at the beginning, wasn't it?

MS: Yes.

MY: *Our Gang*.

MS: That's before the thirties.

MY: No, no it would be in the thirties.

MS: In the thirties, yes.

MY: Jackie Cooper. *Kidnapped*. That was another one they did very well with the, they've never bettered that one.

MS: No.

MY: Wallace Beery as eh, Long John Silver. They've never bettered it. I must say America did the classics very well.

MS: Yes. Newton wasn't as good as eh...

MY: No.

MS: As good as [Robert Whitmore?] in *Treasure Island*.

VB: It's interesting hearing you mention Jackie Cooper [inaudible]

MY: Aw yes, uhuh. I can remember it vaguely, but not all that well. [pause 2 seconds] Remember the girl Withers, who used to be in with Shirley Temple?

MW: Jane Withers?

MY: Jane Withers. She was always the bad girl.

MS: Yes.

MY: She was very good. Jane Withers and Virginia Wood. She never reached the same stardom as eh, Shirley Temple.

MY: No, no.

VB: Another one you've got here is Laurel and Hardy.

MY: Oh, yes.

MS: Oh, yes.

MY: Funnily enough I didn't appreciate them when they came out at first as I did now.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: I can appreciate them more.

MS: Can see the skill. I can also the skill of eh, Charlie Chaplin now.

MY: Yeah.

VB: [inaudible] appreciated?

MS: Ah, we would see them, but we wouldn't really appreciate them, no.

MY: I don't think so, no. But now I can fall about when I see Laurel and Hardy. I mean I think I appreciated them but not as much as I do now.

MS: You see, I, I still can't see anything terribly funny in *The Three Stooges*. I mean that's just terribly, slapstick.

JY: [laughs]

MS: I can appreciate Laurel and Hardy and Charlie Chaplin.

MY: Yeah. Now when I see them on television I think they're quite funny *The Three Stooges*. They're so absolutely awful. [laughs] They're funny!

JY: [laughs]

MS: They're funny, but they're not clever, I think. More slapstick.

MY: And Charlie Chaplin's were clever.

VB: What about the Marx Brothers, did you like them?

MY: Oh, yes! I liked the Marx Brothers.

MS: Yes, yes! We liked the Marx Brothers.

MY: Yes. They were, they were really quite different. You know, they had a different sort of humour.

MS: Yes.

MY: But you see them over and over again, you maybe go off them a wee bit but eh...

JY: [inaudible]

MS: Dustin Hoffman would like to play Harpo.

MY: Is that so?

MS: He'd like to make a film of Harpo, uhuh. It's something he would like to do.

VB: I'm sure he'd be very good in it. He's in practically everything. [laughs]

MY: Yes, yes.

VB: There's just so many...

JY: [inaudible]

MY: Yes, uhuh.

MS: Yes.

MY: No, I quite liked eh, [fun fellows?]. What were [sic] the principal fellow, one-liner fellow? Groucho.

MS: Groucho.

MY: I quite liked his humour. See now I'm a Woody Allen fan. I really do like his films now.

JY: I can't stand him.

MY: I know you can't stand him but I think he's very good. I love him. I don't like him as a person but eh, I like him as a [pause 2 seconds], a film star and a producer and a writer. I like Woody Allen now.

VB: Of course, he [produces?] a lot of professional films, doesn't he?

MY: Yes, and the music. Yes. Gershwin's music. Loved him in *Manhattan*, I thought he was wonderful. Yes, he does use a lot. I think he's very clever.

VB: I enjoyed that [rest inaudible].

MY: I saw it. I saw it, yes. I like Mia Farrow too. I think she's awfully good. [Yes, it was good?]. Very unusual. I hadn't seen it before. And then there's *Radio Days* and *Manhattan*. I love it.

MS: You hadn't seen that before?

MY: No, no.

VB: [inaudible] Janet Gaynor

MY: Yes, that goes away back.

MS: Yes. I loved the Joan Crawford movies.

MY: Yes, *The Women*, remember *The Women*? It was a very, very good picture.

MS: Yes, uhuh. And also eh, Priscilla Lane, the sisters.

MY: Yes, uhuh.

MS: The sisters.

MY: Loretta Young, and all her sisters.

MS: We could go on and on.

VB: Yes [laughs]

MY: But we are! [laughs]

VB: These cards are very interesting.

MY: Yes, I'm wishing I had kept it in better nick.

VB: I think they're in very good condition, actually.

MY: Uhuh, but I just don't have the whole book which annoys me. I don't know what I've done with the rest of it. But that's way back. That must be definitely way back in the thirties.

VB: Oh, yes. I see Elisabeth Bergner and I notice that... [inaudible]

MY: Yes, yes. That's right uhuh. Yes. What's she called. Elisabeth Bergman [sic].

MS: Bergman [sic], uhuh.

MY: Bergen!

MS: Bergen.

MY: Yeah.

MS: Bergner? B,E,R,G,N,E,R [spells out]

VB: Bergner.

MY: Bergner, was it?

VB: Uhuh.

MY: That's right. I'm getting mixed up with Ingrid.

VB: Jack Buchanan [looking at cards].

MS: That was my aunt's favourite [laughs]

MY: When you see him singing and dancing now you fall about. He was debonair, he had a nice way with him, Jack Buchanan.

VB: And Cary Grant.

MY: Oh loved him!

MS: Yes. [laughs]

MY: He lasted a long time.

VB: They're beautifully coloured as well, they must have been very nice when--

MY: Yes.

MS: Yes, when you first got them, uhuh.

MY: I've still got quite a lot of my cigarette cards. Something else I've saved! [laughs]

VB: Where did you get them from?

MY: Well, practically all the adults smoked and of course, and I've still got the original packets round them, and eh, you just went around all your friends and if you'd a doubler you changed them and. So every time your father opened a packet of cigarettes you were dashing over to see what he had.

MS: [laughs]

MY: Each one had a different, you know, there's lots of different things you saved up. Gold Flake, W.H. Wills or something.

MS: Uhuh.

VB: And did you get some books?

MY: You got wee books, yes you did. I don't know whether you got them for nothing or not. I can't remember but...

JY: You got them from newsagents.

MY: Newsagents, uhuh.

MS: Yes.

MY: I've got one on the Empire Exhibition, I've got one on dogs, which I can't find any more. That was a great thing to do was to save up the cigarette cards.

VB: I think this book is amazing. Was that something? Did you have more of these?

MY: No, I don't remember that.

MS: No, that was the only one.

MY: It was a whole page and you'd to cut out the wee photographs and make sure you'd them all in the right order.

VB: But you must've been devoted fans again because I can't see many children [drowned out by laughter, rest inaudible].

MS: Oh, we're hoarders. We're a family of hoarders. Uhuh.

MY: Now take whatever you want with you. I don't mind as long as I get them back sometime.

VB: **That's very kind of you to offer.**

MY: Uhuh. Well they're just sitting around doing nothing so if they can be of use to somebody.

VB: **I'd love to be able to show them to Annette as well, because she's away just now and I'm sure she'd be interested.**

MY: Yes, as long as I get them back I don't mind how long you keep them.

VB: **As I say, I'd take very good care of them.**

MY: 'Cause I'm the only one that looks at them and perhaps you would look at them sometime.

MS: Yes.

MY: They're just sitting upstairs doing absolutely nothing so if they're any use to you, by all means.

VB: **That's very, very kind.**

MY: Uhuh. Just take whatever you want to take.

VB: **'Cause I'm conscious of [inaudible]. There's so many things we're talking about that I would like to ask you a bit more about.**

MY: Yes.

MS: Uhuh.

VB: **If you wouldn't mind.**

MY: Not a bit, no. Just you let us know.

VB: It's always difficult when you're talking. You think "Well I'll have to ask about that".

[laughter]

MY: Well as it comes into your mind, just write them down somewhere and that would be quite good.

VB: Yes.

JY: Will I make some coffee or tea?

MY: Oh, yes that would be nice.

VB: That would be lovely.

JY: What do you prefer?

VB: Em, whichever, I mean.

MY: Doesn't matter, whatever. Tea, tea, tea!

JY: Tea?

MY: Now there's some shortbread in one of the tins, Jack, I made specially for you.

VB: [inaudible]

MY: Do you take milk and sugar?

VB: Em, just eh, just plain without milk or sugar.

MY: Oh, that's easy enough. And there's shortbread in one of the tins.

VB: It's amazing that you've kept these in such good condition as well, because so many people have something like this and then it gets--

MY: Yeah. Of course I think I had brown paper round them all which I... I've torn off so they look a wee bit better for you but I did have brown paper round them.

VB: That explains why [inaudible].

MY: Yes, uhuh.

MS: Yes.

MY: At least you can maybe savour them. I mean you're just glancing through just now.

VB: I'd very much like to.

MY: Yes. There's no point in taking the forties and fifties. Unless you want.

VB: I'll leave that.

MY: Yes.

VB: I'd very much like to... [looking through] These must have given you hours of fun.

MY: Oh, yes! Very much so.

MS: Do you want this still to run now?

VB: I'll just leave it, yes. [pause 2 seconds] [inaudible]

MY: Yes, one or two of my friends. I'm sure some of them must be dated. I'm sure...

VB: [inaudible] 1937 you've got written...

MY: Uhuh. I just wondered. I didn't do it all at the one time, but some of them might be in the forties. Wait till I look up the book and see what they said about *Snow White*, [pause 2 seconds] when it came out. [turns pages] *Snow White* and the *Three Stooges*, no that's not it. 1937, yes. So we wouldn't get it till '38 anyway.

VB: Did you read about the pictures before they came out or were you aware of the ones that were?

MS: Oh, we'd probably get them in the magazines.

MY: Or the newspaper would give you a synopsis, perhaps.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: But I mean we went to see some just because somebody was in it.

MS: Uhuh. I mean we just went.

MY: Because it was Judy Garland or we went because it was Spencer Tracy.

MS: Uhuh, yes.

MY: We went because it, we knew, as Jack said, it was somebody we knew and we knew it would be good. There'd be nobody in it, if it wasn't good.

VB: The only reason I'm asking is I wondered if something like *Gone with the Wind* would that?

MY: Oh, the publicity would be tremendous.

MS: Oh very, yes!

VB: [inaudible]

MS: That's right. A talking point. *Gone with the Wind*.

MS: Oh, heavens, yes. It got tremendous publicity before they even made it! And because they had such a job getting a *Scarlet*, you know, they interviewed so many actresses and it was just pure chance, that Vivien Leigh happened to just come on the set, or...

MY: No! They had somebody, the fellow who was producing it, his brother had seen her in *Fire over England*.

MS: Oh, that's right.

MY: And she happened to be over in America because Laurence Olivier was there.

MS: Making, eh. *Wuthering Heights*.

MY: They'd actually started the film before they had the Scarlet.

MS: That's right.

MY: They did one of the scenes, I think, the Atlanta thing, you know when the house is burned down.

MS: Yes.

MY: And she was brought on the set and they said: "Here's your Scarlet".

MS: Ah, that's right.

MY: I remember watching a programme about that.

MS: Uhuh, yeah.

MY: It just so happened she was on holiday at the time. But she was just perfect, perfect as Scarlet.

VB: [I remember?] Olivia de Havilland as well.

MY: Aw, yes! As Melanie, she's lovely, lovely.

MS: Yes.

MY: And actually Leslie Howard didn't want to play Ashley, he thought he was too old.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: But he came off quite [well?]

VB: I can't imagine anyone else in the role.

MS: Well that's why we don't want to see it.

MY: Yeah. And Hattie McDaniel as Mammie was out of this world.

MS: Yeah.

MY: She got an Oscar for that. I think she was the first coloured lady to get an Oscar. That was really something that anybody in Hollywood, a coloured person. 'Cause I mean, what they did to the coloured people in films that we used to laugh at, is horrendous. I mean they were always the bellboy, or somebody on the train, you know, the porter, or they were some stupid, even idiotic sometimes. You know, it was so insulting. But we didn't think any of it was wrong then. I mean, you didn't know any better.

MS: No no.

MY: But now, when you see them now you say 'oh, dear, oh dear, oh dear'. No wonder they were... annoyed.

MS: Yeah. I took my em, album, that, when I was overseas, you know, during the war. And I took it into the office and I didn't realise that under a picture I'd got: 'A couple of wogs.'

MY: Tch, tch, tch, tch.

MS: And you know, because we just referred to them as wogs, you never thought anything else.

MY: Was that the Indians or the--

MS: Uhuh. And it was somebody in the office, it was only one person that noticed it and said: "Here, here, what's this? What's this word doing here?"

MY: [laughs]

VB: [laughs]

MS: But you just never thought of it and that was just my heading of this particular photograph.

MY: Uhuh, shame us.

MS: Yeah. [3 seconds pause] Two people that [inaudible] really look at them.

MY: Yeah.

VB: If you're describing it, you know, it sounds almost like a different world to me.

MY: It is.

MS: Yes [laughs]

VB: [inaudible] so many times.

MS: But you must have a strong interest in it to want to do this.

VB: Very much so, yes. I mean I haven't seen all the films, obviously, that you're talking about but the ones I have I've really enjoyed.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: Yes. [pause 2 seconds] Ah, that was the heyday, of course, of cinema.

MS: Yes.

MY: When television came in.

[End of Side A]

[Start of Side B]

MY: Yeah. In fact he and his pals were trying to say, have you, do you remember being in such and such. They were able to mention the names of the, supporting people.

VB: 'Cause I was interested in that, you know, if you were, typical movie fans or exceptionally interested.

MS: Oh, certainly our friends are all.

MY: I don't think our friends, they went to the pictures but I don't know if they were as interested as we were.

MS: Well, no, no. Maybe not in the background.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: No.

MY: I mean I don't think my pal Isabel who was eh--

[tape being shuffled about]

VB: [laughs] I wondered if that was why it was giving...

MY: Yeah, I don't remember my pal Isabel who went to the pictures a lot, if she ever bought any of the magazines.

MS: Oh, I don't, I don't think so, no, no.

MY: I don't think Annie Collie did either.

MS: No.

MY: But she was interested in the films.

MS: Oh, yes, but, no, no. You're quite right I don't think they were.

MY: Maybe we took it to extremes.

MS: Uhuh. As interested as we were.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: Not to know the backgrounds.

MS: No. Or maybe they just didn't bother with the magazines that we did.

[JY comes in with tea]

MY: Doing a fine job.

JY: Uhuh.

MY: Well trained. [laughs]

VB: [laughs] I notice your dog's perked up a bit.

MY: [laughs] Awful rude, as far as food's concerned, yes. No wonder he's a fat...

JY: [says something funny, inaudible]

[laughter]

MY: You're well trained. [sound of tea being poured] No milk. Do you take a Hermesetas?

MS: No, no, no.

MY: Right, I take milk.

[pause while tea is being organised]

JY: I haven't bothered with plates.

MY: OK, right. We'll slum it.

MS: As the Queen gets it.

VB: Mmm. That's lovely.

MS: Famous for it.

MY: A wee bit more, right. It's not easy when you're standing over it. There. That's better.

VB: Yes, it's really gorgeous. It's so different from the shop bought stuff, isn't it? It's got a really nice buttery taste. [pause 2 seconds] I'd seen that book with the name of the cinemas before. It really is very...

MY: If you haven't a copy of it, just take it with you 'cause I don't mind when I get that back either.

VB: That would be useful, actually, to refer to because it's...

MY: Yeah.

VB: Thanks very much, very kind of you. Em, [pause] 'cause it is interesting to see what it's like. So many of these cinemas, of course, are gone now.

MY: Yes, this is it.

MS: Uhuh.

[pause 2 seconds]

MY: So how will you get back home. Where have you to go to?

VB: Em, I'm actually at the West End. I'll just get the bus I think.

MY: Uhuh. You don't want to go in by train?

VB: Em. I don't know. Is it quicker to get into town by train?

MY: It's about eh,

JY: Depends when the train's running, but I would say it was.

MY: Twenty-five minutes.

JY: I would say it was, [inaudible] to Central from here.

MY: Uhuh. I mean Jack could take you along to the, the Burnside, you get quite a choice. You would give her a lift along.

[inaudible]

VB: That would be very kind.

MY: Uhuh. And what do you want to do?

MS: Well, I could go. [pause 2 seconds] I would really like to get home. 'Cause I say I've been away since Thursday really, from home. If Jack didn't mind.

JY: Anyone staying for tea?

MS: No, I'd rather not, if you don't mind, Jack.

JY: OK.

VB: It's been wonderful having a chance to talk to you both.

MS: Well, we've enjoyed it.

MY: Well, I thought that would be better, you know. Rather than go to two different houses and...

VB: Uhuh.

MY: We can sort of bounce off one another as it were. Or interrupt one another.

MS: [laughs]

MY: [laughs] As is our wont.

VB: Well I was really interested as well because your parents had taken you to the cinema.

MY: Yes.

VB: [declines more shortbread] I mean did they have any preferences themselves?

MY: I don't really remember ever discussing films with my mother and father. I wouldn't know. I mean I remember mum saying, you know, when it came out at first, how exciting it was for them. You know they really believed that this train was coming towards them and they were all shouting. And a bad person would come in and say: "He's at your back!" You know they really became part of the--

MS: Shouting out.

MY: Uhuh. That was way, way back.

JY: I remember when my mother told me that when she went to the cinema, there was just a pail that they had. It wasn't a [inaudible], just a pail, and they threw in their penny or a halfpenny or whatever it was as they walked in.

MY: Was that in Motherwell?

JY: Uhuh. I don't know if that was just one particular cinema.

MY: Maybe, uhuh.

JY: [inaudible] ...whether this was perhaps a matinee or whatever.

MY: Uhuh.

MY: [inaudible]

MY: It must've been very exciting, you know, going to the cinema for the first time and seeing these images coming towards you.

JY: [inaudible] [before talkies?]

MY: It must've been mind boggling. Yeah.

VB: Did any of the cinemas that you mention have problems with sound? I've heard that sometimes the sound was a bit...

MY: Oh, sometimes it would break down and of course there were catcalls all over the place, you know, and clapping of the hands. You know the fellow must've been panicking in the projection room. But eh, it didn't happen very often. [pause 2 seconds] No, I don't remember the synchronising thing not working but eh.

JY: Oh, it did on occasions but it was soon rectified, whatever the technical fault was.

MY: Yeah. Everything just stopped and then they would--

JY: It was adjusted.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: A friend of our father's was a cinema manager in Govan and occasionally on a Friday night we were taken right past the queues [laughs], right up to the balcony. You know it wasn't very often that we got to the balcony, we were generally in the stalls and we used to get taken down to see the films there. I think we were seeing them for nothing.

MY: Absolutely wonderful.

MS: What was that one like in Govan?

MS: Elder. It was a bit of a fleapit, wasn't it?

MY: Ach. It wasn't up to much, no.

MS: It was just a sort of side street one. It wasn't a main street one.

MY: Is that right? A side street.

MS: That's right. Yes, it was, uhuh.

MY: That was, that was the time that we got some, a plateful of peas before we got on the tram. And of course, coming all the way from Govan to Riddrie on a yellow tram, through Bridgeton Cross. By the time we got home I was, I think I was green!

JY: [laughs]

MS: [laughs]

MY: I didn't eat peas for years after that.

MS: Another thing that we got was taken into the centre of the city and they used to have eh, at night time, they used to have bands and you used to get a roll on sausage from them and a cup of coffee, You had that, standing in St Vincent Street.

MY: Ah, they used to have, do they not still have things like that for people to have cups of tea and... Not that I've been in town.

MS: You might have it for the down and outs.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: But certainly not, I mean, it wasn't down and outs that were going to it.

MY: No.

MS: It was just people who happened to be in town and that was another thing.

JY: I can't imagine now, you know the cinema of the thirties [inaudible] the cinema of today where you have the one complex [inaudible] which I have been to recently to see *Schindler's List* and [inaudible], And perhaps about two dozen people [inaudible] afternoon.

MY: Yeah, and you get, you get the adverts, the coming attractions and the big picture and that's it! Lights up, out!

MY: [inaudible] You're paying your money to get into the cinema to see the film and you're subjected to this advertising.

MY: Yeah. It's ridiculous.

JY: [inaudible]

MY: At least, at least.

MS: It's a long time, uhuh.

VB: Did you ever see promotions for things in the cinema, in the foyer or anything?

MS: No. Well I was once at a trade show but I should have been at work. But I mean that was, it was all cinema managers and theatre managers that were there.

MY: Uhuh. But not in the ordinary cinema as you went in. I mean you might've pictures of the film stars, but there was nothing, they weren't promoting anything, advertising something. Is that what you're meaning, advertising something?

MS: Aw, you mean a product?

VB: Yeah.

MY: Aye. No, no.

MS: No I thought you meant forthcoming pictures, I thought.

MY: No. It would just be pictures like that, what was coming.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: They invariably had, all the way up the stairs, they'd have big pictures of the film stars, all over the place.

JY: There was somewhere in the cinema, you know, the coming attraction.

MY: Oh, yes, uhuh. Part of the advert.

JY: And it would tell you what the future programmes were.

MY: Uhuh. And of course there might be an interval. Was there ever an interval when they were selling their ice cream and things?

MS: Oh, yes. There always had an interval, uhuh.

MY: They came down with their trays.

MS: This is like the La Scala. We're getting the sound of the cups.

[laughter]

MY: The munching of the shortbread.

MS: Remember they used to say they were going to The La Scala and you shouldn't say that 'cause you were actually saying The The.

MY: Yeah, of course, of course. That's right. Going to the La Scala. Yes, that's right.

MS: [laughs]

MY: You never said going to 'The Scala', it was always the La Scala. That's right. I'd forgotten about that. Mind you, you used to think the cafe up the road was the 'Elight' [sic] and turned when we were older we discovered it was the Elite!

MS: [laughs]

MY: We thought it was the 'Elight' cafe.

JY: One of the local cinemas down here was either called the Rio or the R10.

[laughter]

MY: I think the Rio pictures in there. [referring to book]. You'll see the R10 in there.

VB: Yes.

MS: I only learned that recently.

JY: Uhuh.

MS: That eh, the one at eh'm Bearsden was called the R10.

MY: Uhuh [laughs]

VB: [laughs]

MY: A rose by any other name.

JY: [inaudible] The Vogue. The Vogue was taken over by the, the Odeon. Was that a general thing, do you know?

MY: Well, our Vogue was taken over and called the Riddrie, I don't know who took it over but it wasn't called the...

JY: [inaudible] individual cinemas were taken over.

MS: Was it not the Riddrie, and then became, 'cause it's, it's the Vogue bingo hall now?

MY: Maybe it was the Riddrie first of all.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: And it's now the Vogue, yeah. Possibly. Round the wrong way?

VB: [looking at book] Some of these, I mean they must've looked very modern.

MY: Yes, yes.

MS: Uhuh.

MY: Aw, you can tell those that were built maybe in the 1920s, 1930s, the different styles.

JY: Do you go to films a lot yourself?

VB: Em. A fair bit, though not as much as I would like to given the prices! [laughs]

MS: Yeah, quite.

VB: I tend to get quite a few out on video as well, just wait until I can see them more cheaply [laughs]

MY: Yeah, uhuh.

JY: It certainly pays, I think, to get out a video if you've got about four for a family.

MY: Yes. I think that's what they do. Sometimes you can get four at the weekend for about two pounds or something, depending where you go for them.

MS: Or even the libraries now have got them. They've got a vast lot of videos in eh, the Hamilton Library.

MY: Is that so?

MS: I don't think we have got it in Riddrie. We certainly have got a very big video selection in Hamilton.

MY: Uhuh.

VB: There's quite a good one beside us that does a lot of foreign films. That's quite like yourself, I quite like French films and you get quite a few decent ones there.

MY: Uhuh.

MS: Yes.

MY: Is that the one off Byres Road?

VB: Yes, yes. There's one on Great Western Road and [pause 2 seconds]. I can't remember what it's called. There's one of the big chains anyway.

MS: Is that the Embassy or is it Anniesland Cross [probably referring to Ascot cinema]?

VB: I think that's. Yes, yes.

JY: Would you like any more tea?

VB: No I'm fine thanks. That's lovely.

MS: I can't think of a cinema in Great Western Road.

VB: No, I'm saying for videos.

MS: Oh, for videos. Sorry, for videos. I thought eh.

VB: Well of course the one, the best cinema near us has been closed down. The Salon.

MS: Oh, that's the one, uhuh. The Hillhead Salon. That's the one I was meaning. I thought that was maybe where you got your French films from.

VB: Oh, that was really terrible when that closed down.

MY: Oh, I'm sure it must have been.

MS: Yes, uhuh.

VB: I think that was one of the oldest cinemas.

MS: Yeah, that's been there a long time, yes. 'Cause I remember taking our cousin George Davidson who was eight years younger than me to the Hillhead Salon and his mother had given him money for sweets, which he bought and he never even offered me one.

VB: [laughs]

MS: Oh, that stuck in my mind.

MY: I think I'd have asked him for one.

MS: I think I must've gone in the huff.

MY: [laughs] I'm not the huffy type, I just demand.

MS: That was the Hillhead Salon.

MY: Now I don't want to rush you away, but I don't want it to be too dark for you leaving.

VB: No. It's been very kind of you to talk to me at this great length and depth about the cinema.

[pause 2 seconds]

[End of interview]