

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.

\*\*\*\*\*

\* Transcript ID: MY-92-001AT002

\* CCINTB Transcript IDs: 92-1-24a-aac, 92-1-25a-w

\* Tapes: MY-92-001OT003, MY-92-001OT004

\* CCINTB Tapes ID: T95-12, T95-13

\* Length: 01:22:30

\* Glasgow, 20 February 1995: Valentina Bold interviews Margaret Young and Mollie Stevenson

\* Transcribed by Joan Simpson/ Standardised by Julia McDowell

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

\* Notes: Second 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; voice initially fading in and out]

**VB: Actually, it's got two. It's like a sort of stereo thing.**

**MY:** Ah, yes.

**VB: So, it really does give you very clear em, results. So I made a note anyway, of a couple of things I wanted to ask you.**

**MY:** That's good. She couldn't think what else we could say.

**MS:** It won't eh, pick up the tummy rumbles.

**MY:** [laughs]

**VB: It's a very good machine. [laughs]. It'll pick up your dog breathing, or something.**

**MY:** [laughs]

**VB:** Em, I mean, the first thing I actually wanted to ask you about was to do with these books. Because, I was wondering, say with the Robin Hood one, if you would get that before or after you saw the film.

**MY:** Well, I would imagine we'd get it after because it was a birthday present from my aunt who lived with us.

**VB:** Ah, right.

**MY:** Is it on just now?

**VB:** Yes, I think so.

**MY:** No. I think it would be afterwards because eh, I think I raved about Errol Flynn so much that.

**MS:** You would ask for it.

**MY:** Yes, I would ask for it, yes. I think it would come afterwards, uhuh.

**VB:** 'Cause I was wondering whether it was the book that had made you excited about the film, or the other way round.

**MY:** Uhuh. No, no. No, I would say it was afterwards. 'Cause I wouldn't have thought about Robin Hood particularly as a book. It was only 'cause Errol Flynn was in it. And it really was quite a good film, although, I can't say I'm still in love with Errol Flynn but eh,

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** At that time, I just adored him. So, I think I would get the book afterwards.

**VB:** Right.

**MY:** Uhuh. I don't know. It may be dated. Is it actually dated?

**VB:** I think it was, yes.

**MY:** Uhuh. I don't know.

**MS:** Does it actually tell you when it came out?

**MY:** If you look up Robin Hood, it'll give you a date when it came out. Dash, look what I've done!

**VB: They're fiddly things these [inaudible] it's hard [inaudible] anyway...**

**MY:** I'm surprised it hasn't got something written on it. I'd have thought my aunt would've put it on.

**VB: Yes.**

**MY:** No, there's nothing there. No.

**VB: [inaudible], about '36 or '37 or something like that.**

**MS:** Watch your feet again.

**VB: It's got the silent one of 1922.**

**MY:** That was the one with Errol Flynn.

**MS:** That was before both of us were born.

**VB: Yes.**

**MY:** [laughs] Only just.

**VB: That's strange.**

**MY:** Oh, maybe it's 'The Adventures of Robin Hood'.

**VB: That's what it is, yes.**

**MY:** Yes, 'The Adventures of Robin Hood'.

**VB: It is a wonderful film. I saw it myself not that long ago.**

**MY:** It was on quite recently, uhuh.

**MS:** Yes.

**VB: Yeah.**

**MY:** I really do think the Americans were very good at eh, adapting a lot of English stories.

**VB: Yes.**

**MY:** I think they got the atmosphere. And they've never been bettered!

**VB: Ah, here it is. 1938, it was.**

**MY:** '38, uhuh.

**VB: It was a tremendous cast that though, with Basil Rathbone, and Claude Rains and everything.**

**MS:** Yes, uhuh. Oh, all these pictures have got, eh, terrific casts.

**MY:** Yes.

**VB: I like Basil Rathbone very much.**

**MY:** Yes.

**VB: Especially as Sherlock Holmes.**

**MY:** Oh, he is, he's eh, the definitive Sherlock Holmes, I would say.

**MS:** Oh, yes, yes.

**MY:** Nobody's bettered him. I think the black-and-white helped in many of these old pictures, though.

**VB: Yes.**

**MY:** But eh, [flicking through book], I need my glasses. Eh, and I love Claude Rain's voice. I think he had a beautiful voice, so cultured. [looking through book] That was it, yes.

**VB: I mean, it was a wonderful film. I can see how it would appeal to you as a child.**

**MY:** Yes.

**MS:** Yes, oh yes.

**VB: I mean it's, so much action.**

**MY:** Uhuh. [pause 2 seconds] Oh, he'd a way with him, our Errol, at that time.

**VB: Did you like any of his other films in particular?**

**MY:** Oh, yes. Everyone of them. *Dodge City*, eh, *The Perfect Specimen*, eh, oh, lots and lots more. He was terrific.

**MS:** We didn't miss any of them, really.

**MY:** No, no. Pity he went, you know, went for drink and wasted himself. He really was. Talk about Dorian Gray, he really became awful when he was older. Mind you, he died at fifty, I think. He was drinking at the time, just, flopped down and that was him away. No, I liked his pictures a lot, I must say. These are the only two that come to mind, *Dodge City* and *The Perfect Specimen*. He'd a lovely smile and a nice voice.

**VB:** He was very handsome, of course.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** Oh, yes.

**VB:** 'Cause you mention quite a number of stars, actually, that you didn't have time to talk about in great detail or anything. You mentioned Ronald Colman a couple of times. Was that someone that you liked?

**MS:** I liked his, yes I liked his voice.

**MY:** Oh, he had a beautiful voice.

**MS:** Yes. He was nice.

**MY:** Can't say I fancied him particularly, funnily enough. But we just liked him.

**MS:** Just liked him and eh, his pictures were always good.

**MY:** Yeah.

**MS:** What was that one eh, [pause 2 seconds] where they, if they...?

**MY:** [inaudible]

**MS:** Uhuh, when they came out of the city they turned, what was that one?

**MY:** Oh, yes, eh, eh.

**MS:** Not 'The Taj Mahal', was it called?

**MY:** 'Shangri-La'.

**MS:** 'Shangri-La'. [referring to *Lost Horizon*] Uhuh.

**MY:** And also that one with eh, *Rupert of Hentzau*. What was--

**MS:** That's right, uhuh.

**MY:** *Prisoner of Zenda* [referring to *The Prisoner of Zenda*].

**MS:** *Prisoner of Zenda*

**MY:** It was lovely, yeah.

**MS:** Sometimes I got him a bit mixed up with Leslie Howard and eh, Ronald Colman. Not that they looked like one another. The pictures, I sometimes put the wrong person--

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** To the picture.

**VB:** **That's interesting 'cause I can see what you mean because just their sort of personalities, I suppose.**

**MS:** And they had the, what they called, the transatlantic, eh, voice.

**MY:** Accent, that's it, yes. It wasn't too English but it--

**MS:** No. I mean everybody imagined that Leslie Howard was an Englishman and it turns out he's a Hungarian or something like that.

**VB:** **Really?**

**MS:** I mean he wasn't English at all.

**MY:** No, that's right, uhuh.

**VB:** **That's amazing. I'd always thought of him as the perfect English gentleman.**

**MS:** So did we. Because that's, I mean, nobody ever got to the foot of it. Why he was actually killed in that plane crash during the war. There was something very odd about it.

**MY:** Well, I think the fact that Churchill was on it or something. There was some mix-up.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** And they thought it might be him, and that's why it was blown up.

**MS:** But did they not sort of think he was an agent or something like that?

**MY:** Oh, possibly. There's quite a few stories going around.

**VB:** I just saw one of Ronald Colman's again the other day, *Under Two Flags*.

**MS:** Yes, that's right. That was the, was that the Foreign Legion one?

**VB:** That's right. With Claudette Colbert.

**MY:** Ah yes, uhuh. And he was in *A Tale of Two Cities* as well.

**MS:** Where was it that she was Cigarette? Was that not it?

**VB:** That was it.

**MS:** Was it that one?

**VB:** Yes.

**MS:** Oh, I thought it was the Gary Cooper one, *Beau Geste*. But Cigarette was *Under Two Flags*.

**MY:** See there's another couple of pictures [are?] getting mixed up.

**MS:** I could remember her name was Cigarette. That always appealed to me.

[everyone laughs]

**VB:** She was so brave in that one, she was--

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** I don't remember that one at all.

**MS:** Do you not? Oh, no. I can remember it. And *Beau Geste*. That was Gary Cooper.

**VB:** Did you like these sort of adventure films?

**MY:** Oh, yes.

**MS:** Oh, yes. We liked practically everything. [laughs]

**MY:** The only thing we didn't like was the sort of Bela Lugosi type, the *Frankenstein*.

**MS:** No, eh, we didn't like the horror ones, I didn't like them, no.

**MY:** I remember Bob Hope in that *Cat and Canary* [referring to *The Cat and the Canary*]. It was great fun.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** And it was a horror one. Well, when I say horror, it was quite exciting, you know.

**MS:** Our, eh, cousin who's, em, well she's ten years younger than I am. I mean, she loves loves, Betty just loves horror films.

**MY:** Is that so?

**MS:** I just can't stand them you know. I don't particularly care to be scared.

**MY:** I put it in the same category as sci-fi films that I can't be bothered with either.

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

**MY:** These *Rambo* things, and the 'Exterminator' [probably referring to 'The Terminator' franchise] and things like that.

**MS:** A non-event.

**VB:** 'Cause I remember you mentioning that the Paul Muni one in the sort of, how scary that was.

**MS:** Oh, yeah, that was me. [laughs]

**MY:** Which one was that?

**MS:** Aw, it was the one where he was eh, the prisoner.

**MY:** *Devil's Island*?

**MS:** No, I don't think it was *Devil's Island*. It was further back than that. [pause 2 seconds] I can't remember. No, it was 'Chain Gang' it was called [sic: *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*, 1932].



**MY:** Paul Muni, are you talking about?

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** Yes, that's right it was 'The Chain Gang'. That was way back.

**MS:** That, that really scared me. That's when I was under the seat. Mind you, I don't remember much about it because I was under the seat. [pause 2 seconds]. Not that you could get under a cinema seat because it went flat back, but I was down on the floor at any rate. I mean they never stayed put.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** They always came back up with such a noise.

**MY:** No, I think we'd what you'd call a catholic taste in films, except for the *Frankenstein* monster things which we just did not like at all.

**MS:** Yes. And the likes of Boris Karloff and people like that.

**MY:** I remember the Charlie Chan films. They were good.

**MS:** Yes, yes. 'Number One Son', 'Number Two Son'.

**MY:** I think we saw practically every film that was made! [laughs].

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** I mean, if you go three or four times a week you do cover quite a lot.

**MS:** [laughs]

**VB:** Yes. 'Cause I mean you mentioned as well, I mean, the sort of gangster type films with Spencer Tracy and Edward G. Robinson.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** Yes. Aw they were very popular in the thirties. I mean that was a... [pause 2 seconds] a genre, do we call it? When they just churned them out and churned them out. Oh, they were terrific. 'Cause we just gobbled up American films.

**VB: Was there anyone amongst, in that sort of film that you liked particularly?**

**MY:** Well, James Cagney was eh. You didn't fancy him.

**MS:** No.

**MY:** You enjoyed him as an actor.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** But not eh, a. No. Put it this way you wouldn't have him as a pin up.

**MS:** No.

**MY:** You wouldn't have any of them. I mean Humphrey Bogart, Edward G. Robinson.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh. Well none of them were handsome enough, really.

**MY:** No.

**MS:** To be pin ups. But they were very good actors. And we appreciated them acting.

**VB: So it was a different kind of enjoyment you got out of things like that.**

**MS:** Yes, yes.

**MY:** They were sort of social comments, really.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** Rather than the frothy ones like the Ginger Rogers, Fred Astaire's which I adored.

**MS:** We loved them.

**MY:** Mind you, it was a form of escape in those days, too. You were into another world. I mean this business of them walking around with their long dresses on all day long, and having their servants and their, the upstairs-downstairs. We absolutely loved that.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** I mean it was never-never-land. [pause 2 seconds] But eh, I mean there was no television in those days. We didn't, we had the wireless.

**MS:** No, there was just the radio.

**MY:** Uhuh. And the cinema.

**VB:** Just when you were saying that I was thinking, I don't know if you were at the showing yesterday in Rutherglen?

**MY:** No, no. At the *42nd Street*? I heard it was on. Yes. No, I didn't go down.

**VB:** I mean, I went along myself and it was really worth it. It was good.

**MS:** I didn't know about it.

**MY:** There was something on. What was it made of? Were they getting money? Were they taking out the balcony or something? Why were they taking the balcony away?

**VB:** Basically, they were taking away the last of the cinema fittings to make it into a bingo hall completely [referring to the Vogue Cinema, renamed to the Odeon]

**MY:** Oh, I see.

**MS:** I see.

**VB:** Em, so, this woman from the Rutherglen Arts Group, which I don't know much about, but erm, she organised a showing of *42nd Street* and there was a Charlie Chaplin film as well eh, *Easy Street*.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**VB:** Just really for a last, a last cinema showing.

**MS:** Yes, I see.

**MY:** And could you get up on the balcony?

**VB:** Yes, yes.

**MY:** Uhuh, yeah.

**VB:** It was worth it. I mean I'd never been inside the cinema before either so...

**MY:** No, I've been in that cinema quite a number of times.

**MS:** Aye, what was it? An Odeon or an ABC?

**MY:** It was the Odeon.

**VB:** **It looked like it had been a lovely cinema in its day.**

**MY:** Oh, yes.

**MS:** Oh, yes. The Odeon's a beautiful cinema. They were very modern.

**MY:** Uhuh. We had the fleapits and we had the very good ones. I mean it was--

**MS:** But the Odeons, they came along, you know, after the--

**MY:** I mean you'd see from that book about the cinemas, eh, some of them, they're really. I mean, it was like entering into a sort of cathedral in a way, you know. It was, with the doorman and the...

**MS:** Whereas the Odeons were all sort of art deco, weren't they?

**MY:** Uhuh.

**VB:** **They were saying, there was a chap that gave a talk about it as well, and they were saying it had been sort of like a fountain effect on the walls.**

**MY:** I can't remember.

**MS:** Oh, uhuh.

**VB:** **They had sort of panels and he said it had been done like a fountain. It's all painted over now.**

**MY:** I don't remember that particularly. No I can't say I remember it. But it was always, it was quite an event to go the pictures. I mean you really felt you were doing something.

**MS:** Oh, yes, yes.

**MY:** Going up the stairs, or into the stalls or wherever you were going. And the girls with the...

**MS:** If you could afford the balcony you really were something.

**MY:** Oh, yes. That was something.

**MS:** If your money ran to the balcony.

**MY:** It wasn't much fun being in the front seat of the stalls.

**MS:** No.

[everyone laughs]

**MS:** You got a crick in your neck.

[pause 3 seconds]

**VB:** 'Cause I was interested. Someone mentioned to me about waiting rooms. I don't know if that's something that you came across.

**MS:** Well there was. Remember the, the Marne had a waiting room. And you went eh, down the side, you know, the seats were all there and you went down. I think the Parade. That sort of kept you from, in the rain or the snow, when they had that.

**MY:** I don't remember the waiting rooms at all.

**MS:** And also the one in Sauchiehall Street. Which... [pause 2 seconds]

**MY:** La Scala.

**MS:** No further up.

**MY:** No further than that.

**MS:** Which I think is an ABC now or something like that.

**MS:** You could also go in there and sneak your way up to either the stalls or the balcony and you were. Then you were guaranteed that you would get a seat because you were actually inside and had paid your money.

**VB:** Right.

**MS:** If you were still out in the street, you could have been turned away.

**VB:** 'Cause I wasn't quite sure how that worked. 'Cause I just [inaudible] waiting rooms.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh. Well, they weren't exactly rooms. They were like long corridors.

**VB:** Ah, I see.

**MS:** That you moved along.

**MS:** I can remember that in the Marne.

**MY:** I don't remember that at all.

**MS:** Yeah. I can remember that.

**VB: So that was just something then they had in a few of the cinemas?**

**MS:** Just a few of them. It wasn't a recognised thing.

**VB: Right, I see.**

**MS:** That, eh, they allowed you in. And then you knew that you were guaranteed a seat somewhere. Of course you had to take whatever came up. You know, as they say, it might have been the front seat or it might have been the back seat. You just didn't know. As long as they were, you know, sufficient for you and your friend, you know. If they said there was two, and there was four of you well you let the next two go, if you all wanted to be together.

**MY:** I'm surprised at the number of people of your age who are enjoying the old films. I think the GFT [referring to the Glasgow Film Theatre] has a lot of old films on?

**VB: Yes.**

**MY:** And that young girl I've become pally with. She said that she was looking forward to seeing Bette Davis in *Dark Victory* and things like that.

**MS:** Oh, yes, uhuh.

**MY:** They were real good stories. They must be getting sick of these silly stories that are coming out.

**VB: Very much so.**

**MY:** And they want to appreciate the ones that have a beginning, a middle and an end.

**MS:** An end, uhuh.

**VB: Right. Just when you were saying that about the films where they sort of had these amazing dresses on and, like *42nd Street* where they, as you say, going along in these long gowns all the time. It's so amazing.**

**MS:** Gowns, yes, uhuh.

**MY:** It was amazing in *42nd Street*, I think, and other films. They used to have these, they were putting on a stage show and it was like a huge stage they must have had to get all these people on it.

**MS:** On it, yes.

**MY:** I mean it was ridiculous. You just had to imagine it. They could do all that. And millions of folk on the stage and supposed to be on this little stage. [laughs]. The Busby Berkeley fellow.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** With all his patterns, and what not. [pause 2 seconds] And all the stories were the same. Virtually.

**MS:** Uhuh. Yeah. Falling out and then them falling in.

**MY:** Boy meets girl and the boy falls out, come together again.

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** Misunderstanding.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** Everybody happy ever after.

**VB:** 'Cause you were saying that as well about sort of Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers ones, they were all very much the same.

**MY:** Oh, yes.

**MS:** Oh, very much. Just a factory...

**MY:** Uhuh.

**VB:** 'Cause again, *Top Hat* was on quite recently.

**MS:** Yes, yes.

**MY:** Uhuh. I've actually got that on video so I can see it any time I want.

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** You really do see now, how silly some of the stories were. But you were so taken up with the singing and the dancing.

**MS:** That's right, uhuh.

**MY:** And the repartee, and... and it wasn't just Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire. They had other people who were the sort of comic reliefs as it were. You know, Edward Everett Horton.

**MS:** Yes, and.

**MY:** Like the girl Broderick.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** I can't remember. What was her name? Broderick? Broderick Crawford's sister, anyway. Her name was something Broderick. Helen Broderick!

**MS:** Helen Broderick, uhuh.

**MY:** Always had the sort of sarcastic friend--

**MS:** And that eh, tall woman with em, Green was her name. Greenwood, was it? Her legs seemed to go way up to the sky. You know, she was one of these people that could lift her legs straight up, you know. She wasn't a particularly young person either.

**MY:** No, no.

**MS:** And she could still do that.

**MY:** Charlotte Greenwood?

**MS:** That's right.

**MY:** Uhuh. They'd a lot of eh, bit players who were very good. They'd had a whole lot.

**MS:** They never became stars.

**MY:** Uhuh. But they were always there. They must've made a good living out of it.

**MS:** Uhuh.



**MY:** [Jacob?] He was always the principal man, the star's friend and--

**MS:** Never got the girl, sort of style.

**MY:** Yeah. [pause 2 seconds] But you always expected the same performance from them.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** You never got tired of it. You enjoyed them.

**VB:** **That was like em, I remember seeing Nigel Bruce in that, the desert one with Claudette Colbert, I've forgotten what it's called now.**

**MS:** *Under Two Flags?*

**VB:** **And I mean, I'd always thought of them as Sherlock Holmes and his sidekick. [laughs]**

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** [laughs] Dr Watson. [laughs]

**MS:** Always played the second lead.

**VB:** **That's right. But as you say, you sort of, get to, sort of know them in that sort of role.**

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** There was repertory of actors and actresses that were always called upon.

**MS:** That's right, uhuh.

**MY:** We have a friend who is a cinema buff rather than a cinema fan, as we are. And they have a game when they meet his friends. Do you remember so and so? And this was some [pause 2 seconds] remote person and, could they remember this person that was in the, whatever you call it, the [pause 2 seconds] cast list.

**MS:** List, uhuh.

**MY:** And they were away down the list but they'd take fun having to, can you remember so and so? Who played so and so?

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** Rather than the stars are going for the also-rans, as it were. And they have a lot of fun out of trying to remember their names. [pause 2 seconds] 'Cause there weren't so many films that were well known.

**MS:** That's right. You also got used to the ones that never spoke. But they were always there. There's one woman in particular.

**MY:** I call it my lady, yes.

**MS:** She never, ever spoke a word. But she keeps popping up. you'd say, "Oh, that's her again!"

**MY:** Yes, it's one of the extras, but you recognise her. She's always this lady, beautifully dressed and in the background, and you say, "Oh, there she is again!" And you sort of recognised the extras.  
[laughs]

**MS:** It's funny they just, they seemed to have this stable of people who never, well it must've been worth their while, but they never opened their mouth!

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** They never got a speaking part at all. It went on for years.

**MY:** We used to call her my lady. "Oh, there's my lady again!"

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** [laughs] As if I was the only one who'd ever noticed.

**MS:** [laughs]

[pause 3 seconds]

**VB:** It's amazing, you know, you're saying the sort of details in these sort of films as well.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** Yes. [pause 3 seconds] When you see the likes of *David Copperfield*, I mean they just seem to get the... Well what you imagined it was like. There'll never be another, eh, *Treasure Island* like the one with eh--

**MS:** No.

**MY:** What d'you call that fellow with the parrot on his, Long John Silver.

**MS:** Silver, uhuh.

**MY:** What d'you call, Wallace Beery?

**MS:** Wallace Beery, uhuh.

**MY:** And Jackie Cooper as the boy, Jim Hawkins. You'll never get it done better than that. They've tried, but they won't.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**VB:** I mean, did... Can I ask the same question I did about Robin Hood? I mean did you go and read these books after seeing the movie?

**MY:** Some of them. When we got older, yes. But not when you were younger.

**VB:** Right.

**MY:** No, no. When you got older you would read some of the original books.

**MS:** 'Treasure Island' was a, was it not a school book?

**MY:** It is, but I really think you can appreciate it more as a grown-up.

**MS:** Uhuh, oh, yes, yes.

**MY:** Than you do as a child. I think a lot of these, supposedly children's books are better read when you're older.

**VB:** Yes.

**MY:** That they're just too old. I mean when you think about that coming up with the black spot, you know, and the fellow coming up and getting killed. It really was very well done. I enjoyed that. But I would say I would read them in my teens, rather than under that.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**VB:** Right, yes. I mean, did you find that, when you're reading a book like that after having seen the movie, do you imagine the--

**MY:** Oh, yes!

**VB: The characters as the actors?**

**MS:** Yes, I would say so, yes. The one that stands out is *Gone with the Wind*. I mean, they'll, they'll never! I mean we've probably told you this before, but there's no way that we're going to see this remake. No way!

**MY:** Of eh, the sequel.

**MS:** The seq, or the, is it the sequel?

**MY:** It's a sequel. It's not a remake. Aw, they could never remake it.

**MS:** It's a sequel.

**MY:** Which we will not go and see because it'll just be--

**MS:** No. Because I mean right out of the pages is Rett Butler.

**VB: Mm.**

**MS:** And Scarlett and...

**MY:** Melanie.

**MS:** I mean Melanie, the whole lot of them. Hattie Daniels. They just--

**MY:** Pefection, uhuh. I mean whoever did the casting, really should have got an Oscar--

**MS:** I would think so.

**MY:** For the casting, alone. It was terrific.

**MS:** And these casting people I see here, they've all got initials after them, I mean, I don't know what degree they take but they all seem to, what it all incorporates, these casting people. You see an awful lot more in films now. Casting by...

**MY:** That was another thing, we always seemed to know who had made the dresses of the MGM Films.

**MS:** That's right.

**MY:** Orry-Kelly, there was Adrian, Oleg Cassini. We knew who had made the gowns. We weren't interested in anybody else, it was who made the gowns. [laughs]

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** But they became quite famous.

**MS:** That's right.

[pause 3 seconds]

**MY:** Because even now when you see the dresses they're wearing in these films, you could use them again today.

**MS:** Oh yes.

**MY:** Beautiful, beautiful dresses.

**MS:** Mmm.

**MY:** I wouldn't be ashamed to wear any of them.

**MS:** Any of them, no.

**MY:** Even today, and feel good in them. They were, not classless, what is called when it lasts a long time.

**MS:** Oh, I would say. Classless not right, not the right word?

**MY:** Anyway, they're as good today as they were forty, fifty years ago. I mean, you can't say that about many clothes.

**MS:** No, no.

**VB:** Even the sort of hairstyles and the, you know, the general look that they had with them, you would say are--

**MY:** Coming back.

**MS:** Coming back, again.

**MY:** Of course I think there really is nothing much new under the sun.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** It just keeps coming round in circles. The only thing that's new is all these models going round without any underwear on.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** That seems to be the latest thing. They didn't do that in our day. [pause 2 seconds] Well, when I say that, Eddie Cantor films they really were quite scanty in some of their clothes, but they left most of it to your imagination.

**MS:** The like of Jean Harlow. She never wore any underwear.

**MY:** Uhuh. But you weren't aware of that.

**MS:** No.

**MY:** You only read about that. Now you know that.

**MS:** No, but when you think back at the dresses she wore. I mean, we wouldn't be thinking at our age of bra and pants, but now you look back and if you see a photograph of it you think, oh well, she couldn't possibly. There would be a line there or a mark there, you know.

**MY:** Yes. It was silk they were wearing. It would show up everything.

**VB:** Was she someone that you liked, Jean Harlow?

**MY:** Oh, uhuh.

**MS:** Oh, yes.

**MY:** I don't say I liked her, now that I look at her, she really was quite brassy but we just saw the glamour of her. We weren't aware of the fact that her voice was a wee bit, common, shall we say now.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** But she was very, very glamorous, Jean Harlow. I thought she was terrific.

**MS:** Mmm.

**MY:** But when you see her films, she is the brassy blonde.

**MS:** Oh yes, yes.

**MY:** And not as subtle as you would say, Grace Kelly, or...

**MS:** Oh, no.

**MY:** Or Ingrid Bergman, or...

**MS:** No.

**MY:** They were more subtle in their [pause 2 seconds] sexuality. She was straight up. You knew perfectly well what she was. [laughs] And she never gave a damn about anybody. [laughs]

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** Well, we weren't aware of it when we were younger.

**VB: Yeah.**

**MY:** But now we see it. And eh, oh yes, she was one of the. I wouldn't say she was ever an actress but she was a personality.

**MS:** No, no.

**VB: You mention people like em, Greta Garbo, and Marlene Dietrich as well.**

**MY:** Oh, they were absolutely way up here somewhere. They were.

**MS:** They, they were trained. I mean I don't think the like of Jean Harlow, she was ever trained. She just happened to be in the right place at the right time.

**MY:** Yeah. Or knew the right people possibly.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** But, oh they were extremely glamorous. I mean they weren't real, really.

**MS:** No.

**MY:** I mean they had this air of mystery. They were of course foreign, which added to a certain mystery to them. And they were very, well, Greta Garbo left on time I would say, she reached her peak.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** But Marlene Dietrich kept on and on and on. It was such an illusion at the end. I mean she could go on the stage in her seventies. Albeit she might be trundled on. We didn't know that. But eh, she was still able to give that illusion of glamour and beauty.

**MS:** That's right.

**MY:** You know, she was stitched up or whatever they did with her and pulled back and...

**VB:** [laughs]

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** But on the stage she looked good. [pause 2 seconds] She really was quite something. [pause 2 seconds] But they were always the same really, too, I mean...

**MS:** Och yes.

**MY:** We just lapped it up. Whatever they gave us, we thought it was wonderful.

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** Glamorous and [pause 2 seconds], outwith our little humdrum lives.

**MS:** That's right.

**MY:** And of course we loved the Deanna Durbin, Judy Garland. Adored them!

**VB:** **That's what I brought with me. I forgot to, you just reminded me, em, the thing that Annette had [laughs]. I don't know if you've seen this but she found this Deanna Durbin doll.**

**MY:** Oh for goodness sake!

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** Aw. And you dressed the doll with all the clothes.



**VB: I don't know if you ever had anything like that.**

**MY:** No. I had a Shirley Temple one. And I can remember the dresses to this day. They were... [pause 2 seconds]

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** They didn't have a waist. They came from here [pointing]. Is that right?

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

**MY:** I've always liked our wee grandchildren in dresses rather than waist ones. This is, is this closed up?

**VB: I thought you might be interested to see that. I don't think we should open it yet. But it's eh, it's got all the wee hats and everything.**

**MY:** Yes.

**VB: Somewhere in there. [laughs]**

**MY:** Yes, uhuh. I don't remember ever seeing this doll but I definitely had eh, [pause 2 seconds], where did I put my glasses? I definitely had, eh, em, a what do you call it, a Shirley Temple doll, which I dressed and dressed and dressed.

**MS:** Printed in Hong Kong.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** She went very fat.

**VB: Did she?**

**MS:** Oh, yes. She went eh, huge.

**VB: 'Cause she didn't have that long a career, did she?**

**MS:** No.

**MY:** No. She married her third husband who was a Frenchman, I understand. And she went to live in France and just gave it up totally.

**VB: Right.**

**MY:** And we didn't realise when she was, when we were younger, but we notice it now. She had something wrong with her arm. She couldn't hold it straight or something. There was something.

**MS:** Right.

**MY:** Uhuh. But this one here, [pointing to arm]. You see it now, there was an awkwardness, but she was, oh I loved her, loved her films. [flicks through pages] Can't see.

**MS:** I had a Deanna Durbin hat. Remember I got it in Watt Brothers.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**VB: What was that like?**

**MS:** Eh, it had a turned up brim. It was very like eh, the kind of hats that eh, the Austrian people wear when they were... when they went shooting.

**VB: Right.**

**MS:** That kind of, you know a felt hat that had a wee feather.

**MY:** Feather, uhuh.

**MS:** At the side.

**MY:** Was that similar to the Joan Crawford hat that Dad always liked?

**MS:** It was a bigger brim. This was a small brim.

**MY:** Uhuh, yeah. That's fascinating, yes. Oh, she was lovely.

**MS:** Can I see it? [pause 2 seconds; flicking through pages] 'A Hundred Men and a Girl' [referring to *One Hundred Men and a Girl*]

**MY:** Aw that wasn't one of my favourite ones. It was *Three Smart Girls* that I first saw her in. She was the all, I think she was Canadian wasn't she?

**MS:** No, I think she was American. I don't think she was Canadian, was she?

**MY:** I've got a notion she was Canadian.

**MS:** Aw.

**MY:** Anyway, she was the all-American girl as far as we were concerned.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** [flicking through pages] There's one of the hats, but that's a straw one.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** Where did she get that?

**VB:** I think she actually got it in London, em, 'cause I saw them at the 'Museum of the Moving Image' there when I was in London towards the end of last year.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**VB:** Em. And they had quite a few things like that.

**MY:** Is that so?

**VB:** Yeah. In fact, they might even have had a Shirley Temple one as well.

**MY:** Uhuh. Oh, I can remember, I can remember it very well. Lovely little yellow dresses.

**MS:** This looks as though it had a feather in it, here.

**VB:** Ah.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** If I can just get it to, oops! The wrong thing's coming over!

**VB:** Maybe, we should just open it actually.

**MY:** No, I haven't seen that.

**MS:** Och no! I don't think that's fair to.

**MY:** Oh no! Definitely not open it. No, no, no.

**MS:** It's coming. Aw no, that's not the one. That's the brim's down all the way round. That's not the one, the brim was up, the one I had.

**MY:** Uhuh. I remember that hat

**MS:** [inaudible] paper doll.

**MY:** Ah, I'm glad to see that, that's most interesting, yes indeed.

**MS:** Yes.

**VB:** I thought you would like it because you were talking about Deanna Durbin before. Em, what was it about her that you liked?

**MY:** Och, she was young and fresh, bubbly,

**MS:** She was a good singer.

**MY:** And eh, she always overcame difficulties and eh, och it was just, and there were schools things too.

**MS:** Yeah.

[End of Side A]

[Start of Side B]

[silence until 0:29:44]

**MY:** Eventually, but, and she was singing away. Och, she was just bright and bubbly and full of life.

**VB:** Do you feel, 'cause when you're saying she was young and everything. Was she more the same sort of age you were?

**MY:** Possibly, yes.

**MS:** Yes, yes, uhuh.

**MY:** She was a teenager when we saw her.

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

**MY:** Uhuh.

**VB:** 'Cause obviously people like Garbo must have been like--

**MS:** Oh, they were older.

**VB:** You know, grown women.

**MY:** Oh, yes.

**MS:** No, just the same as eh, em, Judy Garland. They were all ages with us at the time.

**MY:** Yes, uhuh. There was quite a, one of two school stories that you saw Deanna Durbin in.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** I remember one in Switzerland. I can't remember what it was called but she was pretending. Herbert Marshall was her father.

**MS:** Father, that's right, uhuh.

**MY:** And Gail Patrick was her mother and she finally got the two together and they got married, in the end, you know. But she was having to lie her way through this. But this was her father, who wasn't her father at all but, eventually they got around to it. Loved it!

**VB:** Did you like the songs from the pictures?

**MS:** Oh, yes!

**MY:** Yes. Very much so. Oh, yes.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** They were very catchy tunes. I mean, when I look back on the songs, there's very few songs I can remember in the last few, maybe, ten years, you could whistle or sing. I mean, I can't remember any of it.

**MS:** No.

**MY:** Mind you, we don't listen to it all that much. Certainly when my son was young I eventually got to like some of his records but they weren't really, they were more instrumental, rather than singing songs.

**MS:** And they're so repetitive.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** No melody.

**MY:** He was selling some of his records and I even bought one. I think it was Pink Floyd I bought, I have it. I don't know even where it is now, but eh, I like Pink Floyd very much. But eh, it was a form of osmosis that I. It was just because I heard it so often I thought, 'Here, that's not bad.'

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** But eh, you didn't have these catchy tunes that you got. I mean Bing Crosby.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** He was... some of his films were good with the music... I don't know if they would last, I don't know now if I saw it now if I really,

**MS:** *High Society* has lasted.

**MY:** Oh well, that's, that's a...

**MS:** I mean I love all the tunes from *High Society*. I think they're terrific.

**MY:** Then again, it's the glamorous... plenty of money and... [laughs]

**MS:** 'Philadelphia' [referring to *The Philadelphia Story*].

**MY:** *Philadelphia Story* was the original one. Which I didn't think they could ever better, but they did, they did very well.

**MS:** That was one they managed to do better.

**MY:** Uhuh. [pause 2 seconds] Katharine Hepburn, I loved her.

**VB:** What was it about her that...?

**MY:** Och, well. She again, the independent spirit and the... She was really rather good looking, I thought. And it was good fun.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** One of her films was on recently. What was it now? *Bringing up Baby*.

**MS:** Baby, uhuh.

**MY:** I quite enjoyed it again.

**MS:** She did some marvellous ones with Spencer Tracy. They were a good...

**MY:** Team.

**MS:** Team, uhuh.

[pause 2 seconds]

**MY:** But, eh, any more questions? [laughs]

**VB: Em. [pause 2 seconds] Well the other thing I was wanting to ask a wee bit about was the comedies, 'cause you mentioned folk like Chaplin and *Our Gang* and things like that. I mean, was comedy something that you particularly liked?**

**MS:** Oh, I think we just took them in our stride, sort of style. It was a picture.

**MY:** I don't think I fully appreciated Laurel and Hardy till I got older.

**MS:** No, no.

**MY:** I appreciate them now.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** Looking back at some of the things that you see of them now. Oh, we liked the comedies.

**MS:** They were really, really clever. And Charlie Chaplin was clever. But I didn't particularly think. I thought he maybe was a wee bit silly when I was younger but now I can see he was really very clever in his pictures.

**MY:** And I think a person that I didn't appreciate at the time was Buster Keaton.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** Which, if you see him now, you can really appreciate what he, his cleverness.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** I think he was even better than Charlie Chaplin.

**MS:** Yeah, uhuh.

**MY:** I think I would get tired of the little man that he kept playing. But eh, I'm trying to think of the comedies. [pause 2 seconds] I mean, the comedies were partly, stories as well, they weren't just comedies. Like the *Andy Hardy* series, there was comedy in it.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** All the musicals had comedy in it.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** Bob Hope. I enjoyed some of his films.

**MS:** Films, yes, uhuh.

**MY:** At one time we liked the 'Road' pictures very much.

**MS:** Oh, that was a must.

**MY:** Though now we look at them and we think, och they're a bit daft, but eh, at the time we thought they were great. [pause 3 seconds] And there was the Marx Brothers, of course. And eh, the Ritz Brothers.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** I don't know if I particularly cared for these two. What were they called? They used to have their repartee, the wee fat one man and the--

**MS:** Em, Bud Abbott and Costello.

**MY:** Abbott and Costello. Uhuh. I didn't think they were very funny.

**MS:** No, they weren't. No. They weren't quite the same.



[pause 2 seconds]

**MY:** I can't just remember all the comedies. We did, oh we liked comedies all right, without a doubt. *Our Gang* was away back, I can't really remember the stories about the *Our Gang*. That was just when, at the very start when--

**MS:** No. I can only remember the wee fat one.

**MY:** And the 'Alfalfa' Switzer.

**MS:** And the 'Alfalfa'. You know, the hair sticking up.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** But eh... [pause 2 seconds] They were just after the silent, weren't they?

**MY:** Yes, uhuh. They were at the very beginning.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** But I only vaguely remember them.

**VB:** **It's interesting when you're saying that. Do you think your tastes have changed at all, when you say you look back at some folk?**

**MY:** Oh, yes. Some of the things were really pretty empty.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** But eh, we didn't know any better. But others I think have, have lasted the pace.

**MS:** Oh, yes, yes.

**MY:** They weren't as realistic as they are nowadays of course. As I said, I think the last time, if anybody was expecting a baby, you never saw that. I mean, they were still as slim as they were at the beginning.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** And they had people who were living in tenements with beautiful nails. I mean they had beautifully manicured nails.

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** And eh, they put out a washing. They hadn't a clue how to put a washing out. You know, it wasn't real.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** But we didn't know they were doing it. But now we look back and say, "Tch, she's supposed to be having a baby the next day and she's just as slim as she was before".

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** You didn't see these sort of things. I mean there was no bulge as there are nowadays.

**MS:** And also the motor car scenes. I mean they were, it was just, it was the scenery that was passing by.

**MY:** [laughs]

**MS:** I mean, we never saw that, then. Now...

**MY:** Plus that, you don't see the birth any more.

**MS:** No.

**MY:** They're upstairs, and you can hear noises, and somebody's running for the kettle and running for the, the petticoat to use for something or another.

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** But now you actually see the, which just drives me nuts! I've got, I think somebody's got a thing about seeing a woman giving birth to a baby.

**MS:** Oh, I know.

**MY:** But you didn't see that in those days. They just, you know, you could see the sweat coming off the face occasionally but everybody was rushing for the boiling water. You never knew what they were going to do with it. But they had to get scissors, boiling water and a petticoat.

**MS:** A sheet of some sort. [laughs]

**VB: [laughs]**

**MY:** [laughs] And then the baby was there, looking absolutely beautiful.

**MS:** Yes.

**VB: I remember that, when you mentioned *Gone with the Wind*, Scarlett O'Hara upset because she's got an inch extra on her waist or something like that. [laughs]**

**MY:** Oh, yes, yes.

**MS:** I think you're about to have visitors.

**MY:** Oh, yes. Eh, do you think you could put that off just now, please?

**VB: Yes, sure.**

[tape switched off]

[tape restarted]

**MY:** It's a good thing you noticed.

**MS:** I just saw the, the hat, you know, the shape of the hat and I thought, that's Cameron.

**MY:** Yeah. [sound of mike being positioned] What were we talking about?

**MS:** Campbeltown?

**VB: Em.**

**MY:** Is that the Campbeltown ones?

**MS:** Yes.

**VB: Just about the way the movie showed things like, having babies and--**

**MY:** They weren't realistic--

**MS:** Oh, yes, yes.

**MY:** They weren't realistic at all, no, no. Not as they are nowadays.

**MS:** No, no. I watched a wee bit of eh'm, Robert Mitchum. Was it 'The Return of the', *The Night of the Hunter*?

**VB:** Ah, I saw that was on, yes.

**MS:** And eh, the two children that were in it were sitting on the ground and away in the distance, you saw, he was the minister, the bad minister, going along on a horse. And Robert Mitchum was saying. It was all done on a stage. And it was a midget on top of pony [laughs] that was going along a stage, and it was supposed to done outside!

**MY:** Yes. Oh, they can...

**MS:** And he was, he was sort of giving that away, you know.

**MY:** The background, yes, uhuh.

**MS:** The background gave it away.

**VB:** That's right. 'Cause you don't think about that when you're watching a film.

**MY:** No, no.

**MS:** No, I mean, it looked so realistic. The minister just going along. And he said, he was just walking along a stage, and it wasn't him at all, it was a midget on a pony. [laughs]

**MY:** [laughs]

**MS:** Not a man on a horse.

[pause 2 seconds]

**MY:** Aw, they had some clever tricks up their sleeves that we didn't know about. Certainly, we saw the background moving and they're sitting in cars, and of course they're supposed to be driving along and chatting away to one another. All you see is the scenery passing.

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** It was pretty crude at times. But eh, [pause 2 seconds] then again, at that time we didn't notice.

**MS:** No, no. See it all now.

**MY:** We see it now.

**VB:** The other thing I was wanting to ask you about was, eh, if you went to the pictures more at certain times of year. For instance, in the summer were you out more?

**MY:** Well we still went to the films but we certainly were outdoors quite a lot. We spent a lot of time out on the tennis courts and, eh. No, no we didn't go. I think we went almost as often, but not quite, maybe an extra time in winter time.

**MS:** Probably, probably if we wanted to go, we'd probably get a row because we should have been out in the fresh air, you know.

**MY:** But if it was a film we wanted to see, we would go.

**MS:** Oh, we'd go and see it, uhuh.

**MY:** Because there were so many to, there were four in our local area. And sometimes, if it wasn't a really big picture, it was on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, then it changed Thursday, Friday, Saturdays. So you had this tremendous choice.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**VB:** But I'm sure we would go.

**MS:** Oh, yes, uhuh.

**MY:** Regardless of what the weather was like.

**MS:** Well according to our diaries, it doesn't seem to matter. [laughs]

**MY:** No, no.

**MS:** The number that we have recorded.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** That, eh, there wasn't a special time. [pause 2 seconds] 'Cause we really didn't go very much to the theatre.

**MY:** No, no. Not until we were older. We were way into our teens.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** Before we went to the theatre. See we didn't go into town when we were younger, by ourselves. [pause 2 seconds] I mean we only went with our mothers.

**MS:** That's right.

**MY:** I don't remember going in as a young person.

**MS:** Oh, I can only remember really, once going to The Picture House with Aunt Jean and mum. That's the only time in the town that I can remember going with parents.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**VB:** I mean, you mentioned your aunt before. Did she go to the pictures a lot?

**MY:** No, I wouldn't say Aunt Jean went to the pictures a lot.

**MS:** No, no.

**VB:** I just wondered, 'cause when you mentioned about, was it her that gave you the book?

**MY:** Yes, uhuh.

**MS:** No. It just so happened that she stayed with us for 22 years.

**VB:** Ah, I see.

**MY:** Uhuh. And the folks didn't go to the pictures all that often.

**MS:** No, no.

**MY:** Occasionally, if we were skint, we might ask them to take us.

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** But, aren't we all? [laughs]

**MS:** That's right. No, they didn't go very often.

**VB:** Was that quite typical? I mean, was it mainly young people that went?

**MS:** Oh, no.

**MY:** Oh, no.

**MS:** No, I don't think so. No there were other people that...

**MY:** It might be the fact that they didn't have a lot of money.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** It could quite possibly be the fact that...

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** Maybe that's how we spent our pocket money, but, eh, I wouldn't say there was an awful lot of money in our house.

**MS:** No. Well that's how, I could fairly make my Saturday sixpence go to two different pictures in the one day. [laughs] I don't know, what's sixpence nowadays? Would it only be five pence?

**MY:** Probably. A wee bit more. Five pence, uhuh. But it was quite a bit of money in those days, I suppose.

**MS:** Yes. 'Cause if got you sweets as well as a seat in the cinema, you know.

**MY:** Uhuh. We were very lucky.

**MS:** Tuppence for a seat and a penny for your sweets.

**MY:** Yeah. But we were very lucky in as much as my father had a job. It wasn't all that much of a job but he had a job. We were never without food and heating.

**MS:** And we always managed a holiday.

**MY:** Uhuh. I remember that was a month. Eh, down the Argyle, is it Argyle? Yeah, it's Dinnies, Argyle, isn't it?

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** Sandbank. Outside Dunoon we went there for--

**MS:** And it was always a month.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** We were very fortunate that way.

**VB:** Did you go to the pictures when you were on holiday as well?

**MY:** Not as often.

**MS:** Not as often.

**MY:** Because it was quite a distance from Sandbank.

**MS:** It was three miles, two miles away.

**MY:** No, that would be a special occasion. No, we wouldn't go. I remember going to the pictures but eh, not. Maybe once a week.

**MS:** But there was only one picture house.

**MY:** As far as I know, in Dunoon. No, that wasn't a must. We were too busy with our pals down there.

**MS:** Yeah.

**MY:** Swimming and...

**MS:** We'd too much, too many other attractions.

**VB:** Right.

**MY:** It was just being with the people who were there. I don't know what we did with ourselves.

**MS:** That's right. We formed friendships.

**MY:** We went walks, didn't we, with the folks?

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** I remember going walks with them.

**MS:** That's right.



**MY:** Which was very boring but we just went.

**MS:** Very boring, and very midgie too. I was very prone to midgie bites. It was awful down there in summertime.

**MY:** And I suppose we'd be in bed reasonably early too.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** No, we didn't go to the pictures during that month. We went once or twice, that would be all.

**MS:** As I say, the main, the cinema was three miles away.

**MY:** And you'd have the bus fares.

**MS:** That's right.

**MY:** Aw, it would be too much.

**VB: Was that, what sort of picture house was that one?**

**MS:** Very, very small. It wasn't very big at all. I mean, it's still there.

**MY:** But not as a picture house.

**MS:** Yeah, it's still there as a picture house. I'm sure it is.

**MY:** I don't think so.

**MS:** Is it not?

**MY:** No, I was there quite recently and I don't think it's a picture house, no.

**MS:** That was when I was, we were with [Donald?]

**MY:** No, that was when I was with eh, Jack and Isabel.

**MS:** Oh.

**MY:** Which is only last year some time. I don't think it's still a picture house.

**MS:** Is it not? I thought it was.

**MY:** Anyway. I'm not absolutely sure but I don't think so.

**VB:** I couldn't have imagined there being a sort of huge, grand Odeon or anything.

**MS:** No, oh no. It wasn't a big cinema. It was very, very small. Very narrow. In fact I don't even think it had a balcony.

**MY:** I couldn't tell you.

**MS:** I think it was just the one.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** Just downstairs.

**MY:** No, going to Dunoon was quite a treat for us in those days.

**MS:** Yes. Well what I remember more about it is a Saturday afternoon we'd be taken into Ross's Dairy, and having afternoon tea, and then getting popcorn on the way out because Ross's this particular restaurant cum shop sold popcorn.

**MY:** It was gorgeous.

**MS:** That was the highlight of our Saturdays.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**VB:** It sounds lovely. I mean, for a month's time there it must've been great.

**MY:** [laughs] Yes.

**MS:** Well, it was a very rainy place. That was the only trouble. I mean there wasn't a tremendous amount of sunshine. It was quite a rainy area.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** But that didn't worry us, of course, you know, because we had mackintoshes and sou'wester hats and wellington boots. I mean it never kept us in. We were always out. Or playing in the wee porch. Remember the wee porch?

**MY:** Yeah, uhuh. We used to go round the shops getting eh, samples of their boxes of sweets. Made up our own shops.

**MS:** Shops, uhuh. [laughs]

**MY:** Happy Days!

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** I wonder what I was worrying about in those days.

**MS:** I don't know. [laughs]

**MY:** Used to always be worried about something. Anyway.

**VB:** **Actually you reminded me there of something else I meant to ask was if you ever played at things that involved the pictures? Played at dolls...**

**MY:** Like dressing up?

**VB:** **Dressing up, or...**

**MS:** You didn't but I did.

**MY:** No, I can't remember me doing it, no.

**MS:** No, I did. And eh, there was a particular eh, case that used to be my platform and I can remember having a pair of high heels on and the heel went right through. It was sort of a cardboard type of case and I didn't know how I was going to explain I'd put my heel right through it. No, I dressed up and I played. I mean I was Joan Crawford and different people like that.

**VB:** **Really?**

**MS:** Yes. And I hated it if you wanted to come into bed because I didn't want anybody to see me.

**MY:** [laughs]

**MS:** You know my imagination ran absolutely riot. And I'd all these clothes and hats and different things.

**MY:** No. I don't remember anything like that at all.

**MS:** No, I did that.

**VB:** I mean I remember doing something similar when I was a child. I remember playing at em, I don't know, something that was on the TV, you know, *Anne of Green Gables* or something and I can remember me and my friends who were pretending, doing this lots of times.

**MY:** [laughs]

**MS:** Oh, I never, I never did it with anybody. I was just myself.

[pause 4 seconds]

**MY:** "What on earth are you doing in that bedroom?"

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** [laughs] "Nothing!"

**MS:** [laughs]

**VB:** I mean, it makes sense, when you're going to so many movies.

**MY:** Yes, uhuh.

**MS:** Yes... you get caught up in it.

**VB:** Did you think, did you want to be like these sort of stars when you were older?

**MS:** Oh, yes. I think so. Yeah, 'cause, you know, if they were closing the shops that were a copy of it, you wanted it. [pause 2 seconds] Yes, you thought about it all the time.

**MY:** Yeah. We bought our magazines and pored over the American magazines.

**MS:** Oh, yes, definitely.

**MY:** Cut them out. Pasted them into books.

**MS:** Books. [laughs]

**MY:** It's a wonder we didn't keep them.

**MS:** Yeah.

**MY:** Maybe Mummy threw them out when I wasn't looking.

**MS:** [laughs]

**VB:** I mean were there, these sort of fashions, were they quite widely available? Sort of copies of stars clothes.

**MS:** Oh, I think so. I think that's where designers got their ideas from.

**MY:** Yeah.

**MS:** I mean, copied from America.

**MY:** Mind you, when we started to get interested in clothes the war came and we didn't have the materials and...

**MS:** No, no. Mind, you had coupons.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** So you couldn't really have that an extensive wardrobe because of the coupons. [pause 2 seconds] We were lucky in as much the aunt we were speaking about, I mean, she was very good at dressmaking. She made things for us. Knitted and things like that. We were quite lucky that way.

**MY:** And I got your hand me downs of course.

**MS:** Yes, yes.

**MY:** That stuck in my teeth quite a bit. Having looked at it for years and then I had to wear it.

**MS:** Wear it. [laughs]

**MY:** I always have a sympathy for the second child.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** Or even the third child.

**VB:** I remember you talking about knitting that em...

**MS:** Yes, I did. The Jane Wyman. Jane Wyman's cardigan.

**VB: What was that actually like?**

**MS:** It eh'm, it had a band, round here and it had eh, buttons and the collar.

**VB: Ah.**

**MS:** What else? And then the sleeves came down to the same kind of double knit band.

**VB: Right.**

**MS:** There was a double knit band down here and the cuffs ended up in a double knit band as well.

**VB: What colour was it?**

**MS:** Eh, it was grey, grey wool that I got for it. And it had wee imitation pockets here with a button in the middle of it. So you had buttons down there, buttons here.

**VB: It sounds very smart actually with the...**

**MS:** It was quite. Because most cardigans just came down in a V but this actually was up to here [pointing] with the collar outside.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**VB: It sounds quite complicated as well.**

**MS:** Well it couldn't have been all that complicated because I managed to copy it. [laughs].

**MY:** [laughs]

**MS:** But eh.

**MY:** I don't remember it at all.

**MS:** No. Oh, I can remember that. It was the only one I ever did.

**VB: Did you have anything to go with that? Was it part of an outfit or...?**

**MS:** No, it was just, it was just a cardigan and fitted... being grey it went over any colour of skirt, you know.

**VB: I don't suppose you remember what film it was that she wore that in.**

**MS:** No, no.

**MY:** It wouldn't be *Johnny Belinda*, was it?

**MS:** No, it wasn't *Johnny Belinda*. No I don't think so. No I can't just remember.

**MY:** I can't remember, I mean she was in a lot of films. But I can't remember another one other than *Johnny Belinda*.

**MS:** That she was in?

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** Well she was in some of the dancing ones, was she not?

**MY:** I don't remember her particularly. I mean, I remember her being around but I don't remember any names of films that she was in.

**MS:** Nothing springs to mind. I just remember that that cardigan just seemed to stick in my mind, you know, and I thought it was so nice.

**VB: And was she one of your favourite stars?**

**MS:** Yes I liked her. We liked her because we have a friend who, we always called her Jane Wyman. She had the fringe and down, Annie was very, very like. I mean there wasn't only us. Other people said, oh you look like Jane Wyman.

[pause 5 seconds]

**VB: It's amazing when you listen to you talking about all stars. There's so many great stars [laughs] about.**

**MY:** [laughs]

**MS:** [laughs]

**VB: It's hard to know where to stop.**

**MY:** I know. [laughs]

**VB: I mean, during the war, I mean, did you go to the pictures so much?**

**MY:** Oh, yes. That was part of the, the, the government wanted us to be cheerful, so they allowed in the American films and we saw the musicals and eh, the technicolour came in then, and...

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** Oh, you went to the pictures a lot when, didn't you, during wartime. It was, it was one thing they allowed into the country.

**MS:** The country, uhuh.

**MY:** This was to keep the morale up. But it was encouraged.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** But eh, we were always at the pictures. If we weren't at the pictures, we were at the dancehalls. And that was very popular.

**MS:** And the Americans were.

**MY:** And the Canadians.

**MS:** And the canteens. We worked in the canteens.

**MY:** Uhuh. [pause 2 seconds] When you think about it, you know, the fact that we met all these rather handsome men and whatnot, that we didn't fall by the wayside. [laughs]

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** I presume it was just innocence on our part.

**MS:** Yeah.

**MY:** We just didn't know any better. They probably wouldn't bother us too much if they knew they weren't going to get anywhere with us.

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** Which must have made us rather dull.

**MS:** Dull, yes.

**VB:** I'm sure that's not true.



**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** Nonetheless, we got away with it. [laughs] We weren't with it.

**MS:** No.

**MY:** There must have been a lot of temptations.

**MS:** We were not Jean Harlows. [laughs]

**MY:** No, no. But I would imagine most of them wouldn't care whether we were or not. Any port in a storm.

**VB: Did you get to meet any of the Americans?**

**MY:** Not the Americans, no. No, I didn't meet Americans. I met a lot of Canadians. But eh, I thought they had a lovely accent. So different from the local lads that it was quite glamorous to meet a Canadian.

[pause 4 seconds]

**MY:** But then again, different, different ideas. [pause 3 seconds] Aw, the place, Glasgow was the, the dance capital and the...

**MS:** Oh, yes.

**MY:** And the film capital of the world at that time, I think. I mean, I don't understand how the island didn't sink under the mass of people that were here.

**MS:** People that were there.

**MY:** I mean practically every country in the world was in our country. Soldiers, sailors, airmen, dear knows not. Oh, there must've been...

**MS:** Prisoners of war, too.

**MY:** Uhuh. [pause 3 seconds]. It's amazing how we survived. [pause 3 seconds]. That was what I was worried about in those days was the Germans.

**MS:** The Germans, yes. [laughs]

**MY:** I was worried about that. I used to lie awake and listen for the bells going, that meant they had invaded. The church bells were a sign that they were going to invade. I could hear them practically every night.

**MS:** [laughs] In your imagination.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**VB:** Yes, it's very hard to imagine if you haven't lived through that.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh. And the sirens going off.

**MY:** Mind you the propaganda. I don't know whether it would've been, I mean it would have been bad if a Nazi had come in but eh, we were really, they were the phew! - the horror of horrors, the Germans. And then of course the war's finished and all of a sudden they're our friends.

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** And it's the same with the Japanese.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** As soon as the war was over we had to start training with them.

**MS:** That's right.

**MY:** Talk about propaganda. [pause 2 seconds] You never knew who were going to be your allies next. I mean the Russians were our allies and--

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** And then all of a sudden it was over and they were our enemies. All these politics. We never seemed to go against the Italians. I don't think they took the war very seriously as far as I know. They would rather go home and grow their onions.

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** Or their tomatoes, or whatever it was they grew. They weren't quite so--

**MS:** No, frightening.

**MY:** Horrible as the Germans.

**MS:** No, no, they weren't. [pause 2 seconds] I don't suppose the German soldiers. It was really the, em, Gestapo and people like that who you were so afraid of.

**MY:** Anyway, that's getting off the films.

**VB: Yes.**

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** [laughs]

**VB: I was just thinking that, when you were saying that, about the films of the time again. Were they quite different from the thirties films?**

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** Well, I would say so. They were eh, they were propaganda films most of them, I would say.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** And we always won.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** And eh, they were escapism. There was the musicals, there was the propaganda ones, the soldier ones, *In Which We Serve*, Noel Coward.

**MS:** That was when eh, Britain, they were better.

**MY:** Yes.

**MS:** They were really very good. And I mean, the 'Dam buster' one [referring to *The Dam Busters*] with the...

**MY:** Yeah.

**MS:** Bomb going along the water, I mean, they were really very good at that.

**MY:** Guy Gibson. He was my hero in the war.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** And eh, there were some very good films. *In Which We Serve*.

**MS:** Uhuh, yeah.

**MY:** But we were subject to a lot of propaganda, keeping up our spirits with the musicals, the comedies.

**MS:** Mhm.

**MY:** I suppose there would be some eh, cowboys and Indians as well.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** Aw, there must've been 'cause, Ray Mil, eh, not Ray Milland. Errol Flynn was in *Dodge City*, I think, in the 1940s. Betty Grable was the big pin-up girl.

**MS:** That's right.

**MY:** Alice Faye, John Payne, Jack Oakie.

**VB:** **Actually, I think that's the one thing we haven't talked about is westerns.**

**MY:** Uhuh.

**VB:** **Em, did you like the Westerns?**

**MS:** Oh, yes. [laughs]

**MY:** Oh, yes, we liked the westerns. [laughs]

**VB:** **Need I ask! [amused voice]**

**MY:** *Stagecoach*. When did it come out? That was my, I think that's my all-time favourite, with Wayne.

**VB:** **Oh, yes. John Wayne.**

**MY:** Yes. Wait, I'll see where that is. [looks through book]. Oh, we liked the westerns all right. Eh, what did I call it?

**VB: *Stagecoach*.**

**MS: *Stagecoach*.**

**MY:** [flicks through pages]. Oh, I don't know when it came out but. 'Course it wouldn't come to us for a year after...

[tape cuts out]

[End of Side B]

[End of Tape One]

[Start of Tape Two]

[Start of Side A]

**VB: That was on quite recently, wasn't it?**

**MY:** It was, yes, uhuh.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** It was on a week ago on Saturday, I think it was. [flicks through pages of book] Wonder why it's not here. *Stagecoach*. Eh, 1939. Yes. We would get it in the 1940s. Yes.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** I thought he was terrific in that. He became a, sort of, caricature after that I always felt. But he was very good in that one.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** See it's eh, borrowed from, eh Guy de Maupassant's 'Boule de Suif'?

**VB: Right.**

**MY:** Which is really quite. I didn't know that. I've got that book somewhere. [reading from book] "A minor western with a plot borrowed from Maupassant's 'Boule de Suif' became a classic." Yeah. It was really good.

**MS:** When did eh em, 'Hopalong Cassidy' films, talking about cowboys?

**MY:** Well, what would they be called though? They wouldn't be called 'Hopalong Cassidy'. He was just the character in it. I just vaguely, they were in the 1930s were they not?

**MS:** That's why I was bringing it up.

**MY:** Uhuh. But I wouldn't know what they were called. Certainly wouldn't be called 'Hopalong Cassidy' 'cos that was his character.

**MS:** No, that's right. But was it not 'Hopalong Goes to Town' or something like that? [laughs]

**MY:** [laughs] 'Hopalong Goes to Miami'. [laughs] [Looks through book]. *Hop-along Cassidy!* Would you believe that?

**MS:** [laughs] You see, I'm right!

**MY:** Yes. Look at the number of, look at all these. Even up to 1948! Starting in 1935. *Hop-along Cassidy, The Eagle's Brood, Bar 20 Rides Again.*

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** *Call of the Prairie.* Look at them all. Hopalong Cassidy.

**VB:** **That's amazing.**

**MY:** Uhuh. Right through the forties as well. I thought they would stop maybe. But right onto *Sinister Journey.* I mean, if we saw them now, we'd laugh.

**MS:** Oh, yes, yes.

**MY:** I think we'd laugh.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** They'd be so wooden.

**MS:** Well the horse would probably be wooden. [laughs]

**MY:** And then Gabby Hayes or Andy Clyde as comic sidekicks.

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

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** William Boyd. I suppose we did like them to a certain extent but--

**MS:** Oh, yes! 'Cause we liked eh, Gabby. He was always funny. He was always the cook.

**MY:** Uhuh. With the hat with the brim up at the front.

**MS:** He was funny. Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** And no teeth in, I don't think.

**MS:** That's right.

**MY:** Uhuh. [laughs] A folk hero. Yes, I'm surprised [pause 2 seconds] to find him in the book.

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** Yes. There were some... quite a few classics which I can't remember. The only one I can think of is *Stagecoach*. [pause 2 seconds] *Dodge City*. Well that wasn't a cowboy really. That was, no that was, maybe the, the union against the Confederates or something.

**MS:** Yes. My father always liked the cowboys.

**MY:** Uhuh. Oh, even now Jack likes to watch the cowboys.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh. Because he rode during the First World War, so that was why he was--

**MY:** In the cavalry.

**MS:** Interested in. Uhuh. In the cowboys.

**MY:** 'Saturday Trail'. [possibly referring to *The Big Trail*]

**MS:** Yes. That's right. That's one.

**MY:** But in those days the Indian was always the baddie. It's only now that we're getting the other side of the story.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** Again propaganda. When are we not subject to propaganda, I'd like to know.

**MS:** [laughs]

**VB:** I was going to ask though when you say that, you know, that your husband likes these sort of films and your father liked these sort of films,

**MS:** Uhuh.

**VB:** Were there types of film, d'you think, that men were attracted to, more than women?

**MY:** Oh, yes, uhuh.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** Action. The gangster films and eh, action films. Maybe, sea dramas possibly.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** Oh, I'd say there was quite a difference, uhuh. I don't know if they would go for the Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers. I mean they appreciated the films but I don't think they would dash to see it as we did.

**MS:** No.

**MY:** And of course, then Gene Kelly came along and his style of dancing was totally different, but equally as good as Fred Astaire.

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

**MY:** I liked his films. [pause 2 seconds]. But that wasn't the 1930s.

**MS:** No.

**MY:** That would be later.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**VB:** Yeah.

[pause 2 seconds]

**MY:** Ah, there was a certain charm, I think, we saw in the Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers films. Which now, when we see the stories, are pretty trite but in those days we loved them.

**MS:** [laughs.



**MY:** Otherworldliness.

**MS:** That's right, uhuh.

**MY:** But eh. [pause 2 seconds]. No the different studios had different types of film. MGM did different films from Warner Brothers.

**MS:** That's right.

**MY:** Who were different from Columbia, from RKO.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** And they all had their, so many actors and actresses and they always made a similar type of film. Warner Brothers were the gangsters.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** MGM were the musicals.

**MS:** MGM were the musicals.

**VB: Right.**

**MY:** Some of the classics. I mean, *Pride and Prejudice*. Would that be, forties, I think it would be. One of my favourite films. [flicks through pages in books] Have you got this book in your...?

**VB: I have, yes.**

**MY:** Very, very handy.

**VB: Yes.**

**MY:** [flicks through pages] *Pride and Prejudice*. [flicks through pages]. [Pink Floyd?] Of course in the thirties, Shirley Temple was the big money maker. I think she saved some studio from going bust--

**MS:** She did.

**MY:** Because of that. 1940, *Pride and Prejudice*. So we wouldn't see it till about eh, 41. [pause 2 seconds]. Oh, I loved the Shirley Temple. It was a must. You had to see the Shirley Temple films.

**VB: What was it about her that?**

**MY:** Och, well, she was again a spunky, it was always the same.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** She was the orphan. But she always finished up, everything fine. Though nowadays they're hinting that a lot of it would be of interest to the paedophiles. They're actually making it out, and one film I saw recently and I thought, that's a bit odd. Which I would never have noticed.

**MS:** Uhuh, yes, if they had--

**MY:** What they did with her. And I thought, that is slightly, not right.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** I mean it was quite strange to see this. Her father took her along to this river and she just had a wee pair of pants on and he kept dipping her in and out of the water. It was as if the, it made her pants cling to her body somehow and I thought, oh, that could be a wee bit off.

**VB: Mmm.**

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** So who knows? What they were doing behind our backs that we didn't realise in those days?

**MS:** Uhuh. And yet her mother was always there.

**MY:** She was always there, yes. But maybe she didn't realise either, what they were doing.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** I mean, I'd never heard of paedophiles till...

**MS:** No.

**MY:** Just recently. Well, in the last maybe twenty years or so.

**VB: Mm.**

**MY:** But eh, a lot of things have come out from under the woodwork, or under the stones, that we didn't know about.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** But she was very, she was a pretty wee thing.

**MS:** Aw yes, yes.

**MY:** And she was talented and, lovely clothes, and. It was always the same thing. No matter what happened, she always survived.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** And everybody was happy at the end. She was a good wee dancer. Quite a nice wee singer.

**VB: Was there not a sort of, a British equivalent to Shirley Temple?**

**MS:** Aw they tried.

**MY:** Binkie. Binkie Stewart. No, nothing.

**MS:** No.

**MY:** Nowhere near it.

**MS:** No, no.

**MY:** I mean somehow or another, Shirley Temple's curls did not look artificial, but Binkie's did.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** She wasn't the same. It was too, there was something real about Shirley Temple that didn't come over with Binkie.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** She was sort of manufactured, I would say.

**MS:** Och, yes. Definitely. They tried to make her like a carbon copy but it wasn't successful.

**MY:** Uhuh. And then there was that girl Withers. What was her name?

**MS:** Googie.

**MY:** Goog, no not Googie. Jane. Jane Withers.

**MS:** Jane, sorry.

**MY:** And she was always the baddie, but she was awfully good at it.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh.

**MY:** You know, if Shirley Temple was in her company, she was the one that was, getting her into trouble and pretending it wasn't her.

**MS:** Yeah.

**MY:** She was really quite wicked. But she was good, Jane Withers. She wasn't a very bonnie looking girl, but she was good.

**MS:** No.

[pause 3 seconds]

**MY:** I can't remember what other. I mean there was Jackie Cooper. Is that right, Jackie Cooper?

**MS:** That's a Cooper, uhuh.

**MY:** And eh, he was very good as the, it wasn't Jackie Cooper, was it?

**MS:** No Jackie Cooper was older.

**MY:** The one that was in eh, *Treasure Island*. Was that his name?

**MS:** Uhuh, yes, Jackie Cooper. That's right, uhuh.

**MY:** Suddenly it didn't sound right.

**MS:** No, you're thinking of Coogan.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** It's Cooper. Also shows you the education that eh, Shirley Temple got. I mean, she must've had brains as well, to get to be an ambassadress.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**MS:** I mean she's really had something there. It says quite a lot for the studio school, schooling.

[pause 5 seconds]

**MY:** Anything else you want to know?

**VB:** Em, I can't think of anything just now actually. I think we've probably covered the lot. I mean I've certainly asked what I wanted to ask. Erm.

**MY:** Will there be time for me to make a wee cup of tea then?

**VB:** That would be lovely, yes.

**MY:** Right, OK. If you think of anything else you can put it on again.

[sound of people moving about]

**MY:** Ginger Rogers, Fred Astaire, *Top Hat* and you'll find out the dates maybe.

**MS:** Uhuh, yeah.

**VB:** Right enough. She did look very young in it. She was a very... she wasn't quite as slim as she was in later films.

**MY:** No.

**VB:** She must have been more, you know, teenager like--

**MY:** Yeah. I know what you mean. The sort of puppy fat.

**VB:** Right.

[sound of cups being set out]

**VB:** But she was very good in it. I mean she... certainly stood out.

**MY:** Yes.

**VB:** In the movie, even although it was just a small part.

**MY:** And when you look at all the lovely beauties that seem to pass the screen, you wouldn't recognise too many of them.

**VB:** No.

**MY:** As having gone far after that.

[pause 4 seconds]

**VB:** The dance routines in it were just amazing. I really enjoyed that.

**MS:** You enjoyed that, uhuh.

[pause 5 seconds]

**MY:** Come across it yet?

[MS looking through book]

**MS:** Yeah. [pause 5 seconds] Eh, *Top Hat* was 1935 and the other one was 1933.

**MY:** Is that so?

**MS:** *42nd Street*.

**MY:** Ah well. Uhuh. Was that the first one she was in with eh... Look up *Damsel in Distress*. That was when he did, eh, he was with eh, Joan Fontaine in that one. See if that's before *Top Hat*. You know, maybe round about 1934 or something.

**MS:** *Damsel in Distress*. 1937.

**VB:** Ah.

**MY:** Oh! I'm suprised.

**MS:** So the Ginger Rogers one was eh--

**MY:** Uhuh. *Follow the Fleet*.

**MS:** Yeah.

**MY:** I think that was after *Top Hat*. [pause 2 seconds] My mother liked it. Jack watched that.

**MS:** 1936. Is that so?

**MY:** Uhuh. He must've wanted a change or something. Jack! Teatime.

[door closes]

**VB: What was *Follow the Fleet* like?**

**MS:** Aw, it was good.

**MS:** It was good.

**MY:** I enjoyed that one.

**MS:** You've got songs like 'I'm putting all my eggs in one basket', 'We saw the sea', 'Let's face the music and dance', 'Let yourself go.'

**MY:** He was in the navy, Fred Astaire, and came home. And she was his partner before and they'd fallen out. And they'd go into this dance contest which they win but she shouldn't have won because she was a member of the staff. And she was kicked out and then... one of the girls, her sister I think it was, she wanted to build a boat or redo a boat. What was the name of the fellow who was the... that sort of wooden faced fellow? Who's the other?

**MS:** Ginger Rogers, Randolph Scott.

**MY:** Randolph Scott! Yes, that was the boyfriend. Have you never seen it?

**VB: I haven't, no. It sounds good.**

**MY:** It's good.

**MS:** Lucille Ball was in it as well.

**MY:** Yes, she had a great one liner.

**MS:** And Tony Martin.

**MY:** It was one of her first, eh. Lucille Ball was very good.

**MS:** Tony Martin.

**MY:** Eh, that was one of her first parts. She was the wisecracking dame. [pause 2 seconds] Do you like your milk in first?

**VB: Eh, actually I'll just take it without milk.**

**MY:** Without milk. Oh, that's OK. Molly, you take milk and no sugar.

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

**MY:** Am I the only bad one?

**VB:** [laughs]

**MY:** Taking everything that's going.

**MS:** That's fine.

**MY:** Jack takes sugar but no, that's it. [sound of tea being poured out]

**MS:** You'd really start and see how many films you've seen out of this book, Margaret.

**VB:** [laughs]

**MY:** [laughs in distance]

[pause 5 seconds]

**VB:** I find I'm like that once you start looking in it, you look at one and you see something else.

**MS:** Yes, uhuh. [laughs]

[JY comes in]

**JY:** Hullo, how're you doing?

**VB:** Hello. Fine. Yourself?

**JY:** Very well, thank you.

**VB:** Nice to see you.

[pause 2 seconds]

**JY:** Are you hearing all the information you want?

**VB:** Very much so, yes.

**JY:** Good, good.



[pause 3 seconds]

**MY:** I'm going to look through my books once more and all my stuff and then I'm going to give it to the university. 'Cos I don't want it thrown in the bin by Carol when we're no longer here!

**JY:** [laughs]

**MS:** [laughs] Cheery thought.

**VB:** **No, it is very good of you. I mean, it is much appreciated.**

**MY:** Well I don't want to think of them going to waste.

**VB:** [given cup of tea]. **Thanks very much.**

**MY:** There you are.

**VB:** **Oh, that's lovely.**

**JY:** Did you remember how to get here all right?

**VB:** **I did, yes. I had a problem with the bus. Em, there wasn't a bus when there should have been so...**

**MY:** There you are.

**JY:** Thank you.

**MY:** That's yours just at the corner there.

**JY:** Yes, I must admit I'm pretty lost myself if I'm left to get a bus. I don't know what the numbers are.

**VB:** **The town was very busy as well.**

**JY:** Was it?

**VB:** **I was quite surprised.**

**JY:** It's all the school holidays round about here.

**MY:** That's it. That's what it is. It's the children.

**VB: Of course.**

**JY:** That may be the cause of it.

**MY:** There you are. Help yourself.

**MS:** Thank you.

**MY:** Now. Whose is that? That's Jack's, isn't it? Yes.

**JY:** And what stage are you at now? Are you sort of in the middle, or nearing the end or, just starting? [laughs]

**VB: Nearer the start from the beginning.**

**JY:** Uhuh.

**VB: Em. We started up actually the 1st of November.**

**MS:** Uhuh.

**VB: So, it's running until November '96.**

**JY:** Mm.

**VB: So it's pretty much the early stages still.**

**MS:** Uhuh.

**VB: Though I feel it's later than it is, I think, because it's been so interesting.**

**MY:** [laughs] Good. What made you start? I mean did you just see it advertised in the university, or...?

**VB: I did, yes. But I've always been very interested in thirties films and it seemed like the ideal thing to do really.**

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** Good.

**VB: And I have been working in oral history, so, the two sort of...**

**JY:** Uhuh.

**VB:** Went together.

**MY:** Went together.

[pause 3 seconds]

**JY:** I don't know whether it was the... the social background to it all in the thirties or not. Whether it was the mental attitude of people in the thirties. But I think they probably were enjoyed more in the thirties than what they are now. They seem to be a bit too realistic, or too futuristic now. So much so that we don't go to them, do we really?

**MY:** It mirrors the time, I suppose. Plus the fact that there weren't so many diversions as there are now.

**JY:** Yeah.

**MY:** You know, there's the videos, the films, the computers, the... More people taking up sports and...

**JY:** Yeah.

**MY:** They say the films mirror the times. Well, it's certainly chaotic times at the moment.

**JY:** I think the one good thing about it is that each cinema now can cater for about five films. I think that's a good thing in itself. You know that you can all go to the one spot and... instead of a picture house here, there and everywhere,

**MY:** Ah, but they can't fill them any more, Jack. This is the thing.

**JY:** No. I appreciate that. The last time I went to see a film there must've been about a dozen people in the place. That was eh--

**MY:** Afternoon.

**JY:** Early afternoon.

**MY:** Uhuh. *Schindler's List* I think it was.

**JY:** Aye. *Schindler's List*, I went to see. [pause 2 seconds] And eh [laughs] what I thought was quite funny was that I got the ticket and eh, I go to the films probably about once or twice a year and I didn't know what the routine was. So, you know, you go up and buy a ticket... And I was told by the lady who took the ticket, my seat was E14.

**MY:** Uhuh.

**JY:** So I went in expecting to look for row E, seat 14. And realised there was about three other people in the place, apart from me! [laughs]

**VB:** [laughs]

**MY:** [laughs] Fighting your way to get over to your seat.

**JY:** So I just sat down where I wanted to sit and eh. Funnily enough, as I say, about a dozen and a half people eventually came. There was one chap who excused himself, you know, from someone else to get into his seat. [laughs]

**VB:** Ah. [laughs]

**MY:** Ah, that's one of the big differences now and then. It was continuous in our days, and you could go in in the middle of a film. And that's why they couldn't just tell... they got everybody out. 'Cause you could see the films where you came in. Sometimes you just stayed on, and on and on and on! Hoping that nobody would tap you on the shoulder. And say 'Get out!'

**VB:** Did they do that? I mean did they make you go?

**MY:** Oh yes! Oh, yes.

**MS:** Yes. If they saw you.

**MY:** You were always on the [Queen bee?] that somebody was going to tap you on the shoulder. [pause 2 seconds] I remember my pal and I were down in London and we went into the toilet. We'd a meal somewhere and we went into the toilet. And then we couldn't find our way out and we ended up in a picture house. It was part of the, whatever it was.

**JY:** The complex.

**MY:** So we just sat down. 'Course I was sweating buckets that they would notice that we hadn't any tickets! [laughs]

**JY:** [laughs]

**MY:** We got away with it! So we not only had our meal, we had a film as well! [laughs].

**MS:** Mmm. [laughs]

**MY:** I mean we must've been in our late teens, early twenties when we were doing this. We really knew we were doing the wrong thing. But we really honestly did stumble out the wrong exit, into a picture house. Having got lost in the labyrinth of passages.

**JY:** Mm.

**VB:** Was it worth it? Was the film good or...?

**MY:** It was *The Snake Pit* actually with eh, Olivia de Havilland.

**MS:** de Havilland, uhuh.

**MY:** It was a bit harrowing, actually. I think they were put into a snake pit.

**MS:** They were, uhuh.

**MY:** The very idea of it. I don't know whether it's supposed to frighten you out of your madness or what it was.

**JY:** Uhuh. [coughs]

**MY:** Help yourself to a biscuit or another piece of shortbread.

**VB:** I might have another bit of shortbread, actually. It's lovely that.

[pause 3 seconds]

**VB:** I liked Olivia de Havilland as well. We were talking about Robin Hood earlier.

**MY:** Oh, she was lovely.

**MS:** Yeah.

**MY:** And her sister Joan Fontaine, she'd a lovely voice.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** What time, when did *Rebecca* come out? I thought she was lovely in it. They had quite a, sort of, [inaudible]. They weren't speaking to one another for quite some time.

**VB: Mm.**

**JY:** By the way, I don't think Cameron wants to go to the whist.

**MY:** So I believe, uhuh. He's had a shock an he's not very good at putting out the...

**MS:** [looking at book] 1940.

**MY:** 1940. Uhuh. [pause 3 seconds]. That was a great film, *Rebecca*.

**MS:** Mm.

[pause 5 seconds]

**JY:** I ate it all, Sasha. [talking to dog] [laughs]

**VB: What a face. He's very...**

**JY:** Dripping at the mouth.

**VB: Poor thing.**

**MY:** [laughs] Seeing you've met everybody, I'll give you this biscuit.

[sound of munching]

**MS:** Now there's in 1932 they made *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* with Mary Pickford and Ralph Bellamy, May Marsh.

**MY:** Oh.

**MS:** Alan Hale. And then in 1938 they made *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*.

**MY:** With Shirley Temple.

**MS:** No. [pause 3 seconds]

**MY:** Oh, I'm sure she was in 'Rebecca'.

**MS:** Oh, here we are! Sorry! I was looking in the wrong place. Yes. Shirley Temple, Randolph Scott, Jack Haley.

**MY:** Who was the old? Who was the mother or the auntie or...?

**MS:** Slim Summerville and Bill--

**JY:** [laughs]

**MS:** Gloria Stewart! Phyllis Brooks.

**MY:** I can't remember--

**MS:** Helen Westley! Helen Westley was the old one.

**MY:** She was the one with the frozen face but of course, he ended up loving her because of her sweetness--

**MS:** Slim Summerville.

**MY:** And Pollyanna stuff.

**MS:** And Bill Robinson. [pause 2 seconds] Was Helen Westley not Aunt Pity in *Gone with the Wind*?

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

**MS:** I wouldn't have said that Helen Westley was. She was a chubby faced person as far as I remember. Not, straight faced.

**MY:** Well this lady I'm thinking about had black hair and she had a frozen face. Very much the aristocrat, you would say.

**MS:** Uhuh.

**MY:** Look up *Gone with the Wind* then, and tell me. You might come across the name. We could be here all day. [laughs]

**MS:** [laughs]

**MY:** Cross referencing. Ting, ting, ting.

[sound of pages being flicked]

[pause 6 seconds]

**MY:** Read out the names.

**MS:** Right. Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh, Olivia de Havilland, Leslie Howard, Thomas Mitchell, Barbara O'Neill, Hattie McDaniel [pause 2 seconds]

**MY:** Ann Rutherford.

**MS:** Butterfly McQueen, Victor Jory, Evelyn Keys, Ann Rutherford, Laura Hope... Laura Hope Crews, Harry Davenport, Jane Danville, Una Munson and Ward Bond. No, Aunt Pity's not in it.

**MY:** I don't think she's mentioned.

**MS:** No, she's not mentioned.

[pause 6 seconds]

**JY:** It's a great book, that.

**MY:** [laughs]

**VB: Yes, it's great.**

**JY:** Uhuh.

**MY:** Mary Pickford was really before our time.

**MS:** Yes.

**MY:** She was the silent film, wasn't she?

**MS:** Uhuh, yeah.

**MY:** I don't remember seeing her in the talkies a lot. I'm sure she would be, to begin with.

**VB: Was Ronald Colman not in the silents?**

**MY:** Possibly, yes. But he was lucky and he had a lovely voice.

**VB: Yes.**



**MY:** See some of them didn't last because they had awfully thick European accents. When I say European, I mean the German type thing or, French or whatever. But some of them managed to overcome the voice business. But, one or two fell by the wayside. But that's why, I think, they imported a lot of English actors in those days, because they did speak well.

**VB: I'm sure that, yeah.**

**MY:** Yeah. And they went to the stage, you know, the New York stage and whatnot because they could speak.

**MS:** We have a little microphone between us.

**JY:** Uhuh, yeah.

**VB: It really is very good that. I mean I was amazed when I tried it.**

**JY:** Uhuh.

**VB: It's just as good as these big, eh, bulky ones.**

**MS:** Yeah.

**MY:** 'Course they're always eh, making them better and better. What's the word? Improving.

**JY:** Improving.

**MS:** Will we be brave today and hear a wee bit of it?

**MY:** Oh, no. I don't want to hear it.

**MS:** [laughs]

**JY:** [laughs]

**MY:** I've heard my voice,

**MS:** Oh, I know. So have !! [laughs].

**MY:** I was amazed, shocked.

**MS:** I just thought we might be a wee bit,

**VB: Not at all. I mean you've both got lovely voices.**

**JY:** [laughs]

**VB: Very clear.**

**MY:** Well, let's hear just a wee bit then.

**MS:** Are they not terribly Glasgow?

**VB: Em...**

**JY:** Yes. [laughs]

**MY:** [laughs]

**MS:** [laughs]

**VB: [laughs]. Em. The only thing is that this machine that I've got hasn't got a playback on it.**

**MS:** Oh, it hasn't? Oh well. Margaret, you're lucky.

**MY:** So much for modern [inaudible].

**VB: But I have got a pair of headphones that you can hear through.**

**MY:** No, no. It's okay.

**VB: Right.**

**MS:** Uhuh. Aw, I wouldn't mind hearing a wee bit of it.

[tape recording stopped]

[End of interview]