

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

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* Harrow, Middlesex, 25 July 1995: Valentina Bold interviews Nancy Carrington, Nancy Prudhoe and Elsie Horne

* Transcribed by Joan Simpson/Standardised by Richard Rushton and Julia McDowell

* NC=Nancy Carrington, NP=Nancy Prudhoe, EH=Elsie Horne, VB=Valentina Bold

* Notes: Second interview of four with Nancy Carrington; Sound Quality: Good

[Start of Tape One]

[Start of Side A]

[VB tape introduction]

VB: I stay [live] in Glasgow, so...

NC: In Glasgow?

VB: Yeah.

NC: Oh. You are at university are you?

VB: Erm, I work at the university in Glasgow.

NC: Oh you work in there? Oh, what do you do?

VB: Erm, I'm in the Department of Theatre, Film and Television, so...

NC: Oh, lovely!

VB: So this is what I'm working on, is this project.

NC: Oh I see.

VB: So it's a nice job to have. [laughs]

NC: Yeah.

VB: But erm, it's been really interesting 'cause I didn't know the area at all when I came so--

NC: Pardon?

VB: I didn't know the area at all when I came down. So it's been great getting to meet people like yourself.

NP: Here they are.

[other people come in]

[pause 10 seconds]

VB: Hello.

[general introductions]

NC: This is Elsie, this is Val. It is Valerie, isn't it?

VB: Well, it's Valentina actually.

NC: Pardon?

VB: It's Valentina.

NC: Valentina!

VB: Most people call me Val. Nice to meet you.

NC: Sit down in your usual chair.

EH: I'll put all my bits and pieces here.

NC: Yeah.

VB: Ah.

NC: We're just starting on a thing about the Cosy Cinema.

EH: I'll sit here 'cause I can't hear very well, you know. Ohh.

VB: Ah right. It's so hot, isn't it?

EH: We couldn't seem to get a taxi.

NC: Couldn't you?

EH: Well I hadn't, I'd lost the number, so I'll have to have the number down and put it in the book again.

NC: Did you walk then?

EH: No we had to wait and that's why we're... we had to wait for the bus.

NP: And do you know, it's 50p from our place to up here.

NC: To here?

NP: Yeah.

NC: I thought you paid two pound odd.

NP: No. No-o! From where we live.

NC: Yeah.

NP: Just one stop!

NC: Oh, you mean on the bus.

NP: Yes!

NC: Oh, that's terrible, isn't it?

VB: **That's terrible.**

NP: Look! 50p.

NC: Hu-uh!

NP: We waited for a taxi and we couldn't wait any longer.

EH: You see, we had a ticket and it was in a round thing.

[general discussion re transport]

EH: We're all upside down since we moved.

NC: Val's got a tape she's got to put on.

VB: Yes. Is that all right? If I put a tape on while we're talking?

NP: Oh yes! Yes! Certainly.

NC: I'd forgotten but Terry told me that we used to get a cup of tea and a bun in the interval at the Cosy.

EH: Oh yes.

NC: D'you remember that?

EH: Yes I do.

NC: I'd forgotten that. See, so it comes out. And erm, I was telling Val that we'd have a band. On the stage during the interval at the Dominion.

NP: Ooh yes! Yes I believe we did.

NC: During the interval.

EH: What?

NP: A band on the stage during the interval at the Dominion.

EH: Yes.

VB: Mhm.

NC: And what else do you remember?

NP: Eh... [pause 5 seconds]

NC: The Odeon, South Harrow, there used to be eh, a load of Italian people there. Mhm.

NP: Oh! Did there?

NC: So Terry was saying. Mhm.

NP: Did there?

NC: I didn't remember that.

NP: No.

EH: Remember what?

NC: A lot of Italian people.

NP: Italian people. At the Odeon.

EH: Oh, I don't know about that. But I know that the Odeon was on the Hill, wasn't it?

NC: No. That was the Cosy.

NP: No, that was the Cosy. That was the Cosy.

NC: I don't know who first had that, I don't know.

NP: That was the Cosy, wasn't it?

NC: Yes. 'Cause my niece, she won some money for that.

EH: Those on the Hill was the Cosy.

VB: You were telling me.

NC: Yes she named it.

VB: This is wonderful.

NC: They wanted a name and she chose the Cosy. I thought it was rather appropriate.

NP: It was. I didn't know that, you know, Nancy. I didn't. No, I didn't, no. It was jolly good.

EH: You used to go in the Cosy, if by half past two you'd get in for, was it tuppence or threepence?
On the Saturday.

NC: Yes, in the old money we're talking about Val.

EH: Yes in the old money.

NP: You had to be there before two o'clock and you'd get in for two pence.

NC: Oh yes that's right. Yes. And then we used to flog jam jars.

NP: We all used to run up the Hill. 'Cause there wasn't any buses.

NC: No, no. We'd walk.

NP: We'd run up the Hill.

NC: Harrow-on-the-Hill. It's a long way.

VB: Hopefully not on a day like this!

NP: Ye-es! And as a matter of fact it used to be hotter than this.

EH: And in the centre when you got to the top there was a nanny goat, wasn't there?

NP: Oh yes. That's eh--

NC: A what?

NP: That's outside the King's Head.

NC: Oh yes.

NP: There used to be a big piece of ground and it was all grass and it was all erm, wired in.

NC: Yes.

NP: And they permanently used to have a nanny goat. You remember, don't you?

EH: Yes. It was quite old, that nanny goat.

NP: That nanny goat was quite old. It was there for years and years and years.

NC: It was. That was the King's Head Hotel in Harrow.

VB: Ah, I see.

NC: Right on the Hill. You know.

VB: Yeah.

NC: And when you go down Stiven Crescent, if you look in front of you, you'll see St Mary's Church.

VB: Ah.

NC: And that's right near the Harrow Public School.

EH: Oh yes, yes.

NC: Up there, yeah. Erm, what else do we remember? Erm, I remember Gracie Fields. Erm, she was in *Sing... Sing As We Go!* And I was going into hospital, I think the next day or something like that. And that seemed to cheer me up.

NP: What when she? Yes.

NC: Yes. That was at South Harrow. Always remember that being on.

NP: But oh, its, what else was there?

NC: And the music.

NP: And how about Barnets Farm. [pause 3 seconds] Used to be a Barnets Farm there. You know...

EH: Opposite the Odeon?

NP: Yes, opposite the Odeon. You remember Barnets Farm?

NC: Oh yes.

NP: You could get a pint of milk at one o'clock in the morning.

NC: Opposite the cinema.

VB: A-ah.

NP: And sometimes if... you'd have to wait until they'd milked a cow.

NC: That's right.

VB: Ah!

NP: Honestly. And the milk was warm when you got it.

VB: Mhm. That sounds lovely actually.

NC: Yes.

NP: Yeah. It was really marvellous. And they also used to do their own butter.

NC: Yes.

NP: They used to have a special place to churn their butter. But if you, if you'd been out and if it was twelve o'clock at night, and sometimes you run short in those days--

EH: My mother sent me nearly one o'clock in the morning.

NP: You used to go down Barnets Farm and eh, you could get a pint of milk, at twelve o'clock at night.

NC: Yes.

EH: And then there used to be erm, what was that eh, nursery where flowers used to be?

NP: Nursery.

NC: Oh yes, the nursery.

EH: Eh?

NP: [louder] The nursery.

NC: The nursery. We used to get erm, cucumbers and tomatoes.

NP: Tomatoes. And apples and pears. They used to pick them off the tree while you waited.

NC: Yes. And if you had windfalls on the ground.

NP: They used to sell the windfalls. You used to get a load for about a ha'penny.

EH: And there was a big field there. Well they were foundations for houses, but they hadn't built for

years. And then when we came out of our back gate, there was a great big field there. Oh, it was lovely. And a beautiful park.

VB: Ah.

NC: Yes. All this was country. Flowers where these houses are now. And all down Eastcote Lane, where the bus comes. Where you just come from.

VB: Yeah.

NC: It was all flowers.

NP: Oh it was fantastic. It was out of this world.

EH: When we first came to live this way, you'd go out your back garden and you had horses in your front garden.

NP: Oh yes. And where we're living now, when we first went down there, when I lived in Royal Crescent eh, the farm, eh, what farmer was it? Used to have his pig farm.

NC: Eh, Monks.

NP: Monk. Mr Monk. Had a farm. He had a pig farm and sometimes it was nothing to find a pig in your front garden. They used to get loose and come in your front garden. And horses used to run round the roads, didn't they?

NC: Oh, the horses. Yeah, yes.

EH: There was only one cinema in South Harrow, wasn't there? That was before the--

NC: Before the Cosy [possibly referring to the Broadway].

VB: Mhm.

NC: Yes, that was the Odeon.

VB: Mhm. Yes, I was wondering if maybe Nancy and Elsie might like to see these pictures of the cinemas--

EH: There was one--

VB: That I showed you. The photographs of the cinemas. Mhm.

NC: Yes, yes, oh yes. You bring those out. She's got some--

NP: Oh yes.

NC: That'll take you back.

EH: There was only one train, one coach on the railway.

NC: One coach, was it?

NP: Mhm.

NC: This'll take your memory. Bring your chair nearer in.

VB: 'Cause I've got some here of the Grosvenor.

NC: Would you like to come nearer, Elsie?

EH: Pardon?

NC: She can't hear.

EH: I'll be all right.

NP: She's all right.

NP: The Grosvenor, Rayners Lane, Harrow.

NC: Yes.

[pause 4 seconds]

NC: The Grosvenor was on up until fairly recently. Now they've done erm--

NP: Oh Wealdstone Odeon! Oh yes! I used to go to Wealdstone Odeon with Harry sometimes.

NC: Did you?

NP: That's my husband. And erm, [laughs] and you walked in and for courting couples, they used to have a curtain. And--

VB: Oh.

NP: Yes, honestly. They used to have a curtain. And eh, just--

NC: To get in the back row.

NP: Yes. About a pace from here to here and a curtain. And eh--

EH: If they knew you were courting, they'd show you there. Into that special place for courting couples. [laughs]

NC: You'd sit on the back seat. [laughs]

NP: Oh! I remember that, yes.

NC: Yes.

EH: Show me.

NC: That's lovely, isn't it?

NP: Yeah. The Wealdstone Odeon. Rayners Lane, Harrow.

NC: Now it's something experience, it's called. Beautiful inside that place. There's a bar in there.

EH: Where?

NC: Rayners Lane. Where the Grosvenor was.

EH: Is it? Is it?

NC: It's beautiful. I've been to a dinner in there.

NP: Have you?

NC: A couple of dinners. It's worth going in for a sherry and seeing all the different things. They've got an aeroplane in there. Oh it's lovely. Still got the screen up.

NP: Have they?

NC: Mhm. Charlie Chaplin was on when we went.

VB: Oh.

NC: Yes, it's really lovely.

NP: And the silent films.

NC: Mhm?

NP: The silent films.

NC: Oh the silent films. Yes, Mary Pickford. Have you heard of Mary Pickford?

VB: Yes, I have, yes.

EH: They used to have a serial every week.

NP: They used to have a serial every week.

NC: And she had ringlets, didn't she?

NP: Yes, yes.

NC: She married Douglas Fairbanks.

VB: Mhm.

NC: Beautiful lady, wasn't she?

NP: Oh yeah.

NC: She died when she was about eighty, I think.

NP: Yes, I think she did.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Ooh, it was lovely there.

EH: If you went to Rayners Lane you had an outing, didn't you?

NP: You had what?

EH: An outing.

NP: Oh yes. If you went to Rayners Lane.

VB: I've got one of the Dominion as well.

NP: Oo-oooh, yes! Oh yes.

NC: Oh yeah. That's where they used to play the band, in the interval.

NP: That's right. That's right. Yes.

NC: That's still there but it's eh, bingo things they're using it for now.

NP: I've queued up. How we used to queue, to see the films. Hours on end.

NC: Hours on end, yes.

NP: Hours on end! I think the whole of South Harrow used to turn out if there was a good film.

NC: Oh they did, yes.

NP: We used to dress up, all in our best to sit and watch the films. [laughs]

NC: Yes, yes. We did.

VB: Is that right? It was quite an occasion, was it? To--

NC: Oh yes, it was.

NP: Ye-es. Oh, yes! You were going out. You were really going out.

NC: Yes, Boxing Day we used to go to the South Harrow one.

NP: Yeah. But if we went to the pictures in the evening, with a boyfriend. Ooh, you were made up, as though you were going, as though you were going somewhere--

NC: Oh yes, court shoes and--

NP: Ye-es! Yeah.

NC: Not like some of the kids wear now. Trousers with holes in them.

EH: And the King's Head was a very old establishment.

NP: Oh the King's Head.

NC: The King's Head.

EH: Ye-ah. Oh Royalty used to go there.

NC: As I say, this is still there.

VB: Mhm.

NC: Only it's something else.

VB: Yeah. I've got some adverts here too. Erm, from the South Harrow Odeon.

NP: Charles Boyer. Oh-h-h! [cheers] Yes!

NC: Oh!

NP: Jean Arthur! Oh yes.

NC: Yes, Jean Arthur.

NP: Oh and Douglas Fairbanks Jr!

NC: Oh-h! Oh dear.

NP: Oh, I say! [pause 2 seconds]

NC: Yes, if we knew they were on, we used to make a point of going.

NP: Oh-h!

NC: Katharine Hepburn. Erm, and the one who died, erm--

VB: Oh.

NC: Humphrey Bogart.

NP: Oh Humphrey Bogart--

NC: Was marvellous.

VB: 'Cause the other thing that I've got with me that I didn't have the other time was [inaudible].

NC: Val works in the television, isn't it?

VB: Well it's the eh, tele, yeah, Television Department in Glasgow. Glasgow University.

NP: Oh-h-h!

VB: So, I thought you might like to see that.

NP: Oh-h, look. I used to draw these.

VB: Did you?

NC: I used to draw these. Yeah.

[pause 4 seconds]

NC: Oh, yes, yes.

NP: Oh-oh! Oh, I say!

NC: Yes, I used to draw these.

VB: Did you, did you put the drawings on your walls or..?

NC: Well mostly I did them when I was in hospital. I was in hospital twelve times. And when I was getting better I used to draw a lot of the film stars. Aw, look.

NP: Oh, look. Maurice Chevalier. Oh-h.

NC: Yes.

VB: Did you like Maurice Chevalier?

NP: Ye-e-es!

NC: Oh-h.

NP: He was wonderful!

NC: Beautiful.

EH: Wealdstone [Odeon] wasn't very nice, was it?

NC: No. No, Wealdstone wasn't a nice one.

NP: Oh, he was wonderful! Absolutely wonderful!

EH: But South Harrow [Odeon].

NP: Absolutely wonderful!

NC: And Rayners Lane. And eh, then you got--

NP: Jeanette MacDonald.

NC: Jeanette MacDonald. She was a singer, wasn't she?

EH: Yes.

NC: Who was her partner?

NP: Maurice Chevalier. I don't know. I can't remember.

VB: Was it not Nelson Eddy?

NP: Ooh. Nelson Eddy.

NC: And Jeanette MacDonald. And then there was Anne... Webster Booth and Anne Ziegler.

NP: Oh yes. Webster Booth.

NC: Yeah. Oh look.

EH: What did you say?

NP: Webster, who's this? Charles Ruggles. Ooh, I can remember him.

NC: Yeah.

NP: He wasn't very popular, well erm--

NC: That's Claudette Colbert.

NP: Oh-h! Oh yes, look at her friend.

NC: Yeah.

NP: Oh yes.

VB: Did you like Claudette Colbert?

[general assent]

NC: Oh we loved them. All of them. Marlene Dietrich.

EH: All here was all fields and horses, wasn't it? Wild horses.

NC: Yes, yes. They were really beautiful.

NP: Kay Francis. I don't remember her a lot.

NC: Yes, I do.

EH: Who?

NC and NP: Kay Francis.

EH: A bell rings something but I can't remember.

NC: Who were those four girls, there was four girls in one family and they were in *Little Women*?

EH: What's that?

NC: One had blonde curls.

NP: Four girls and they were called the *Little Women*.

NC: They were in *Little Women*.

NP: In *Little Women*.

NC: Or two of them were.

EH: They were in *Little Women*.

NC: They were a family.

NC: They were a family.

NP: Oh I saw the film.

VB: Katharine Hepburn was in that, wasn't she?

NC: Yes, she was Jo in it.

VB: She was Jo. Yeah.

NP: I saw the film.

NC: No, this was Beth. One took the part of Beth. She died in it. [pause 2 seconds] Oh dear. I nearly got it just then. It was a family of them. They were all blonde. [pause 4 seconds] Three or four girls.

NP: They were sisters?

NC: Yes.

EH: Not *Little Women*, was it?

NC: That was the film they were in. Or one or two were in it. [pause 2 seconds] Another one I liked was erm, oh... he was in... erm, Charles Laughton.

NP: Oh! Oh!

NC: In *Mutiny on the Bounty*.

EH: Who?

NP: Oh Charles Laughton. Marvellous actor!

NC: And I think *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* was one of the best films he ever made.

NP: Oh yes, yes.

NC: Who was in that? Was it Vivien Leigh?

NP: I don't know. I can't remember.

EH: I only went to the pictures once a week.

NP: Oh Harry and I used to go to the pictures a lot.

VB: **How often did you go? Erm, if you went once a week, erm, how often did you go the pictures?**

NC: About twice a week.

NP: Oh-h! Easy. Sometimes three times a week.

VB: **Three times a week!**

NP: When there was no dancing on, we went to the pictures. We used to go Sunday nights.

NC: Yes, yes.

NP: Sunday nights to the films.

NC: Yeah.

NP: And we used to dress up, didn't we? All in our best.

NC: Always. That's Charles Laughton, isn't it?

NP: Yes.

EH: Used to have some lovely dances at the King's Head.

NP: Oh yes. You'd erm, [clears throat] go to business and you'd say, we'll go to the films tonight. And you'd dress up in your best, wouldn't you?

NC: Yes. Yes.

VB: Did you ever try to look like the film stars?

NP: Oh, y-e-es!

NC: Copied the styles. Didn't we? I mean there was no make-up. You know, bit of beetroot, you know. [laughs]

NP: Ye-es.

NC: Wouldn't you, beetroot and the blue you'd get out of a [inaudible].

NP: Ginger Rogers. I used to try and, 'cause she was a dancer and I used to go dancing a lot as you know.

NC: Yeah.

EH: And I used to try and make myself look like Ginger Rogers. Not that I ever looked like her but, you know.

NC: Yeah.

NP: You'd think you were. [laughs]

NC: Yes.

VB: 'Cause when we were talking before you [to NC] were saying that. That you imagined yourself in some of the films.

NC: That's right. Always imagining you were a film star.

EH: When Mr Farr opened it was, it brought life to South Harrow, didn't it?

NC: Mhm?

EH: When Mr Farr opened--

NC: Oh yes, yes. [pause 4 seconds] The man, he had a dance place built, you know.

NP: He had a special dance hall built. And you used to go in for a shilling and he'd give you a ticket to go in for sixpence the next night.

VB: Ah!

NC: Yes, yes.

VB: Do you think that people in the thirties were good dancers then? Was it...?

NP: Oh they were!

VB: 'Cause when you think of people dancing now--

NP: Oh no! It was real! It was real dancing.

NC: 'Come Dancing' was on last night.

NP: Oh-h! Was it?

NC: So Rose told me at the club. But I never saw it. I would've watched it--

NP: Oh.

EH: What was on?

NP: 'Come Dancing'.

EH: Ah.

NC: And eh, you know, it was lovely.

NP: Ooh, yeah.

VB: What sort of dances did you do?

NP: Waltz, foxtrot, one step erm--

NC: Erm, eh--

NP: Lancers--

NC: The Boston Two-Step.

NP: The Boston Two-Step. What other one?

NC: The Lancers I loved, 'cause they used to swing you right out, the boys used to swing us right out.
Paul Jones!

NP: Oh! Paul Jones.

VB: I don't know that one.

NP: Paul Jones. You stood in, well you stood in, we all... you used to go with your partner--

NC: All the girls.

NP: On the dance halls. Like, I had Harry and you had your husband. And you'd dance round and then eh, there'd be some people in the middle of the hall and then you'd touch them on the shoulder and you had to--

NC: And when the music stopped, it stopped opposite the man. The man nearest to you, you danced with.

VB: A-ah.

NP: Oh yes. I'm thinking of the 'Excuse Me' dance.

NC: Oh no, that's the 'Excuse Me'.

NP: That's the 'Excuse Me' dance.

NC: Yes, you could--

NP: You've heard of 'Excuse Me' dance?

VB: I think I know the one you mean. It's kind of like a. You, you, you--

NP: You're dancing around with your partner.

VB: Yeah.

NP: And those that hadn't got a partner used to stand in the middle of the room. And you'd be going

round and then you'd tap them on the shoulder--

NC: Say 'Excuse me'.

NP: And the girl would have to leave and go in the middle and you'd have her partner and dance round. [laughs]

NC: Yeah, I used to watch the steps, you'd have a main dancer, you know.

NP: Yeah, that's it, yeah.

NC: And eh, it used to be lovely, you know.

VB: Mhm. It sounds it.

NC: Erm, what else did we have? Erm--

EH: Mr Farr was a flat-footed man and he used to dance flat-footed, didn't he?

NC: Yeah.

EH: But he couldn't dance much himself.

NC: No.

NP: But he was a marvellous--

NC: These are lovely, aren't they?

NP: Yeah.

EH: Then once you went, there was no re-admission.

NC: Elisabeth Bergner!

EH: You couldn't go out and have a drink and come in unless you paid again.

VB: Mhm.

NC: Elisabeth Bergner.

EH: Every night. [pause 3 seconds]

NC: I've got some drawings upstairs that I've done.

VB: Oh-h.

NC: But not film stars. They're hairstyles and that type of thing.

VB: Yes.

NC: Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers.

NP: Jack Buchanan.

NC: Yeah. He was good.

VB: Do you think there were certain qualities that you liked in film stars? I'm just wondering if there were similarities between the stars you liked?

NP: Well, they, they were. Well some were more gentlemanly than--

NC: Yeah.

EH: What, Nance?

NP: Some were more gentlemanly than the others. Then there was the big tough guys, wasn't there?

EH: Who?

NP: Eh, the film stars.

EH: Oh.

NC: Yes.

VB: Did you like, did you prefer the sort of gentlemanly ones, or the--?

NC: Oh yes. To dance with.

NP: I did.

EH: Loretta Young. Do you remember her?

VB: Yeah.

EH: Loretta Young.

NP: Loretta Young.

NC: Yes. Yes.

EH: She was lovely.

NC: Me and my sister, my sister's that much older than me.

VB: Mhm.

NC: They had to have a chaperone.

VB: Ah.

NC: When she was sixteen. So my mother used to go. And I used to go and dance with her boyfriend.

NP: [laughs]

NC: And erm, they used to give me a dance, you know.

NP: Yeah.

NC: And all the boys wore gloves in those days.

NP: Oh yes. Oh yes.

VB: Ah.

NC: And they'd come up and say, "May I have this waltz" or whatever. "Miss," you know. And she'd have a little book with a coloured pencil. And the boys used to write their names down on whichever dance they were going to have. First one, maybe a waltz, you know. And the next one'd be somebody else. And erm, they used to wear white gloves so they wouldn't soil the dresses.

VB: Oh. It sounds very elegant when you talk about it.

NC: Oh, it was beautiful.

NP: Very elegant, yeah.

NC: And then we used to have streamer and balloon nights.

NP: Oh yes, yeah.

NC: You'd be up in the--

EH: And we used to have erm, a big thing with all, and they used to throw--

NP: Coloured lights.

EH: Confetti. All over the place.

VB: Oh.

NC: Yes, that's right. Confetti. That's how my sister met her husband.

EH: What, the--

NC: She stuffed him up with confetti that night and that's how they came together.

VB: Mhm.

NC: He was a bit mad about it.

NP: Yeah.

NC: And erm, but that's how they came together. It was a real match, you know.

NP: We used to have fancy dress balls, didn't we?

NC: Oh dear, yes.

NP: You'd go in fancy dress. And you'd have a prize, you know, they'd parade round.

NC: Parade round.

NP: It was a very small place but there was an awful lot doing, wasn't there?

NC: Yes, yes. My sister once, she went as a powder puff. And she had a little round hat with swansdown round with a little bobble on the top, you know. I think it was pale blue. And a little short dress. And it had all swansdown round.

EH: Yeah, yeah.

NC: And erm, I forgot what the others, eh, the boys started picking all the swansdown.

NP: [laughs]

NC: She couldn't go in the erm, thing. They were picking it all off. It was a shame. She looked real good, you know.

NP: Ye-ah. Oh it was nice.

NC: I got eh, second prize once for Old Grannie Cackle.

NP: Oh-h-h.

NC: I had the old bonnet of years ago with a big string, you know, the old ladies wore things with flowers on. An old black long dress.

EH: Those days you used to get mothers and fathers and grandmothers, and they all mixed.

NP: And then, erm, down here, there was no buses. And two brothers used to run a taxi. And they daren't charge. Because they weren't allowed to. So they used to have a box. And when you got to your destination, you got out. Pardon me. And you're supposed to put money in the box. But half the boys used to put buttons in.

NC: Yeah. Then afterwards they charged tuppence.

NP: Yeah. They weren't allowed at first to do it.

NC: No.

NP: Because they were running it on their own steam. Well then the Council or whoever was in charge. They got erm, you know, what can I say.

EH: Admission to pay.

NP: Yes, admission to pay.

VB: Like a licence or something.

NC: They used to stop almost at every house.

NP: But towards the end, at the beginning, they didn't used to get much money because the boys used to put buttons in.

VB: [laughs]

NC: Yes, yes. Used to come out of the Cosy Cinema, all the way round Harrow, and all the way, Right the way round till they got down here and then they used to drop us off practically at our houses.

NP: Yes, they used to come all the way round, didn't they? Yeah.

VB: So was that like a sort of bus?

NP: Yeah. Instead of, 'cause there was no buses, you see.

VB: Yeah.

EH: And there was only one carriage on the railway.

NP: One carriage on South Harrow railway.

EH: And if you went from South Harrow to Harrow, you had to walk. There was no buses.

NC: And there used to be a man there years ago. My father told me. And erm, he had springs on his shoes.

VB: Mhm.

NC: And he used to jump. They called him spring-heeled Jack. And he used to have a sheet over him. And just as people were coming along, you know. Specially a woman on her own, he'd jump.

NP: Frighten. [laughs]

NC: And he'd be right by the side of her. And course they used to scream. Yes, that was at South Harrow.

NP: Yes.

NC: There was a bridge there. Used to jump down from that.

EH: It was a lovely place. There was somewhere to go every night.

NP: It was a very small place but there was clean enjoyment. Very clean, wasn't it?

NC: Yeah we had a pond that we used to--

EH: You've dropped your bus ticket, Nance.

NP: Pardon?

EH: You've dropped your bus ticket.

NC: We used to skate on the pond, you know.

NP: Where?

EH: It's under your chair.

NP: Oh is it? Ooh.

VB: I see it at the back there.

NP: Thank you very much.

NC: Oh, these are beautiful. I had one of Judy Garland, a book. I gave it away.

VB: I can't remember if I asked you or not but did...

[End of Side A]

[Start of Side B]

NC: It just used to be shown, the film that was coming on. And then if it was a good one, you know, we used to--

VB: Ah. But there weren't any magazines as you say or erm--

NC: No, you know. But erm, yeah, we used to queue for hours, didn't we? In the rain and... [laughs]

NP: What else was there? No, there wasn't any magazines, was there?

NC: No, I don't remember magazines.

EH: Oh yes, there was. Mother used to have them. Erm--

NP: 'Peg's Paper'.

EH: Erm, she used to have, I forget it was called. It was like a book. It used to come out once a week. Erm, forget what it was called.

NP: Was it 'Peg's Paper'?

EH: We all used to take the mickey out of her.

NC: Mhm?

NP: Was it 'Peg's Paper'?

NC: Oh yes.

NP: 'Peg's Paper'.

EH: No, this wasn't 'Peg's Paper'. This was a book.

NP: There was a 'Peg's Paper'.

NC: Yes, there was.

VB: Not the--

EH: Oh yes but I forget the book mother used to read. We all used to take the mickey out of her.

NP: What was it?

VB: 'Cause I've heard of the 'Picturegoer'. I don't know. Was it the 'Picturegoer' she got?

NP: [louder to EH] Was it the 'Picturegoer'?

EH: No. No, it was a book that used to come every week. Forget what it was called.

VB: Mhm.

EH: Mother use to have it and read all what was in it. You know.

NP: Ooh--

EH: Forget what it was called. Because we used to take the mickey out of her. [laughs]

VB: That doesn't sound like they were easily available from what you're saying anyway.

EH: No.

VB: Not something that you--

NP: No. What else was there?

NC: We used to have some gorgeous films. Most of the film stars have died now, haven't they?

VB: Mhm.

EH: Oh erm, who was that. Morna, Morna erm, [possibly referring to Norma Shearer]. With Clark Gable. Was a film star, wasn't he?

NP: Ye-es.

NC: Yes.

EH: And who was the girl that he used to be with? Eh, I forget her name. Clark Gable.

NC: Vivien Leigh.

EH: Eh?

NC: Vivien Leigh.

NP: Vivien Leigh. Was it Vivien Leigh?

NC: He was with her in *Gone with the Wind*.

NP: Ooh, that was a wonderful film.

EH: Oh, I didn't like that picture.

NP: You ever seen that?

VB: Yeah, it's amazing.

NC: That came on recently. I've seen that about three or four times.

EH: Yeah. You haven't seen it?

VB: I have. Yes.

NC: You have seen it.

VB: Yes.

NC: I saw it not long ago.

VB: Yeah.

NC: As a repeat.

VB: With erm, Leslie Howard's in it as well, isn't he?

NC: Yes.

VB: Leslie Howard.

NC: Yes, yes.

VB: Did you like Clark Gable as a star?

NP: Oh-h-h.

VB: [laughs]

NC: We used to have a crush on these film stars.

NP: William Powell. I liked him too.

VB: **Myrna Loy.**

NC: Oh Myrna Loy.

EH: That's right. Myrna Loy. That was his--

NC: Carole Lombard.

NP: William Powell. The films, they were marvellous because they, they, you got a thrill. Erm, you'd see William Powell in his pyjamas and you'd see Myrna Loy. And then you, oh, they said, "Oh well, goodnight dear," and the light would go out and it was something--

NC: So clean, you know.

NP: Differently, if you know what I mean. It was--

NC: You never saw them in bed together, did you?

NP: I can't describe it. It was a clean film.

NC: Oh it was beautiful.

NP: Ye-es.

NC: And lovely love stories, you know. And then there used to be a lady on the Hill, and she, no--

NP: Who?

NC: What was that fil... place near the Coliseum? No, the technical school. What was that called?

NP: Well we used to call it the, is that what we used to call the bug hutch?

NC: Yeah.

NP: It is, I believe. Near the technical school.

NC: It was erm, it had a name to it.

NP: Did it?

NC: Mhm. And it had, oh, beautiful inside. Big foyer with, brass, big brass things. All beautifully clean. It's only a small place. You had to walk a long way down.

NP: Yes, I used to go there with Harry.

NC: Yeah.

VB: Mhm.

EH: What was that?

NP: When we were courting.

NP: Eh, the picture place next to the technical school?

NC: Technical school.

NP: What was it called?

EH: In Harrow?

NP: In Harrow.

EH: I don't know.

NP: Next door to the technical--

EH: We used to call it the flea [inaudible], the [fleapit?].

NP: Did you? I don't know.

VB: I've got some more here. I don't know if it would be erm, one of these other ones.

NC: Oh the Embassy. Yes. Coliseum. Spencer Tracy.

NP: Oh! Spencer Tracy.

VB: What was it about Spencer Tracy that--

NP: Well he wasn't good looking, was he?

NC: No. He was a devil. He was a fighter.

NP: He was a bit of a rough and tumble.

NC: Oh he was a rough and tumble. He always got his man, though. Bang, bang, bang! We used to say, "Way-ay-ay!" You know.

VB: [laughs]

NC: But it was silent then, so, you know, silent film. Granada, Jessie, oh [referring to Jessie Matthews]. I got friendly with her cousin--

VB: A-ah.

NP: Loretta Young.

NC: In a place in Pinner. Erm, and she, she wasn't very well at the time. And erm, she had all her memoirs, you know. And she wanted to, she knew she wasn't very well. And she wanted to let somebody have them that would treasure them. So she put them into Sotheby's. And erm, somebody bought them. She didn't know who it was. But it was Sir Andrew Lloyd Weber--

VB: Really?

NC: And gave six thousand pounds. She knew that he would treasure them. And erm, so she thought what she'd do was to go for a holiday. A cruise. And it might make her better. Well before she even drew one penny, she died.

VB: Oh.

NC: And eh, she lived in Pinner. She used to sit, sit with Jessie Matthews. Erm, well she had cancer. And she was ever so good. And her name was Nancy!

NP: Was it?

NC: Yeah. That was last year she died.

VB: Yeah. 'Cause Jessie Matthews--

NC: He was a so-and-so.

NP: Did Jessie Matthews die of cancer? Jessie Matthews.

NC: Yes.

NP: Did she?

NC: Oh yes.

EH: She lived in erm--

NP: I know she was in hospital in Pinner.

NC: And she was in hospital, you know on the Hill, the private hospital.

NP: Yeah.

NC: I knew the sister that looked after her. I got an idea she's dead now. She lived at Rayners Lane and she told me she nursed her once. But she didn't know she'd died.

NP: Oh-h-h!

NC: Many years ago, she was very ill.

NP: Oh-h-h!

NC: And she said, "I looked after her." But she married Sonnie Hale and he was a devil. And I've got her life story. Oh, it's lovely.

NP: Is it?

NC: Mhm. I've read it. And I've got it here. Erm, it was, it was sad.

VB: Mhm.

NC: She had a terrible life. Very poor, you know.

EH: I never liked Clark Gable. [leafing through book]

NC: She had a child by him, but it died.

EH: Spencer Tracy.

NC: But he was horrible man. Gracie Fields. She was another lovely one.

NP: I couldn't stomach Gracie Fields an awful lot.

NC: Oh I loved her.

NP: I liked her singing but I, I, there was something about--

EH: Gracie Fields--

NP: Yeah.

EH: Lived near where I used to work. Not long. Years before I worked there. Erm--

NP: Where was that?

EH: In London somewhere.

NC: 'Course she came from erm, Rochdale.

NP: That's right. Oh yes.

NC: That was her home.

NP: Yeah.

NC: And they say that erm, you know Betty Driver in Coronation Street? They say it's her cousin.

VB: Really!

NC: I don't know whether it's true.

EH: Who's her cousin?

NC: It's only hearsay. Eh, Betty Driver.

NP: Eh, she died, she was in the hospital in Pinner, wasn't she?

NC: Jessie Matthews?

NP: Yeah.

NC: Yes, I think she was.

EH: Yes, she was.

NC: But in erm, Ruislip cemetery, eh, they've got a huge erm, thing in her memory. And it's massive. It's from there [points] to there [points]. And it's got 'In Loving Memory of Jessie Margaret Matthews OBE', and whatever.

VB: Mhm.

NC: And, 'Born so and so, and Died.' I think she was cremated. Whether the ashes are put there, I don't know. But her, her cousin showed me.

NP: She died in Pinner, didn't she?

NC: Yeah.

VB: Did you like her as an actress? Did you like Jessie Matthews?

NC: Erm, 'Over My Shoulder Goes One Care'. Erm, that's what eh, the book I've got is called 'Over My Shoulder'. And it's got her whole life story.

VB: Mhm.

EH: Jessie Matthews eh, lived in Wales for a while. And she lived with Jack...

NC: She did, yeah.

EH: Jack what's her name's mother.

NC: Mhm.

NP: Jack Sutton?

EH: Jack.

NP: [looking at book] Sonnie Hale in person. Gracie Fields. *The Show Goes On*. Oh, Ruby Keeler!

NC: Yes.

NP: Oh she was good, wasn't she?

NC: Oh yes. Shirley Temple.

NP: Aw-w-w!

NC: Oh Shirley Temple.

NP: [laughs]

NC: Oh! Wasn't she gorgeous?

NP: Ye-es.

VB: Think I've got a picture of her here actually. Yes.

NC: [sings] 'Animal Crackers In My Soup.'

NP: Yeah.

NC: [sings] 'Lions and tigers, loop the loop.' Aw-w-w. I had a friend that erm, had worked with her.

VB: Ah!

NC: On the stage. Jean Chalmers, eh, Chambers.

NP: Is she dead now?

NC: No.

EH: Who's that?

NC: She's eh, she's a big erm--

EH: Who's that, Nance?

NC: She's in parliament. Erm, American Ambassador or something.

VB: Mhm. Something like that.

EH: Who's that you're talking about?

NC: Erm, she's married a Black. Her name's Shirley--

NP: Yeah, what's her name. Eh, forgotten her name now.

NC: Shirley Temple.

NP: Shirley Temple.

NC: She's a Mrs Black.

NP: Is she?

NC: Yeah. She had one daughter.

EH: She married a black man?

NP: No. Her name was Black. Wasn't it?

NC: Yeah, she married--

NP: She married a--

NC: A Black.

NP: Uhuh.

NC: But she's eh, something high up. Ambassador or--

VB: Mhm.

EH: Well, was he coloured?

NC: No.

NP: No.

NC: She had one daughter.

NP: Yes she didn't marry into erm, the films, anybody in the films at all.

NC: No, no. But she was keen on politics and--

NP: Yeah.

NC: And that's where she is. That's gorgeous. [looking at book] Ah-h-h!

NP: Lovely.

VB: Do you think she was a talented youngster?

NC: Oh-h-h, yes. She used to dance with erm, that old film star. He was in 'The Hillbillies'. An old man. With a cowboy hat [referring to Buddy Ebsen in television series 'The Beverly Hillbillies'].

NP: Oh, wait a minute.

NC: Whatever was his name? [pause 4 seconds]

VB: Think I know the chap you mean. He's got a very sort of, he's got quite a young face. Well sort of fresh-faced although he was an older--

NC: What's the one who danced with Shirley Temple?

VB: Yeah. I can picture him but I can't think what his name is.

EH: It wasn't Sonnie Hale?

NC: No.

EH: No.

NC: He was in 'The Hillbillies' with the old lady, you know. Grandma. And erm, erm, one who liked Marie Dressler. Here, his brother. Eh, what was his name? Oh, isn't it awful when you can't think.

VB: It's [laughs] so annoying.

NC: In *Tugboat Annie* she was. Marie Dressler. Do you remember that?

EH: I remember it, yes.

NC: *Tugboat Annie*. [pause 2 seconds] Wallace Beery.

NP: Oh-h, yes! Yes!

NC: And his brother was in 'The Hillbillies'.

NP: Yes.

NC: Noah, Noah Beery.

EH: Who did Spencer Tracy marry?

NP: I don't know! Who did Spencer Tracy marry?

NC: I don't know. Probably married a few times.

VB: Was he not married to someone that wasn't Katharine Hepburn? I seem to remember somewhere seeing that he had a long love affair with Katharine Hepburn but they couldn't get married because he was already married.

NP: Mhm. Can't think.

VB: I just can't—

NC: Makes you cross--

VB: Yeah, it does. [pause 4 seconds] I don't think it was anyone famous or--

NC: He was in so many films.

VB: Yeah.

NC: But oh-h! He was a hero, wasn't he? Bang! He's dead, you know. [laughs]

NP: Ooh, yeah. I can't think.

NC: And the lady used to play the piano in the silent films, you know. And when the guns were going she'd be playing ever so quick, wouldn't she?

NC: We used to have an orange in one of the places, didn't we? Given us.

NP: Ooh! Did you? Ooh, I didn't.

NC: I believe it was next to the technical school. I think we had an orange.

NP: Ooh!

EH: Who's this?

NC: Does it ring a bell with you? An orange given us, at the interval.

NP: The picture place, in Harrow. Near the technical school where you used to give an orange.

NC: We used to have an orange.

EH: No, I don't know.

NC: But we used to save up our jam jars. And get pennies on them and then go to the pictures.

NP: Oh rather! Rather!

NC: [looking at book] To Rayners Lane. Oh the Belmont. I never went there. Herga. Oh, that was Wealdstone. I never went there.

VB: Was it mainly--

NC: *The Dawn Patrol*--

NP: Well I went to the Wealdstone once or twice.

VB: Mhm.

EH: You what, Nance?

NP: Went to the Wealdstone once or twice.

NC: Errol Flynn.

NP: Oh Errol Flynn! Oh-h!

NC: He was a devil.

NP: Yeah. Oh Joe E. Brown! You remember him.

NC: That's Joe Brown. Yes. Yes.

EH: Who?

NP: Joe Brown.

EH: Joe E. Brown.

NP: Yes.

NC: Yes.

EH: I can't remember him.

VB: What sort of films was he in?

NC: Mhm?

VB: What was Joe E. Brown like?

NP: He was erm--

NC: I can see his face.

NP: He was eh... [pause 3 seconds]

NC: More of a pointed face, wasn't he?

NP: Yeah. I know he was a bit funny, wasn't he?

NC: Yeah.

EH: Who's this that was funny?

NP: Joe E. Brown.

NC: I can see him smiling, you know.

NP: I, I... [pause 3 seconds] Joe E. Brown, *The Gladiator*. [reading from book] 'His funniest film.'
There you are.

NC: Yes, he was funny.

NP: He was definitely funny.

NC: And another one I liked. 'Schnozzle' Durante [Jimmy Durante].

NP: Oh! Schnozzle. Oh I remember, oh, he used to get on my nerves a bit.

VB: [laughs]

NC: He did a bit.

NP: Yeah, he got on my nerves a bit.

NC: Yes, he played the piano, didn't he?

NP: Yes, yeah.

EH: Who?

NP: [loud voice] 'Schnozzle' Durante.

EH: Don't remember.

NP: Ooh, Elsie! You should do.

EH: I never went to the pictures a lot.

NP: Didn't you?

EH: No, 'cause I was always at Farr's.

NP: Yeah. 'Schnozzle' Durante.

NC: Yeah.

VB: What about some of the other comedians? Erm, eh, like Laurel and Hardy, did you...

NC: Yeah, I liked them. Nance.

NP: O-h-h! Laurel and Hardy!

NC: "Another fine mess you've got me into."

NP: Ye-eh! Yeah. [laughs]

NC: They were good.

EH: Who was that?

NC: Laurel and Hardy.

NP: Laurel and Hardy.

EH: Oh, I used to like them.

NP: Yes.

NC: They were really funny, weren't they?

NP: Oh, they were.

VB: What was it about them that...?

NP: We-ell, he always looked simple.

NC: Yeah, simple, simple.

NP: He looked simple and he acted simple. Yeah.

NC: But he always come out on top.

NP: Oh ye-es.

VB: [laughs]

NC: You know.

NP: But this one used to sort of play him up.

NC: Yes.

NP: Didn't he?

NC: "Now, Stanley." And he used to give him a clump, didn't he?

VB: [laughs]

NP: That's right. Yeah.

NC: Yeah. And he used to go like this. [demonstrates] And he'd do something. And go like this.

NP: That's it. Yeah.

NC: They were, marvellous couple.

VB: Mhm. What about Charlie Chaplin? Did you...?

NC: Oh-h-h.

NP: No, I never, I, my dad used to take me to the films to see Charlie Chaplin.

NC: I was in Croydon, when I saw *The Kid*.

NP: Oh! I saw that.

NC: D'you remember that little boy played--

NP: Yes, yes.

NC: He had his cap on back to front.

NP: That's it, yeah.

NC: With a peak at the back. He was called 'The Kid'.

NP: Yes.

NC: And he was in Charlie Chaplin's films, you know.

NP: My dad used to take me to see Charlie Chaplin's films 'cause my father liked him.

NC: Used to walk like this, you know. With his whirling stick.

VB: Mhm. Did you go to the cinema with your parents?

NP: Yes, yeah.

NC: Oh my mother loved the cinema.

NP: My dad used to take me.

NC: Dad never went.

NP: My mother wasn't all that, but he used to take me to the films. Did you ever go to the films with father?

EH: No, I wouldn't go.

NP: No. Well I know he took me everywhere.

EH: I know you used to go with dad.

NP: I used to go.

EH: I wouldn't go.

NC: My mother did. [pause 3 seconds] Will and I had had a row once. And she was trying to get me to go back to him and I ignored him. We were going on the Cosy cinema up the Hill. He tried hard.

He sat the back of us as well, you know.

EH: I only went to--

NP: If you went to the Cosy Cinema, we used to run up there. You had to get there before two o'clock.

EH: Yeah.

NP: And you'd get in for threepence, was it?

VB: A-ah. And what was it after two?

NP: I don't know how much it was after two, but I know if you ran up there and you were on there at two you got in for threepence.

VB: Mhm.

NC: It was probably sixpence.

NP: You used to run up there. Absolutely run. And it was a big hill.

NC: Oh it was.

NP: Yeah. And you'd get in for thruppence. But if you were a minute late, you couldn't get in.

NC: You couldn't get in.

VB: [laughs]

EH: Mind you, when you got in sometimes, you didn't come out for a long, long time.

NP: [laughs]

NC: We used to see the film over and over again. If we liked it. Didn't we?

NP: Yeah.

NC: If it was worth watching we, you know.

NP: It was marvellous. And mind you, there was a hill. You had to run all the way.

NC: Oh ye-es.

NP: Right from South Harrow. Station, right up the Hill.

NC: Yeah. Another couple was Bebe Daniels and Ben Lyon.

NP: Oh yes!

NC: Oh-h! They were marvellous.

NP: Yeah.

NC: I saw her in *Ramona*, I think it was. And she sang. A beautiful voice, hadn't she?

EH: Who's that?

NP: Bebe Daniels.

NC: And Ben Lyon.

NP: Ben Lyon.

NC: Her husband.

EH: I only used to go Saturday afternoon.

NC: They had one daughter, Barbara. And they adopted Richard, the boy. He wasn't theirs, but they adopted, you know. I remember when she died but then he married again.

NP: Yes, I believe he did.

NC: He's gone now anyway. They were... [pause 3 seconds] real romantic films, you know.

NP: They were marvellous.

EH: I know I was in the Odeon once and they used to have a kind of a serial. And the lady, the man that used to go around, he came and asked my friend if I was liable to faint. I got so excited.

NP: [laughs]

VB: [laughs]

NP: Yeah.

VB: What about the, we haven't really talked about the horror films. Did you like the ones that scared you?

NC: Oh-h-h. I used to be a bit frightened.

NP: I wasn't very keen on those.

NC: No, no, I used to be--

EH: Keen on what?

NP: Horror films.

NC: No, I didn't really like those. Not very keen the way they sucked the blood out of somebody and, you know. Gory. No.

VB: Sort of Boris Karloff and people like that.

NC: Oh now, mind you, I did like Boris Karloff. And another one I saw was erm, it was called the *Mystery Of The Wax Museum*.

NP: Oh, I've heard of that. I don't know whether I saw it or not. The name rings a bell.

NC: It was really... Well this man, he'd been in a fire. And, erm, his face got absolutely, dreadfully burnt. And so he wore a mask.

VB: Mhm.

NC: He wanted revenge.

EH: I'm going upstairs, if it's all right.

NC: You know, they had waxworks, he had a waxwork thing. And eh--

EH: I'm all right. Leave me alone. I can get up.

NC: What he used to do was to steal the bodies from the mortuary, and eh, [pause 2 seconds] Glynis, now what was that girl's name? Glynis Farrell was it? I think her name was [referring to Glenda Farrell]. She was a reporter in it. Film star. And eh, he got somebody and this person was alive and he got her on this slab. And all the wax was boiling and it was getting, nearly boiling over, you know.

NP: Oh yeah.

NC: And eh, she reported it or something. And just before the wax came over to kill the girl, erm, she scratched her leg and found it was human. That she was alive.

VB: Oh-h.

NC: But you saw him take all the bodies out the mortuaries.

VB: [laughs]

NP: Ooh.

NC: And put them through a window.

NP: Ooooh!

NC: And lay them on the slab and he'd eh, cover them with wax. And then sometimes there used to be eyes watching you.

NP: Oooh! [laughs]

VB: Ooh, that's horrible. [laughs]

NC: It used to be... [laughs] I liked that.

NP: Oooh! [screams with laughter]

VB: [laughs]

NC: Because that person was alive, you see.

NP: Oh-h, dear.

NC: He had a lovely face, this man. But when the hero came and then found out that he was stealing the bodies and making them into a wax museum. But they were the real bodies, you see.

VB: Eugh! [laughs]

NC: And this girl, she wasn't dead. And he had revenge on her for some reason or other. And I think she clawed him, and the mask came off.

NP: Oh-h!

NC: And he was hideous. He was almost burnt to a cinder, his face.

NP: Oh-ooh!

NC: 'Course they caught him and he was done away with. It all came all right in the end, you know, in the end.

VB: Mhm.

NC: You'd see these eyes coming out the, you know, when they were dressed up.

NP: Yeah.

NC: They were hiding the reporters, you see. And Glynis [sic] Farrell, I think her name was, you'd see her come. And I can see it now. Then they had it again, and it was called erm, *The House of Wax*. They renamed it.

NP: I can remember *The House of Wax*.

NC: Yeah, they renamed it.

NP: Yeah.

VB: It's enough, [laughing] to give you nightmares, I think.

NC: Yeah, but I liked Boris Karloff. I liked those.

VB: Mhm.

NC: They were gory but they were sort of interesting, you know. And Jekyll and Hyde.

VB: Oh!

NP: Oh yes.

NC: Doctor Jekyll and--

NP: Mr Hyde [referring to *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*].

NC: Mr Hyde. That was good.

VB: Was that with Fredric March?

NC: Oh-h! Fredric March. He was lovely.

NP: Oh-h! Fredric March.

NC: He had a moustache, didn't he?

NP: [pause 2 seconds] Did he?

NC: I think so. [pause 5 seconds] One man I loved, erm, Lewis Stone. He was in *Sorrell and Son*.

NP: I remember the name.

NC: Oh he had to work so hard. And he died in it. Oh, it was sad. The tears used to stream down, you know.

NP: I remember, I can remember but I don't think I saw it.

NC: Lewis Stone.

NP: No.

NC: And he had a moustache. He went very thin in the end, you know. He was a lovely man.

VB: Mhm.

NC: Very good film star.

VB: What about some of the English men? People like Robert Donat. Did you like him?

NC: Oh yes, Robert Donat was nice.

NP: I wasn't all, I don't--

NC: But I liked the Americans best. Did you?

NP: I did like the Americans. I don't know what it is about it, about them, but they seem, what can I say... [pause 2 seconds] more free and natural, the Americans.

NC: Yes, real.

NP: Eh, whereas the English sort of used to stand there and say it, if you know what I mean.

VB: Mhm.

NP: They, they used to have all the actions and--

NC: Yeah, yeah.

NP: I can't describe it.

NC: Only Americans. Joan Crawford.

NP: Oh!

EH: What's that?

NC: Joan Crawford.

EH: You can't describe?

NP: Pardon?

EH: What's that you can't describe?

NP: The... what did I say, what was I saying about I can't describe it? Oh, I forget now.

VB: You were saying about the English... actors--

NC: About the English people, yeah.

NP: Yeah. Well the English actors, they stand there and say it. Whereas the Americans, well they're just natural aren't they?

NC: Mhm. Yeah.

NP: Whether the American language--

EH: Well the language is no different but they, instead, they've got a different, what shall I call it, they speak, but when they speak it sounds different.

NP: They put it over differently.

VB: Mhm.

NP: You know, the English are more likely to stand there and sort of say it.

NC: Mhm.

NP: Whereas the Americans, they do the actions and--

VB: Like when you were showing me there just now. It's like they're a bit stiffer or... when you

were doing--

NP: Yeah.

VB: Yeah.

NC: Yeah, yeah.

EH: And of course their language sounded different, didn't it? When they speak it sounds different. They've got a different--

NP: I like the American language--

VB: Mhm.

NP: Far better than the English.

NC: Yes, I like--

VB: **D'you think there was a difference between not just the actors but the American films?**

EH: The American films.

NP: Oh yes! Oh ye-es!

EH: American films--

NP: They're more natural than the English films.

NC: Oh, definitely.

NP: Yeah.

EH: They were more--

NP: They're more advanced than what the English were.

NC: Yes, yes.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Well I think so.

NC: Mhm. Very good films. You never see them now, do you? Unless you get a repeat of an oldie.

NP: Whether it's the American language that's more attractive, whereas the English it's a bit la-di-da.
You know--

EH: Well, it's different nations.

NP: Rar-rar. [imitating posh accent] You know.

NC: Yes.

NP: Har-di-har-di-har.

NC: Yes.

NP: Whereas, the American are we-ar-our-ir, [garbled accent] you know.

NC: Yes.

VB: [laughs]

NP: I think that's why the American took over more than the English.

VB: Mhm.

NP: I think the English people are a bit--

NC: Snooty.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Yes. Yes, they're not. Whereas the American, they speak differently and they act differently.

NC: Yeah.

NP: They're more free with their actions, I think.

NC: Who was that old lady that used to be in erm--

EH: Who?

NC: Eh, she was very old lady.

NP: An old lady.

NC: Came from an old film family. Margaret Rutherford!

NP: Oh-h-h! Ye-es.

NC: Oh, she was great! She was great. She found out the murderers, didn't she?

NP: Ye-es. Yeah.

NC: There was a train, wasn't there? A murder on a train once.

VB: Oh yes.

NC: I think she solved it. Have you heard of her?

VB: Was that *The Lady Vanishes*?

NC: Mhm?

VB: The film, was that *The Lady Vanishes*? The one where the woman disappears on the train.

NC: Yes, it could be.

VB: Yeah.

NC: *The Lady Vanishes*. I think it was.

VB: Yeah.

NC: And eh, she was in that. Ooh, she was marvellous. And Ida Lupino. She was a good actress, wasn't she? All the Lupinos were.

NP: Yeah, yeah.

EH: Who was a good actress?

NP: Ida Lupino, is it?

NC: Yeah.

NP: Ida Lupino.

EH: Oh, I remember her.

NC: There was a family of them. All actresses, wasn't there?

VB: You mentioned Joan Crawford there. A minute ago, you mentioned Joan Crawford.

NC: Oh, she was marvellous. She was, but she was not a nice lady. Very cruel.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Yes.

NC: She adopted four daughters and she was cruel.

NP: She treated them terrible.

EH: Who's that?

[End of Side B]

[End of Tape One]

[Start of Tape Two]

[Start of Side A]

VB: I was going to say. I mean do you think that side of her came out in her films? Do you think she came over as erm, sort of cruel?

NP: She acted as she, as she... in normal life.

NC: Ye-es.

NP: She acted in her films like she acts in--

VB: Yeah, I was wondering if you thought her character came over as an actress?

NP: That's right. That's what you said. That's what it was.

NC: Probably.

NP: Yes.

NC: Yes. But I remember her being with Bette Davis.

NP: Oh! Bette Davis.

VB: Aw.

NC: And Joan Crawford was in a wheelchair. And Bette Davis was trying to kill her.

NP: Oh! I think I remember that.

NC: On a beach.

VB: *What Ever Happened To Baby Jane?*

NC: That's right. *What Ever Happened To Baby Jane?*

VB: Yeah.

NC: That's right

VB: [laughs]

NC: Oh! That was good.

VB: Oh, she was good.

NC: And I always remember she came on as a child, didn't she? On the stage. And, [singing] 'I'm writing [sic] a letter to daddy, his address is heaven above.' Erm, 'Writing a letter to daddy, telling him of my love.'

NP: That's it, yeah.

VB: Mhm.

NC: Yes. That was very good.

VB: Mhm.

NC: But they said she wasn't very nice. They said she could be horrible.

EH: Who was that?

NC: Some of these film stars that worked with her.

EH: Who was that?

NC: Bette Davis.

NP: Bette Davis.

NC: They said she was a horror.

NC: She was a marvellous actress.

NP: Joan Crawford, she was a horror, wasn't she?

NC: Yeah, but Bette Davis, they said that... that when she was on the set and there was these young up and coming film stars. You know, the girls. She'd be horrible if they, you know, when they went on with her.

EH: She was a marvellous actress though, wasn't she?

NC: Wonderful actress.

EH: I used to like her films.

NP: I think these film stars, they took the parts of their natural life, if you know what I mean. They act [pause 2 seconds] how they... [pause 2 seconds] What can I say? How they were born, you know.

EH: How they lived.

NP: Yeah. How they lived. That's right, Elsie. Yes. Yeah.

NC: Mhm.

VB: I'm sure that's right. 'Cause when you think, I don't know if that's true of. We mentioned Ginger Rogers earlier on. Do you think, how do you think Ginger Rogers' personality came out in the films? Do you think...?

NC: 'Course she was a dancer, wasn't she?

VB: Yeah. That's true.

NC: She was a dancer through and through.

VB: Yeah.

NC: A most beautiful dancer.

EH: Who was that?

NP: Ginger Rogers.

EH: Oh, she was lovely.

VB: Yeah.

NC: And eh, I saw them in *Top Hat*.

VB: Oh yeah.

EH: Now who was her partner?

NC: Pardon?

EH: In *Top Hat*.

NC: Fred Astaire.

NP: Fred Astaire!

NC: Ooh, wonderful.

VB: I've got that one again. [laughs]

NP: That's it. Wonderful.

NC: She landed up in a wheelchair and she died a little while ago.

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

NC: I don't know what she died of.

EH: She hasn't been dead all that long, has she?

NC: No. She died recently.

VB: Mhm.

NC: But she came on somebody's life story. 'This Is Your Life', or something. And they wheeled her in in this chair.

VB: Aw.

NC: Dreadful. Cause she was the most lovely dancer.

NP: Oh, I didn't see that. Did they?

NC: Yes.

NP: Oh! I missed that.

NC: But she died recently.

EH: Oh yes. She's not been dead all that long.

NP: She was a wonderful dancer.

NC: Of course she must have been in her eighties. She must've been in her eighties.

NP: Oh yes, yes, yes. You know, I can tell by my age, you know.

NC: Yes.

NP: Because this was out when Harry and I used to go dancing.

NC: Yes.

NP: As I say, I'm in my eighties.

NC: That's right.

VB: **Actually, you've reminded me there, eh, [laughs] I was meaning to ask you a bit about your own background. Would that be all right?**

NP: Ye-es!

NC: Of course.

VB: Things like your date of birth, that sort of thing. 'Cause I asked Nancy when I spoke to you before.

NC: Yeah. Elsie's the eldest. I'm the next. And Nancy's the next.

VB: Right. I've got a... 'Cause remember I asked you these questions.

NC: That's right.

VB: [brings out papers] Can I ask what your second name is?

NP: Yes.

VB: Erm, so your second name?

NP: Oh, Prudhoe. P, R, U, D, H, O, E.

VB: Ah. That's unusual. I've not heard that before.

NP: Yeah.

VB: It's nice. Erm, and can I ask what year you were born in?

NP: Well, I'm, I'm eighty-three in February,

NP: February--

NP: February. It's all right, I'm... [laughs]

NC: About 1913, I should think.

VB: 1913.

NC: Few years younger than me.

NP: Yeah. 19, yeah.

NC: About 1913.

VB: Right. And where were you born?

NP: Manchester.

NC: In the bedroom.

VB: [laughs]

NC: [laughs]

NP: Don't ask me what part of Manchester. What part of Manchester?

EH: I don't know. I only know where I was born. Manchester. In Silly Town!

NP: [laughs]

VB: Ah.

NP: Manchester. I don't know what part. Oh, if I'd known I'd have brought me birth certificate.

VB: Oh, [laughs] But I was hearing that you came here when you were very young.

NP: Yes, I came here when I was two.

VB: Right. And have you lived in the area ever since?

NP: Yes.

VB: That's great. Erm, can I ask what sort of work your father did?

NP: My father was an engineer.

VB: Mhm. Ah.

EH: We went to Newcastle to live, didn't we? During the war.

NP: Yeah. My father was a bluecoat schoolboy.

VB: Right. That's interesting. And did your mother work at all? Or did she raise the family? Did your mother work?

NP: Oh, well she used to go out. And mother went out occasionally to work, didn't she?

EH: What, after we were--

NP: When we came here. When we got older. When we got older.

NP: Because when the war ended--

EH: When the war ended--

NP: When the war ended--

EH: And things got bad.

VB: Mhm.

NP: The engineering department got very bad and my father was out of work quite a time.

VB: I see. Yeah.

NP: And she had to go out to work!

VB: I'm sure many women did at that time.

EH: We had our granny with us, didn't we?

NP: We had our grandma with us.

VB: Yeah.

VB: And can I ask how many sisters and brothers you have?

NP: Pardon?

VB: Do you have sisters? Brothers?

NP: No. No no sisters, just this one. [laughs]

VB: Just that one. [laughs] That's great.

EH: Oh, how she said it. Just this one. [laughs]

VB: Just that one! Doesn't count. [laughs]

NP: She's the eldest.

VB: Right. [laughs] And can I ask how old you were when you left school?

NP: Eh, fourteen.

VB: Fourteen. That's great. And did you go straight into work then?

NP: Yes, I went in, I worked in Mrs Smith's the sweet shop at first. You know Smith's?

NC: Yes.

VB: And did you stay working there or did you get another job?

NP: No. Then I worked at Hamilton's. Hamilton's brush factory.

VB: Ah. Is that local?

NP: Eh, beginning of Wealdstone.

NC: Yes.

VB: Ah, I see. Yeah.

EH: Next to the Wealdstone cinema. I know.

NC: Wealdstone.

VB: And can I ask what year you were married in?

NP: Ooh! Ooh! What year was I married in?

[pause 4 seconds]

NP: Ooh dear. I was twenty... [pause 3 seconds]. Wait a minute.

EH: Twenty-four was it?

NP: No. I was... I don't know if I was twenty-four or twenty-three.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Wait a minute. Twenty-four, twenty-five, twenty-six. twenty-seven. Wait a minute. I'm thinking about Bobby. How--

NC: How old Bobby... yeah.

NP: Yeah. Erm, [pause 3 seconds] I was twenty-four, I think. When I got married.

VB: So about 1937.

NP: That's right.

VB: Right.

NP: That's right.

VB: That's great. And can I ask what sort of work your husband did?

NP: Eh, well, at first when I met him he was a jeweller.

VB: Right.

NP: And then when the war came on, his mother knew a man who was manager over a factory in, where was it?

EH: Who?

NP: Where Harry worked during the war.

EH: Erm, I forget where the name was.

NP: Wait a minute. Oh-h-h,

EH: Non-ferrous.

NP: Non-ferrous.

VB: Right.

NP: Non-ferrous Die Casting Company.

VB: Ah.

NP: Now where was that? [pause 3 seconds] Non-ferrous Die Cast... Now that was in--

EH: Neasden.

NP: Neasden way. Yeah.

VB: That's great. And how many children do you have yourself?

NP: I have two children. Two boys.

VB: That's great. Erm, the only other thing was erm, do you have any strong political views? Have you ever been in a party or anything like that?

NP: No.

VB: And can I ask what religion you are?

NP: What?

VB: Can I ask what your religious--

NP: Oh! I'm, what am I?

NC: Mhm?

NP: What religion am I?

EH: What, what?

NP: Protestant!

VB: Protestant. Were you raised in the Church of England then?

NP: Yes, yes.

VB: That's great.

NC: You're a Christian.

NP: Yeah. Yes, that's right.

VB: That's great. That's all I wanted to ask. Erm, obviously a lot of these are going to be the same for you--

EH: Yeah. Yes.

VB: In terms of the family. Erm, but could ask what your second name is?

NP: Elsie Horne.

VB: That's great.

EH: H, O, R, N, E. Don't forget. [laughs]

VB: That's right. Erm, and what year were you born in?

NP: What year were you born in?

EH: 19--

NC: She's four years younger than eh, older than Nancy.

EH: Nineteen hundred and eight, I think.

NP: Four years older than me.

EH: I'm four years younger, older than you.

NP: Older than me.

VB: That's great. Eh, and how old were you when you left school?

NP: Fourteen when you left school.

EH: Oh yes.

VB: That's great.

EH: But I didn't go to work for a long time.

NP: No I know you didn't. Lady of leisure.

EH: I just sat and ate... [laughs]

VB: Right. Erm, so what sort of work did you do?

EH: I went to a Catholic school.

VB: Ah.

EH: Erm, on the Hill. What was it?

NC: St Dominic's.

EH: St Dominic's. Yes. St Dominic's.

VB: That's great. And did you work later?

EH: I'm not Catholic...

NP: She was a shorthand typist at first.

VB: Yeah.

NP: And then she went into a factory.

EH: No. Then she went to work in town.

NP: Shorthand typing.

EH: I wasn't doing shorthand typing there. I was just about to. And I didn't like the people 'cause they were snobs.

NP: Oh! Snobs.

EH: So what I done, what I done, I put two letters in the wrong envelope purposely to get the sack.

VB: [laughs] A useful trick. [laughs] Goodness me. And have you always lived in South Harrow?

EH: Pardon?

NP: Eh, she was born in Manchester.

EH: Yeah. In Silly Town [inaudible]. [laughs]

NP: [laughs] She was born in Manchester. Same as I was born in Manchester.

EH: Yeah.

NP: And eh, I was two years old when I came to London?

EH: No, I think you were a bit more, Nance. 'Cause you were a baby when you went to Newcastle.

NP: Yeah. How old was I when I came to--

EH: We were at Newcastle quite a time. 'Cause father had his position there.

NP: Yeah.

EH: And, I remember when we went, father was over there. And there was you and me and her. And you were a baby in arms when you went to Newcastle.

NP: Yeah, well how old was I when I came to London?

EH: Well, I don't know Nance.

NP: About two.

EH: No. I think you were more than two. More than two because we were there quite a time.

NP: I don't think I was much more than two.

EH: Oh I think you were.

VB: **But quite small anyway.**

NP: Yes. Yes.

VB: **Yeah.**

EH: We came to London. Yes. Then Newcastle.

NP: Yeah.

EH: And father was transferred.

NP: We lived in Manchester and then we went to Newcastle. And then he was transferred his job down to London.

VB: Right.

NP: During the war.

VB: So obviously you were of an age where this is really what you remember best.

NP: Yes. Yes.

VB: That's great. And, erm, are you married, or have you been...?

NP: Oh yes. She's a widow. Yeah.

EH: What's that?

NP: Are you married?

EH: Now I am, yes. But my husband got killed in the war.

VB: Oh.

EH: So, he came from Newcastle.

VB: Ah I see.

EH: But he was out of work from when he left school. Until he came to London which was twenty years old.

VB: Mhm.

EH: And we got married.

VB: When did you get married?

NP: When did you get married?

EH: Oh, I can't remember.

NP: During the war.

EH: Yes. During the war but I can't remember. Because I knew him for about three or four years before we got married.

VB: I see.

EH: And eh, he got called up when he got killed [and that was?].

VB: Do you have children or...?

EH: No.

VB: No. That's great. Thanks very much for answering these. Erm, the other thing I'd like to ask is erm, because I've been tape recording this erm, as you know--

NP: Yeah.

VB: Erm, the university asks us to get people to sign something as Nancy knows.

NC: Yes. Because of the tape, you see.

VB: Because of the fact--

NC: They can use your voice.

VB: Yeah.

NC: If you don't mind.

VB: It's possible that we may use some of these recordings. Either in broadcasts or we might be doing a book about it.

NC: Yes.

VB: Erm, so I don't know if you would have any objections to being quoted or--

NC: You don't mind anybody listening to your voice, do you?

NP: No.

EH: What's that, Nance?

NP: Do you mind anybody listening to your voice?

EH: Well if they like it, they can listen. [laughs]

NP: [laughs]

VB: I mean, we're talking about eh, people researching into the cinema or wanting to find out more about it.

NC: Yes, yes.

NP: Yes.

VB: So would that be all right with you?

NP: Ye-es.

EH: Just a minute. What's all this for?

VB: I mean I can explain a bit more about the project if you like.

NP: No. No. That's all right. Well what do you mean? What is it for?

EH: Well, is it to go down in somewhere or what?

VB: Well the tapes are going to be kept in Glasgow at Glasgow University.

NP: Yes.

EH: I can't hear Nance.

NP: She's a bit deaf. No that's all right.

NC: You don't object to yours, did you?

NC: No.

NP: No.

VB: I mean if you want to think about it, I can leave you the forms.

NP: No! That's all right dear.

NC: You only just got to sign, you know. She can use the tape, you see, for the project.

NP: Yeah.

VB: Is that okay? It's erm, if you want to have a look through it of course that's erm...

NP: Erm, what have I got to sign?

VB: Yeah. It's just this bit here.

NC: Can I—

VB: It's to stop you from suing us. [laughs]

NP: A. Prudhoe. Well they call me Nancy but my name, do I have to put Agnes?

VB: No. Whatever you like. Whatever you're known as.

EH: [laughs]

NP: Nancy Prudhoe. [pause 5 seconds; writing]

VB: Thanks very much. There's a bit for me to sign as well so I'll do that. I'll just date it.

NP: Have you signed yours?

NC: Yeah.

VB: To be honest, it's something that really just gets filed away.

NP: Ye-es.

VB: Eh, but it means that, it's in case anything ever cropped up.

NP: That's right. Yes.

VB: They know that you were aware that it was being taped. So that I wasn't sort of hiding a microphone somewhere. [laughs]

NP: [laughs]

VB: So that was the official thing.

NP: Yes, yeah.

VB: To do.

NC: Is there anything else you want to ask?

**VB: Well, I mean it's just been great for me sitting listening to you. I mean I must say. [laughs]
'Cause it's eh, it sounds so different from life today when you're talking about the dancing,
cinema.**

NC: They were the good old days.

VB: What the area was like and everything.

NP: Yeah. Oh it was nice in those days.

NC: It was.

NP: Oh it was.

EH: What was nice Nance?

NP: Peaceful. Well, the way we, when we were younger it was very nice.

EH: Oh. What? Here?

NP: Yes.

NC: In Harrow.

NP: In Harrow.

EH: Yes.

NP: It was wonderful. Well, it was a very quiet place, wasn't it?

NC: Yes, there was only about one shop. Wasn't there?

NP: That's right.

NC: There was Goldings.

NP: Goldings, Charles, there were no buses.

NP: Three shops.

EH: If we wanted to go to Harrow years ago, you had to walk.

NC: You had to walk.

VB: Mhm.

NC: Because there was no buses. Then they got buses and then you could ride.

EH: 'Cause we didn't live far from the Harrow School, did we?

NP: No, no we didn't.

EH: There was the Harrow cricket fields.

NC: West Street.

EH: West Street and all that. And then you walked all that way. Then they started... But it was a long time before they started buses, wasn't it?

NC: Yeah.

NP: My father, my father used to take my two boys to, along the erm--

EH: Cricket grounds.

VB: Ah.

NP: The cricket grounds. And they used to sit on the forms [benches] and see the schoolboys. The Harrow schoolboys play cricket. Now I didn't know that.

NC: My father used to mend the nets.

VB: Ah!

NP: Yeah. I didn't know that my father used to take them.

NC: You know, like the fishermen.

EH: But you used to go into the cricket field. You didn't...

NP: Eh, go on Nancy. Have you finished dear? Have you told the lady.

NC: What?

NP: We interrupted.

NC: Did you?

NP: 'Bout your dad.

NC: Oh-h! Oh yes, he used to erm, I used to go every March. I used to hate it. It was cold, you know. And he used to get the big nets out of the shed. Laid them on the ground and I used to look for the holes and he used to mend them.

NP: For Harrow School.

NC: And I used to get three pennies for that.

NP: [laughs]

NC: But I hated it. It was so blooming cold.

NP: [laughs]

VB: [laughs]

NC: And eh, you know erm, then he'd roll it all up, mend it, put it back an get the next one out. And it used to be very hard because he was only a small man.

NP: Yeah.

NC: And they were, the holes were like that. They were all nets round, you know. He did there and erm, Orly Farm School. That was another--

VB: Mhm.

NC: High school there. And erm, it was a tradition in the family, you know. Was taught it. It was all right. It was freezing cold. I never liked it.

VB: [laughs]

NC: What you gotta say?

NP: I don't, what was I saying?

VB: About watching,

NC: You were talking about your dad.

NP: Oh my father. I didn't know this. Until oh-h. Just before--

EH: Bobby was married.

NP: Just before Bobby was married. We were going along the road, erm, near West Street.

NC: Mhm.

NP: And he said, "Course you know, mother, that's where grandpa used to bring me to see the cricket." I said, "What!" "Oh yes," she said. "Grandpa used to take us out and we used to sit up on the forms and see the Harrow schoolboys play cricket." Now I didn't know that.

NC: Inside the cricket grounds.

NP: Inside the cricket grounds. Now I didn't know that.

NC: She lost her boy.

NP: I've lost my son.

NC: He died.

VB: Mhm.

[pause 3 seconds]

NP: My other son's in Panama. I lost my eldest son. My other son's in Panama. Married a little Panamanian girl.

EH: Yeah.

NP: Don't know when I see him.

VB: It's a long way, isn't it?

NP: And I'm scared stiff of flying. I wish I wasn't.

NC: Oh it's lovely. I like turbulence.

VB: [laughs]

EH: You're what Nance?

NP: Scared stiff of flying.

NC: The more turbulence, the more I like it.

VB: [laughs] **Well I think that's an unusual one.**

NP: Do you like flying?

VB: **Erm, I'm not too keen on it but I don't mind it. I don't mind it.**

NC: It's the quickest way of getting around, isn't it?

VB: **It is. It's a yes, it's got a purpose really.**

NC: But last time I had two very smooth trips.

VB: **Mhm.**

NC: There and back, you know.

VB: **Yeah.**

NC: Hardly any turbulence.

VB: **Is it South Africa your--**

NC: Not South Africa. Zimbabwe.

VB: Zimbabwe. Yeah.

NC: Central Africa.

VB: Central Africa.

NC: Yeah. Now my daughter's moved to Mandera.

VB: Ah.

NC: Further up.

VB: Yeah.

NC: So course I've got that to see.

VB: Yeah.

NP: I'd like to go to Panama but I'm too frightened. I don't think I'll ever get there.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Too frightened.

EH: You've got to put that behind you and just say you're going and then you'll be all right.

NC: I don't like the going up very much.

VB: Mhm.

NC: You know, when it goes Zoo-oom!

NP: Ooh, my god! Uh! Do you like flying?

VB: Erm well actually that's about the only bit I do like. [laughs] I quite like it when it goes up.

NC: Oh you like that.

VB: 'Cause it's quite an exhilarating feeling, but I can see why you wouldn't like it.

NC: Yeah.

VB: Erm, I think it's one of these things you either like or you don't.

NC: Yes. But it affects my ears coming down.

VB: Yeah.

NC: Usually terrible. They pop.

VB: Yeah.

EH: They say once you're up you don't know you're there. Is that true?

NC: Well it just goes like that, doesn't it?

VB: Yeah.

NC: I mean you're flying at what? Thirty five miles an hour. No, five hundred miles an hour. You're up 35,000 feet, aren't you?

VB: Yeah.

NC: Roughly. And erm, well that's when I went to Canada, I know. And when you're in the plane it's just like that, isn't it?

VB: It's really very erm...

NC: I like it when it drops in an air pocket.

NP: Oooh!

NC: Because it lifts right up.

VB: My father's the same as you. He just hates flying.

NP: Mhm?

VB: My father's like that. He--

NC: Was he?

VB: He's flown a few times but absolutely hates it.

NP: Well I've never flown and I'm sure I wouldn't like it. I keep saying I'll go but...

NC: Mhm. We went from Northolt Aerodrome. They used to have trips--

VB: Mhm.

NC: Fifteen shillings--

VB: Mhm.

NC: On a Sunday. And the two kids and myself, we went up over London for twenty-three minutes. We went all round the Palace.

NP: Oh, did you?

NC: Yes. And I said, "That blooming thing's been laying dormant all day."

NP: [laughs]

NC: It was an old, blooming old plane it was.

VB: Yeah.

NC: And erm, but, I went up with a cold and I came back without one. I came down without it.

VB: Oh.

NP: Oh. [laughs]

NC: The altitude.

NP: Oh-h.

NC: They say it takes colds away. I don't know whether it does. But erm, I was scared a bit, you know. Going like this, [demonstrates] you know. [laughs]

NP: Ooh, I think I'd be scared.

VB: Mhm.

EH: They say you don't know you're up there once you're up.

NP: Do you like flying?

VB: I do. I quite like it.

NP: Do you?

VB: Yeah.

NC: This'll be my fourth time to Africa. I've been six times to Canada. I've been to America. I've been to [pause 3 seconds] Majorca. I've been to Manhattan. Chinatown. The Bowery. Empire State Building.

VB: All the places that the rest of us know from the pictures, [laughs] I think.

NC: Niagara Falls. Victoria Falls. Niagara's nice. I've been there five times. But Victoria Falls is out of this world. In Africa.

VB: Mhm.

NC: It's lovely.

VB: Oh. I'd love to see it. Sounds beautiful.

NC: And the erm, you know the coloured birds and butterflies and things out there.

NP: Yeah. Yeah.

NC: 'Cause it's bush most of the, they keep getting fires out there and they don't know what starts it.

VB: Mhm.

NC: The sun of course is so hot. Brown, you know.

VB: I bet. Yes. Yeah.

NC: Mhm. We saw a fire when I was out there with my husband. We first went out there.

EH: My mother went on those five-shilling trips on the plane several times.

NP: Yeah.

EH: She'd go anywhere, my mother would.

VB: Mhm.

NC: They're terrible the bush fires.

NP: Ooh, I reckon I'd die.

NC: I love the country. I love Africa.

EH: And yet, I can't understand Nancy. When we were tiny and we lived at Newcastle, my father used to take us to the seaside every week almost. They put her on the roundabouts. Pay the man to keep her there all morning and she wasn't a bit frightened.

VB: [laughs]

NP: It's not up in the air is it!

[inaudible]

VB: That'd be lovely. Yes. [laughs]

NP: It's not up in the air.

VB: I think we deserve one after this.

NC: I think so.

VB: Definitely. Mhm.

NP: All right Nance?

NC: Yeah.

NP: Oh time flies, doesn't it?

VB: Certainly does.

EH: Do you live this way?

VB: No. I live in Glasgow.

NP: In Glasgow.

VB: In Scotland.

EH: Just wondering.

NC: Do you take sugar, Val?

VB: No, I don't.

NC: Do you like it strong or weak or--

VB: Erm however it--

NC: As it comes.

VB: As it comes. Yeah.

EH: Where Nance? Where does she come from?

NP: She lives in Glasgow.

EH: Eh?

NP: Glasgow.

EH: Oh.

VB: In Scotland.

NP: Scotland.

VB: Yeah. Yeah.

EH: Cold there, isn't it?

VB: Not at the moment. [laughs] We're getting the heatwave as well.

NP: Do you work down here?

VB: Erm, I've just been down for about a month talking to people about the cinema.

NP: About cinema.

VB: Yeah. So it's been really interesting.

NP: Ye-es. Yeah.

VB: I've been in different parts of the Harrow area.

NP: Yes.

VB: It's been great.

NP: What do you think of it round here?

VB: It's nice. It's nice. It sounds like it was a lot different though when you first came here. From what you're saying.

EH: Ye-es.

VB: Yeah.

EH: Oh it was beautiful round here. There was no houses here at all. Beautiful. Wasn't it Nance?

NP: Yes.

VB: I'm sure it must've changed.

EH: Oh it was, it was wonderful.

VB: Out of all recognition really.

EH: It was wonderful. Absolutely.

NP: I think that's why we, we haven't travelled very far. I think it was so nice round here--

VB: Yeah.

NP: That--

EH: The people were nice.

NP: The people were nice. And it was so nice that--

EH: You could go--

NP: In those days you didn't, you didn't travel far, did you?

EH: You could go out.

NP: I mean in them days.

EH: Leave your doors wide open and go home and they'd still be as you left them.

NP: Yeah. I mean to say, people didn't fly in aeroplanes much, did they? And, not like--

[End of Side A]

[Start of Side B]

NP: There and back.

VB: Mhm.

NP: About three and four times a day.

EH: 'Cause, you see, this was all fields. When we were here. There was no houses.

VB: Mhm.

EH: Just a lot of wild horses.

NP: [laughs] [pause 3 seconds]. I think that's why, well I travelled very, very little.

VB: Mhm.

EH: You what Nance?

NP: I don't think anybody's travelled so--

EH: Oh! Lots of, lots of people have--

.

NP: I haven't travelled far at all.

EH: Well I've not been very far. Only to Newcastle, where you went.

NP: Apparently, we were contented with the quiet, ordinary life.

VB: Mhm.

NP: I mean to say, when we were young, we used to go to Brownies. And then we, Girl Guides. And erm, weekends we'd go in the big lorry. And stay for a weekend sort of camping.

VB: Mhm.

NP: In an ordinary lorry. You know, it was all so simple and nice, if you know what I mean.

VB: Mhm.

NP: We... [pause 2 seconds] liked the simple things. I mean if you had a bicycle, you were well off. Weren't you, if you had a bicycle? You know, I can't describe it. We, it didn't take a lot--

EH: Very contented, very contented.

NP: Yes, very contented life.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Very contented.

EH: When we came from Newcastle to London, my mother came over with us too. Erm, a man on the train said you're going to the most beautiful part we could go. Where all the roses grow. Lovely, wasn't it?

VB: Ah.

NP: Yeah.

VB: Were your parents from London originally? Though they were in... were your parents from Manchester?

NP: No. I was born in Manchester.

VB: Yeah.

NP: We are Manchester people.

VB: Yeah.

NP: We're Manchester people. Then during the 1914 war, my father was an engineer.

VB: Mhm.

NP: And he tried hard to get into the Army but they wouldn't take him because they wanted him for his work. And then he got his position down here and we stayed down here.

VB: Yeah.

NP: He sent for my mother and--

[tea being brought in; general conversation]

VB: Thanks very much.

NP: We were born in Manchester.

VB: Yeah.

NP: But erm, I mean, I was very young when we came down here.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Elsie was four years older than me.

VB: Mhm.

EH: I was about four, I think.

NP: Mind you when we came to London, everybody thought we were foreigners. Because in those days, if you came from Manchester it was an awful long way!

VB: Mhm.

NP: And we spoke real Northern.

VB: Mhm.

NP: You see. And our twang was different.

EH: We might have spoke that but my father didn't speak like that.

NP: Oh no.

EH: Nor my mother.

NP: 'Cause he was educated at the Bluecoat School.

VB: Oh that looks lovely! [to NC, bringing in tea]

NC: I put it like that, save people messing about.

NP: But I've known Nancy since we've been this high.

VB: Ah.

NP: We went to Brownies and, Guides and--

EH: Ban the Pope!

NP: [laughs] There, there was all those going, you see. That's why there was always something going on.

VB: Mhm.

NP: And then you'd be in a play at the Sunday School and, that's how you. Oh it was wonderful. Just the simple way of life. But it was, it was so nice.

VB: Yeah.

NP: It was so lovely.

VB: It sounds like from what Nancy was telling me before that there was a lot of places for children to go out of doors.

NP: There was. Ye-es. It was so lovely.

VB: Yeah.

NP: It really was. And everybody was so lovely. You never got very many horrid people, did you, Nancy?

NC: No. We used to have hoops and sticks. You've heard of those, have you?

VB: Yes.

NP: And whips. Tops.

NC: And a top. And we used to colour it all colours.

NP: Yeah.

NC: And get a whip. And then eh, wind the string round. And then keep hitting it, you know. And all the colours used to come.

EH: They had eh, what did they call them? Hooplas. Didn't they? When you used to have a hoop.

NP: Oh a hoop. Not a hoo, eh, hoops, hoops.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Oh, it was wonderful. Really was.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Thank you Nancy. [taking tea]

EH: But you never saw me out much in the snow. I hated it.

NP: [laughs]

EH: I loathed the snow.

VB: Mhm.

EH: I hate it. [pause 4 seconds] I used to sit indoors.

NP: When we came down here, we were foreigners.

EH: Bring it a bit nearer.

NP: 'Cause we spoke so differently--

EH: That's all right dear. No, it's all right.

NP: To what they did down here.

EH: It's all right.

NP: We spoke real Northern. We were foreigners when we came down here.

VB: Mhm.

[pause 6 seconds]

NC: When I was out yesterday I went to the doctor's for a checkup. But, I had a chat with the nurse.

NP: Yeah.

NC: She said to me, "Have you got rails in your house?"

NP: Oh! [bursts out laughing]

NC: I said, "Yes. I got seventeen." She said, "Do you do your own work? Who does your work?" I said, "I do." So she said erm, oh, whatever else was it? [pause 2 seconds] Oh well she thought I was about ninety-odd.

NP: Well I suppose she did if you told her you got all those rails Nancy.

NC: No, this was before.

NP: Oh!

NC: She said, "Have you got rails indoors?" You know, to go up.

NP: Yeah.

NC: And erm, "Who does your work?"

NP: [hoots with laughter]

VB: [laughs]

NC: I said, "I do, and the garden." So she said eh, "Oh." She's, "Well your blood pressure's all right." And erm, I'm going up to see the doctor actually, 'cause I want some more tablets. She couldn't give me those. She gave me a prescription but, and then she said, "What about your hearing?"

NP: [laughs]

NC: "Want a hearing aid?"

NP: [laughs]

NC: By the time she'd finished with me... [laughs]

VB: I wonder how she thought you heard her before she asked you about the hearing aid. [laughs]

NC: [laughs]

VB: If she was asking you all these questions.

NC: Yeah.

VB: Ah.

NP: Oooh.

EH: I was a naughty girl, but Nancy wasn't.

NC: Yeah, she said, "You can have a hearing aid, you know. See the doctor."

VB: Mhm. Your house is lovely though.

NC: Mhm?

VB: It's a lovely house. I've been admiring all your ornaments and--

NP: Nice, isn't it?

EH: What?

NP: Lovely house. This house. It's a lovely house.

EH: Yes.

NP: Nancy's very artistic.

VB: Mhm.

NC: I was in the garden till ten the other night. Well it's cooler, you know.

VB: It's the best time of the day, isn't it?

NC: Mhm.

VB: Yeah.

[pause 5 seconds]

NP: How long have we known each other, Nancy?

NC: What d'you say?

EH: How what, Nance?

NC: You were about eight. And I was ten.

NP: Oh was I as old as that?

NC: I've known you about seventy-five years.

VB: [gasps]

NC: Seems like yesterday. The fairy ring.

NP: [laughs]

NC: When you had a friend those days, you kept them, didn't you.

NP: Pardon?

NC: When you had a friend those days--

NP: You had a friend.

NC: You kept them for years and years.

VB: Mhm.

[pause 4 seconds]

NP: We were friendly, weren't we?

NC: Yeah.

NP: We were all friendly, weren't we?

NC: Mhm.

NP: It was wonderful. Really wonderful. We used to have concerts and Nancy used to make all the dresses. Out of crinkled paper. Do you remember? You don't remember those.

NC: Vaguely.

NP: Do you remember in our back garden in--

NC: You had a wall, didn't you?

NP: In Whitby Road. Well it was like a stage. It was raised up and it was like a--

NC: That's right.

NP: All concrete. And it was ideal. It was like a stage.

NC: Yeah.

NP: And you made all the dresses of crinkled paper. You organised it! You, you got the whole thing up!

NC: Did I?

NP: Ye-ah! "Did I?" She can't remember.

VB: [smiles]

NP: You got the whole thing up. You made all the dresses of crinkled paper.

NC: Mhm.

NP: Do you remember that?

NC: Not really, no.

NP: Ooh, you must do, Nancy. You're older than me.

NC: I was always, erm, making up things.

VB: Mhm.

NC: I made up a play called 'Over The Rainbow'. And I trained twelve children in this room. Painted a rainbow on the back. And I had a little girl, two-and-a-half, and they were all rainbow fairies. And erm, 'course the theme song was 'Over The Rainbow'. We had the piano in the hall. Not that one. I had an old honky-tonk. There. The kitchen was there.

VB: Mhm.

NC: Different there, you know. And erm, this was a stage.

VB: Mhm.

NC: And we had frilly curtains across here. And erm, the kids come on here and I had a real actress down. And she said I'd done a wonderful job. So of course, we sang the song 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow'. Judy Garland thing, you know. Then we had a concert. And a party for the kids in the afternoon. So, I had nearly a hundred people in here that day.

VB: [gasps]

EH: Well when Nancy had concerts in the garden, we used to charge them a ha'penny or a penny to come in. They had refreshments for nothing. Then when it was all over, we used to go down the fair. 'Cause there was always a fair once a year, wasn't there?

NP: And spend the money on the roundabouts. [laughs]

VB: Mhm.

NP: You can't remember making all those dresses, can you?

NC: Vaguely. I can and I can't, if you know what I mean.

NP: You made them all out of crinkled paper, Nancy.

NC: I can't remember--

NP: And how I remember, you wanted one more roll of crinkled paper.

NC: Yeah.

NP: And I think that was to make another dress. And I had to run down to Goldings to get this roll--

NC: To get the roll of paper.

NP: Of crinkled paper.

NC: Mhm, vaguely remember it, you know.

NP: My mother used to make the refreshments.

NC: I was always getting...

NP: My mother used to make the refreshments. Yeah--

NC: Yes. We used to get lemonade and erm, and piece, and a bun with all sections in it, and charge a ha'penny.

NP: [laughs]

NC: I remember that. And if they hadn't got the money, packet of pins.

VB: Ah. [laughs; pause 3 seconds] It sounds like you had such good fun.

NP: Oh we did! Oh we did.

VB: Yeah.

NP: Real clean fun, wasn't it?

NC: Yeah. [pause 4 seconds]

VB: Did you ever act out scenes from the pictures or anything like that?

NP: No. No, I was in a play once, wasn't I?

NC: In the Brownies.

NP: In the Brownies.

EH: Oh yes, she was lovely.

NC: Called 'The Fairy Ring'.

NP: 'The Fairy Ring'.

EH: At erm, South Harrow, wasn't it?

NP: South Harrow. I know my mother got erm, a dressmaker to make. I had to have erm, a white suit made. 'Cause I was a little boy. And I had a white suit with a big collar, you know. Sort of a sailor suit.

NC: That's right. You made a good boy you did.

NP: [laughs] Sparrow Legs!

VB: [laughs]

EH: I think it went for three nights, didn't it?

NP: I think it went on for two or three nights. In the big hall in South Harrow. The Parish Hall. I know my mother had a sailor suit made for me. For the special--

EH: You what Nance?

NP: Mother had a sailor suit made for me.

NC: You looked real cute in that.

NP: That shows how long we've been friends.

VB: It does.

NC: Never had a cross word, have we? Never.

NP: No. Only when you called me Sparrow Legs.

VB: [laughs]

NC: No, that was Marjorie Griffiths.

NP: Oh! That was Marjorie Griffiths.

VB: [laughs]

NP: Oh, I thought that was you--

NC: No, not me.

NP: Sparrow Legs. Sparrow Legs that.

VB: Ah.

NP: I had little legs.

VB: Probably a dancer's legs.

NC: I'm going to a garden party tomorrow.

VB: A-ah.

NC: There's about eighty-odd.

NP: Are you?

NC: And I've got to recite.

NP: Ooooh!

NC: About, in front of about eighty-odd people.

NP: What are you going to recite?

NC: She's I've got you, erm, 'Nod'. About a shepherd.

NP: Ooh dear.

NC: She roped me in for it. She said we've got a lady doing a monologue and somebody else doing the recitation, looking at me.

NP: [laughs] And what have you got, what is it you've got to say?

NC: I've got to erm, recite. And it's eh, a poem I learnt about seventy-five years ago.

NP: Ooh, come on.

EH: I went to a convent school and when I was little, I was in a play. Well, I can't sing. And I had to sing, 'It's too late, too late, [inaudible].' I couldn't sing so somebody had to sing for me, and I had to mime it.

NP: [laughs]

VB: Mhm.

NP: An eh, what are you erm--

NC: I've got to recite tomorrow.

NP: Come on, recite what you're going to say.

NC: Mhm?

NC: Give us a little practice now.

NC: Well, I shall ask them all to erm, use their imagination. And erm, you've got to picture an old shepherd. Walking along after a hard day's work in the hills, with his blind old sheepdog. And there's a beautiful sunset. And they're coming along, you know. And the sun's shining on the sheep, you know. Erm, it's called 'Nod'. Eh, 'Nod', by Walter de la Mare. [recites]

“Softly along the road of evening,
In a twilight dim with rose,
Wrinkled with age, and drenched with dew
Old Nod, the shepherd, goes.

His drowsy flock streams on before him,
Their fleeces charged with gold,
To where the sun's last beam leans low,
On Nod the shepherd's fold.

The hedge is quick and green with briar,
From their sand the conies creep,
And all the birds that fly in heaven
Flock singing home to sleep.

His lambs outnumber a noon's roses,
Yet, when night shadows fall,
His blind old sheep-dog, Slumber-soon,

Misses not one of all.

His are the quiet states of dreamland,
The waters of no-more pain,
His ram's bell rings 'neath an arch of stars,
Rest, rest and rest again."

NP: Oh that was good.

VB: Beautiful.

NC: Will that be all right?

NP: Yeah. You're very clever, Nancy. Very clever.

NC: I erm, I can remember another one which my dad helped me with, when I was a little girl. And it was called 'Little Jim'. And he was a miner's son. If I can remember it, I don't know. [recites] "The cottage was a thatched one, the outside old and mean, yet everything within that cot was wondrous neat and clean. The night was dark and stormy, and the wind was howling wild, as the patient mother knelt beside the death bed of her child. A little worn out creature whose once bright eyes grown dim, he was the collier's only child. They called him Little Jim. 'I have no pain, dear mother now, but I am so dry. Please moisten poor Jim's lips again and mother, don't you cry.' With trembling hands she held a teacup to his lips. He smiled to thank her as he took three tiny little sips. She knew, [pause 2 seconds], that all was erm... She knew her child was dying. The child she loved so dear had uttered the last word that she might ever hope to hear. The cottage door was opened, the collier's step was heard. The mother and the father met, yet neither spoke a word. He knew that all was over, he knew his child was dead, he took the candle in his hand and he walked towards the bed. With trembling hearts, [pauses 6 seconds] erm, with trembling hearts and shaking, they humbly asked of him, once more in heaven to meet again, their own poor little Jim." [referring to 'Little Jim' by Edward Farmer]

EH: Oh marvellous.

VB: That's lovely.

NC: I was only a little tot when my father taught...

NP: I don't know how you remember it all Nancy. I honestly don't.

EH: Nancy can't remember going out the front door sometimes!

NP: [laughs] I know I can't.

VB: [laughs]

EH: I don't know how you remember it...

NC: And I made up a poem about my children. When they were younger. Before Shirley, she went abroad, you see. She went to Africa, erm, she went to Canada. I've only got Hazel here.

“Once I had two little buds,
Who grew into lovely flowers,
One was dark and one was fair,
We had such happy hours.

One little flower got blown away
To Canada, over the sea.
And that little flower will never know
Just what she means to me.

And now, I've only one flower left.
And oh to God I pray
That the other one will come back soon,
To complete my treasured bouquet.”

[phone rings; NC gets up to answer phone]

VB: Oh, that's lovely.

[door opens, phone rings louder; NC answers phone]

NP: Nancy's very clever.

VB: She is. [laughs] She is. Without any doubt, yeah.

[NC in background, talking on phone]

NP: She's a true friend.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Been friends ever since we were, we were about six.

[pause 6 seconds; NC continues on telephone]

NP: My other friend's just died. Nancy knows her. She's just died. She was nine months younger than me. And I was her bridesmaid.

VB: Mhm.

NP: They had Hatherley's [?] the sweet shop and tobacconist in South Harrow. [pause 6 seconds] I think it's the way you've been brought up. If you've been brought up... what can I say? To be friendly and true and honest and, it's just. We all used to go Sunday School together and, Brownies and Girl Guides. And I think it sort of frames you for your later years.

VB: Mhm.

NP: I think it teaches you right and wrong.

VB: Mhm.

EH: We had marvellous parents, didn't we?

NP: Ooh. Wonderful. Wonderful parents.

EH: We had my granny with us all the time.

NP: Oh yeah, we had my grandma with us all the time.

VB: Did she come down from Manchester with the family?

NP: Yes, yes. With the family.

VB: Yeah.

NP: Yeah. Yeah.

[NC talking on phone in background].

NP: They all thought we were foreigners when we came down here. 'Cause we spoke so differently.
[pause 2 seconds] But you just get on with it, don't you?

EH: You what, Nance?

NP: I say they all thought we were foreigners when we came down here.

VB: You obviously--

EH: Well she was a good girl.

VB: You obviously made yourself at home quite soon. [laughs]

NP: Oh, yeah. The people were very nice 'cause there wasn't a lot of people round here in those days. And they were very, very friendly. They thought we'd come from a foreign land or somewhere. They really thought we were foreigners.

EH: Yeah.

VB: Mhm.

NP: But it was so nice. Lovely.

VB: Mhm. [pause 4 seconds] **It must be lovely to have a friend you've known for that long. You'll have been through so many things together.**

NP: We were this high--

VB: Yeah.

NP: When we got friendly. Yeah. Nancy is a true friend.

EH: I had like a nice friend, didn't I? Nora.

NP: Yeah. She's just died.

EH: Not long ago. She had erm, TB. She was a cripple. And then I had erm, who else did I have? Another friend. I forget. Like older, as we get older we have different friends...

NP: Well, we were all friends if you know what I mean. Elsie and I, we had a different, you know, as we got older. There's four years difference, you see. But erm, Nancy and I, we've always been friends. Always. It's funny isn't it?... We see each other regularly.

VB: Mhm. [pause 4 seconds]. **Is this Nancy with her children behind you?**

NP: Yeah.

VB: **I thought so, yeah. You can see the likeness between--**

EH: That's the Canada lady, wasn't it?

VB: Yeah.

EH: Her daughter. Went to Canada.

NP: That's the one in Canada that's died.

VB: Mhm.

EH: And her two children.

NP: Well she died.

VB: Mhm. There's a very, she's very like Nancy, isn't she?

NP: Oh yes.

VB: I thought that actually was Nancy with her daughter--

NP: No.

VB: But it's her daughter. And granddaughter.

NP: Very much alike. Mhm.

VB: It's amazing. Amazing likeness.

EH: Nancy had a friend. Judy. Didn't you?

NP: Oh yes. And she's just died.

EH: Her cousin was my friend.

VB: Mhm.

EH: But she had a TB here. She was a cripple.

NP: I've known her like I've known Nancy. She always used to say, "I'll get married in white. And it'll be on Christmas Day. And the snow will be on the ground." I said, "You know, you can't promise that." And do you know, everything came true. She was married in white. She was married in the church on Harrow on the Hill.

VB: Oh lovely.

NP: And the snow was like that. And she was married in white velvet. Oh, she looked like an angel from heaven. She married, there used to be a tobacconist and newsagents in South Harrow. Hatherleys.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Very old establishment. And she married the son there. And I was her bridesmaid. And I was in red velvet.

VB: Oh, it must've looked wonderful.

NP: It's true! Every word of it is true. The snow, she said, "And the snow will be on the ground." Now how did she know that the day, Christmas Day, the snow was that high? And she was married in white velvet. And her sister and I were in red velvet. And her sister was a dressmaker and she made us the most beautiful dresses. We had long sleeves--

VB: Mhm.

NP: And a neck, a cuff that started there and it came right round, standing up round the shoulder. And she machined all fancy, in the red, all fancy. Ooh, and she even made our hats like a tricorne hat.

VB: Oh.

NP: And she machined all the brims. It was all on one side, like that...

VB: How lovely.

NP: And we had muffs. And she made the muffs. And they were all machined beautifully! And we had heather, on the muffs. Honestly. And do you know, everything that she said when we were young, came. She, she must have known! She must have waited for years for this wedding. And everything she said, we'd be married in... she'd be in white velvet and we'd be in red. You know, when you're kids you don't think, do you? Everything came true.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Everything. It was the most fantastic wedding. Just two bridesmaids, her sister and me. And they married in the church on the hill, Harrow on the Hill. And she was in white velvet. Oh and she had black hair like you have. Oh! She looked out of this world. And it was a wonderful wedding.

EH: She was very tiny, wasn't she?

NP: She was very tiny. Tiny and petite. She's died just a year ago.

VB: It would be a lovely church to be married in, that, as well.

NP: Oh, it was wonderful.

VB: Beautiful.

NP: It was Christmas Day. And all the church was decorated all inside. And as you got out the car, the snow, it's like a fairytale!

VB: Mhm. It sounds it.

NP: Some people wouldn't believe you. But if I never move off this chair again, it was true.

VB: Mhm.

NP: I said to her, "Everything has come how you..." [pause 2 seconds] Her daddy couldn't give her away. He was dying with heart. Her daddy couldn't give her away. And she had the most wonderful father.

EH: I know.

NP: He used to be a jeweller.

VB: Mhm.

NP: He had a jeweller's shop in South Harrow. And erm, oh, he was the most wonderful man. But he couldn't give her away. His heart was very bad. And I remember she got dressed, and we came down in her front room. And her mummy opened the door for her daddy, to look at her.

VB: Mhm.

NP: Yeah. He couldn't, he couldn't give her away. He couldn't go to the church.

EH: He was a very nice gentleman, wasn't he?

NP: Ooh, he was a thorough gentleman. He had a jeweller's shop in Bond Street. My son was a jeweller. The one that died. But she had the most wonderful wedding. And it's funny when you're kids, you say all this. But everything happened.

VB: Mhm.

NP: How she wanted it.

NC: [back from telephone] Sorry about... That was a friend of mine. Will you have a cup a tea?

VB: Erm--

EH: I'll have a cup please.

VB: I think I might head off actually.

[End of Side B]

[End of interview]