

BECTU History Project
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Interviewer: Alan Lawson
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Peggy Hyde-Chambers.
Tape 1 Side A

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The copyright of this recording is vested in The BECTU History Project. Peggy Rignold, make-up artist, later to become Mrs Hyde-Chambers, wife of the film editor, and later to work for Lew Grade as an administrator. Recorded on the twenty-eighth of May 1995. Interviewer Alan Lawson. Side One.

First when and where were you born?

Where, where was I born?

When, yes, when and where?

When. Oh I was born on the eighth of March 1917.

And now you did say you came from a showbiz family?

Yes, Dudley, mm.

Now did that affect schooling at all?

Yes.

It did?

Of course it did. [Laughter]

Yes, it did, yes.

Because we were always moving about.

Ah, ha. Ah, ha.

And school we used to be at a place perhaps for a few weeks and then I'd go through perhaps a term and a half and then we'd be off somewhere else.

Yes. This was because of your father was it?

Well, and mother, they were both actors.

Yes, ah, ha.

Oh actually looking back I have no roots because we never stayed anywhere long enough.

Now let's, let's store it up. There's also, there's Hugh Rignold?

Hugo, yes.

Well, I see.

He's, he's a cousin.

Yes, he's a cousin. Was that your, your father's brother?

Father's brother Walter.

Ah, ha. And he...

No, not Walter, his father's brother was Hugo.

Yes, yes.

Hugo too.

Yes.

Because my father was Harry and Harry was Harry and he was Hugo and his son was Hugo.

Ah, ha. And he was the conductor of The Liverpool Phil?

Mm?

He was the conductor of The Liverpool Phil?

Yes, he became, yes. Actually he was with all the big bands with Jack Benny and all of them.

Really?

Oh yes.

Oh.

He was, he, he was...

He crossed over in fact, went from jazz to...

Yes, he crossed from there to classical, yes.

Yes, yes. And he had a, a daughter, Jennifer?

Yes, that's right. Jennifer lives up in Hampstead.

Gay her name was on?

Gay, yes, Jennifer Gay, yes.

That's right.

And...

Television child announcer?

That's right.

Yes, yes.

Yes. And then she was a ballet dancer.

Yes, that's right.

And then she grew a bit too tall I believe.

That's right, yes, yes. Anyway coming back to, coming back to you. When, I know you, you've just told me recently you in fact you and your brother Harry?

Mm.

Appeared in films quite early on?

Oh yes. We, my father was making films, we started right at the beginning and when I was very small. I've still got my father's camera and he used to put me on a box and he was making this film and Harry and I were always working because he always used people.

Yes, yes.

Any, any staff, and they'd stand me on a box and my father would say 'Come on Peggy, one and two and three and'.

[Laughter]

And if it, if it was doing slow motion it would, it would be 'One, two, three and four', and I was very young, about no more than probably about five or six then.

[Laughter]

And Harry was also working and also we were both acting in it.

Yes.

And my mother was acting in it.

Yes, yes. Then when did you decide you didn't want to act any more?

Did I go on to do any more?

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With any more acting?

Yes. Oh well, I was doing it and all the time up to fourteen I was saying to Harry, and he was saying that we didn't like acting. Actually we didn't like the people that said 'Turn this way, do that' and 'Oh God she's got a spot' and do this or do the other and we both got bored stiff with them. We didn't like them, we watched the technicians.

Yes.

And decided he just wanted to be a cameraman and I just wanted to be, actually I wanted to be a continuity girl but I thought I'll get in any way I can.

Yes.

And I was working on a film at Elstree and I did quite a bit there and Stapleton I think was the studio manager.

Yes.

And then I heard that there was a girl in the Make-up Department who was going to get married to Brian Langley.

Oh yes.

And I thought that's for me.

Yes.

I'm going in there. So I borrowed... Oh no actually before that I got a job in the Wardrobe, there was a place in the Wardrobe so I got a job in the Wardrobe for fifteen pounds a week and while I was in...

Fifteen pounds a week?

Fifteen pounds a week.

I say.

Yes, it was fifteen. No, pounds! Shillings.

Shillings?

[A 05:00]

I beg your pardon.

Yes.

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Shillings a week. And while I was in there I, that was just a start, I was in now I was on the staff, and that's when I used to go up and bother him and he got so sick of seeing me he said 'Oh well, you can have it' and I went in to the Make-up Department then, when Harry Dayville [ph 0:05:13] was there.

Yes.

And various other people and Phil Leakey came there. He was, had been once had been in the sound.

Yes.

But he'd had to make the crossover and we worked together a lot. And I stayed in that and worked up till I was, was being rented out.

Now I want, I want to stop you there. What kind, when do you start to get some proper training in make-up because it was...

Oh you didn't have any training in anything.

Really, yes?

I never had, ever had it was always... And even if I said 'Can I, can I do it?' 'Of course you can, of course, you can,' [Laughter] it's always like this.

Really.

'Of course you can'. I said to people 'Are you putting me in at the deep end'? 'No, no, no, you can do it, you can do it'. I've never, never actually it's always been just by experience.

Yes, yes.

Everything, all the acting and everything.

But in, but in those days was it Leichner, or had Max Factor come in now?

We had Leichner, they were just moving out and it was Max Factor coming in with the big tins.

Yes.

And now, I mean after that I saw that the money went on, on the, on the containers not the product. [Laughter]

Yes. [Laughter]

But then we just used to buy the product, and it was really quite reasonable stuff and...

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Yes, yes. What was the, what was the first film that, if you like, you had your own credit for it?

Oh well, we didn't have credits.

No.

Make-up didn't have credits in those days, no.

No, no.

But they used to rent us out and we were, I was out on a Henry Hall picture.

Oh yes.

At Welwyn and Harry Davo, and there was another fellow called Jack Pickley [ph 0:06:43] and I used to go as their assistant at that time. And unfortunately they were rather fond of a tippie and we did an awful lot of night work.

[Laughter]

And I was always the one on the set and they were always the one I used to say to Jimmy 'I can't open the make-up door', so he would come up or send up some of his blokes and we'd have to heave Harry away from the door so as I could get in.

[Laughter]

And there was an awful lot of night work all the time in those days. But from that it was for Stafford, John Stafford the picture that we were making at that time.

Yes.

And they said to me 'We're paying so much for you are you getting it'? And I said 'No'. [Laughter] So they said 'Well, in that case would you like to come and take over our Make-up Department, we're going to Shepperton and we'll pay you so much', which was of course, more. And so I said 'Yes, yes, thank you very much I would' and...

That's where we met at Shepperton?

Yes, must have.

Yes, that's right, yes.

Yes, that's right.

On Stafford's films, yes.

Yes. And David Lean because he'd been working for them, and he went with them on the understanding that he could direct one of their pictures.

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Yes, yes.

And David Lean was the editor and, and Jimmy Wilson was a cameraman.

Mm, mm.

And Jimmy Carter was the, he was the assistant, Arthur Graham was the operator. And Jimmy Carter and I got on very well and then we'd gone to meet his, gone to see his sister one night because actually we were all living down at Shepperton.

Yes.

I mean I, and Harry and I sort of rather drifted because he used to live where he was working and I was living where I was working. Although he had a base at Elstree...

Yes.

We lived in Deacon Hill where mother was.

Yes.

But we used to go to, when we worked on pictures we used to stay near. And Jimmy Carter and I went off to his sister's to collect a new battery from his brother or something for his car and on the way back we had a crash and he was killed.

Oh.

And I remember I got delayed concussion because I went out for about four days afterwards but he was out. I didn't know he was dead but he was a nasty mess. I got up from behind the back of the car and came round and found the seat was, the engine was in my seat and the door was like that. Anyway I went round and they'd got Jimmy out. He was on the, on the bank, it was the middle of the night and raining. But when I, they kept asking me, I suppose they were asking me in hospital and kept asking me what was my name and I kept giving it to them and I'd say 'We've got to be there in the morning we're starting a new film. We both, I can come to hospital now but I've got to be at the studios in the morning we're starting a new film'. Anyway actually when they came I had a big bang here and they were stitching it up and I was saying, they were asking me my name and I said 'I can't, if you'd asked me a few minutes ago I could tell you, I can't remember, if you'd asked me a few minutes ago'. And then I went out for about four days and I got delayed concussion which lasted, stayed with me almost all my life because it affected this.

[A 10:16]

Yes.

And it's very hard to concentrate. But what I've done I mean I've overcome it completely and I never told anybody at the time because people don't employ people

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who have problems [Laughter] with their remembering. I used to do, everything was notes, everything, everything was notes.

Yes.

And I still do that. Actually it's, it's much better now. But friends would ring me up and say 'I'll meet you at six o'clock at so and so' and I'd say 'Yes', put it down and think oh was it six, was it six thirty, was it seven? [Laughter] But that all I sort of coped with alright. But poor old Jimmy. He, he, he was, he, I mean he was just finished and went to the studios in the sky and they got Jerry Massy-Collier.

Oh yes.

To take over. And after that they, George King came in and he made a few pictures and...

And I think we met on those.

Yes. You did?

Yes, yes.

Were you second unit or something because...?

No.

Well, look because Arthur Graham's the only one I remember.

Well, there was Herman Glendenning, [ph 0:11:10]

Oh Herman Glendenning [ph 0:11:12] you were with him?

Yes.

Oh that's right. And, and now we're...

I was operator on some and Arthur was operator on some.

Oh, oh well, I was rather stuck with Bunny Parsons.

Yes.

Yes, we got, we were rather sort of closely knitted we were a little family. And do you remember John Norman, the art director, a big dark fellow?

Yes, yes.

Yes. Well, what happened to him is he, he needn't have gone in to the Army at all but I did. I needn't have done either, people used to say to me 'Why on earth don't you,

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didn't you stay we're making so much money'? Outsiders came in doing it all but I thought well, there's a war on.

Yes.

Once they know I'm there Hitler will take fright. I'll have to go in in it, I was bored doing one and I'll be in this one anyway I joined up. And John thought if I joined up he should join up and I said 'No, you've no need to you don't have to', but he did and he, he was gone. Had his initial training, went to Singapore as the Japs came in and he was never heard of any more. Anyway, now?

You went to, you went in to the Army as?

I went in to the Army and I went, they, I went in to The FANYs.

Yes.

As a driver. They weren't going to take me because I wasn't tall enough but the sergeant or whoever it was pulled my hair up a bit and put me on an inch or half inch and I got in and I was sent to Lichfield. And it was an orphanage and it was extremely bleak and we were all in bunk beds and then there was an air raid siren and in the pitch dark we were all told to get out of our bunks. I got out, forgot I was on top and nearly killed a girl beneath me because I fell on her in the pitch dark and of course... Anyway we were alright and we were sent in. Are you finding this a bit boring?

No, no, no.

We were all taken down in the dark, we went down in to a church and got under the pews. And there was a girl next to me who was trembling like this and I said 'It's alright, it's alright'. She said 'Oh it's a thunderstorm'. So I said 'No, it's not, no, it's not it's not a thunderstorm'. You could hear this 'rurrrm, rurrrm' coming over you see. So she said 'Oh it's a thunderstorm', and she said 'I don't mind the bombs they can drop the bombs', if it's a thunderstorm [Laughter] she was terrified, but anyway she, we survived that clinging to each other hoping it wasn't a thunderstorm.

[Laughter]

And then, oh that's right. We used to have injections and I would always get in the front of the queue because I hated them and waiting in the queue I thought would finish me off. Anyway I got to the front of the queue, had the injections, went outside and collapsed [Laughter] in the passage. And I heard people saying 'Oh she's fainted', but, and I thought well, come and help me. And another morning, oh there was an officer came and sent me off to go back to bed and brought me a cup of tea, mm, mm. And in the mornings you'd come out, you'd hear reveille and come out and there would be the trumpeters blowing reveille with an old dressing gown, fluffy slippers and hair all in sort of pieces of linen or paper or something. [Laughter] But I left there and then I got caught up in the Coventry bombing because I was always being sent somewhere or the other and I was always having, having driven ever since I was a child because my father used to put me on his lap and I would have to steer and then when I could reach the gears I'd do the gears in country roads.

[A 15:19]

Yes.

And then he'd take over when we got to, to towns. And I went and passed my, I went to have this test, oh get my licence at seventeen I didn't have to pass a test, that's right.

No, right, right.

I got my licence. But they were always, we were always having tests in the Army. I was having tests on lorries, I was having tests on ambulances and I had motorcycles and buses and all sorts of things I was driving but on tests. And I was always being sent to different places all over the place to have another test. Anyway I ended up, oh on the way it was an awful thing in Coventry I was on a train there and there's a man who's going demented 'How can you all sit here while people are dying'? It's funny it happened again in Oxford Street in London and there had been a bomb and there was a man saying 'How can you sit here as though nothing's happened people have being killed'? And we were all sort of sitting there as though it was a normal day. And it, as I say it happened again on a, on an underground train here. And so I went, I was sent off from there and I ended up in Camberley.

Oh yes.

And I was on the course that they've given a bit of publicity to now to a princess. I remember her coming down for, for a session there, didn't see an awful lot of her but went through the course. And the only thing that bothered me was the First Aid which I said I'll never get through because I've, I couldn't, didn't like it. But so while we were doing the mechanics and everything, oh while we were doing First Aid I'd be thinking of the mechanics. And anyway I passed them all and passed the First Aid because I just used common sense. But they used to teach us too much and they'd say if you find someone with a broken leg you'd get hold of their foot and pull it and do the thing, and I said 'If ever I'm injured don't let a FANY [Laughter] near me because they don't know enough'.

Yes.

But then I was sent from there... Oh there was one other incident, oh gosh yes, we had a lot of ladies.

Yes.

The Honourable this and the other something.

Yes, I see.

Shall I stop now?

No, no, no, no, no.

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And I had various quite entertaining incidents where they put a girl on to teach us who had been in the Army three months.

[Laughter]

And it, you know, you all sit round and you're all in it and this, one of them who almost was like something out of the '20s, she had an Eton crop and a long cigarette holder she said 'My darling, I'll never be able to drive again, I've driven all my life but I'll never be able to drive again', she was putting me off. And she did put us off because it's like someone saying to you 'Now, now you, when you, when you breathe you do this' and making you totally conscious of breathing. And when, I mean we just drove automatically you didn't even think you did everything automatically and she used to make you think about it. And before then, that's right, before then I'd been driving a colonel for quite some time in a staff car and I had all my little tricks like I had a sticky gear and I'd just give it a little tap, tap, tap and this voice would say 'If you do that you won't be a driver for long', I mean it was really quite overpowering we all thought we wouldn't pass. Anyway we were out in a lorry and we used to do this business of everybody having a, a go and then she got in to, got in to drive it and backed it in to a ditch, which pleased everybody and some soldiers came along at the time and helped us out.

But as, as in all of them I wasn't there for very long. Oh we did drill, we did some drill on the Sandhurst parade ground where we had one of these sergeant-majors who'd give the voice, you know, and you'd get this terrible giggles running up and down and everyone going like this and in front of very eminent people. And there was one, one day which I'll always remember and I was coming from the billet and walking down the country road towards the parade ground, the Sandhurst, and a big black car, a big or a big car came up towards me and suddenly I realised it had got the flag on the front and as it went past it was the King and the Queen. So I snapped to attention and saluted and they were giving me great wide smiles and waving, waving enthusiastically. I was the only person in sight.

[Laughter]

So I stayed smiling and saluting and waved with, with my left hand.

[Laughter]

But I wasn't there for very long and then I was posted to Rutland Gate in, opposite the barracks and there I drove an ADMS who had the maroon ribbons round his hat.

[A 20:13]

Yes.

And his name was, mm, oh my colonel was Buggy. Oh there's Colonel Buggy up there. Colonel, Colonel Marsh I used to drive him.

Oh yes, yes.

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And up there I used to do very well because I was the only girl driver there, and if you were the colonel's driver you do very well wherever you go. And he used to have a trick of going up and down seeing a fellow, stopping the soldiers every now and again and he saying 'How are you?' 'Very well, thank you sir'. And 'How's your family?' 'Very well thank you sir', and then sometimes someone would say 'Well, I'm afraid my...' And he, oh I beg your pardon I'm telling this very badly. He would say 'Good, good' to everything they said 'good, good', and then he got one who said 'Well, I'm afraid my wife's ill and my daughter's not very well', 'Good, good' he'd say and pass on.

[Laughter]

And, oh yes, we did get caught up in one or two things there. Because he used to go out, he used to like to go out on manoeuvres and he used to like to follow all, all the convoys and you'd get this little red light in front of you.

Yes, yes.

And we'd, you'd, you'd actually get, well you'll know this, you'd get so mesmerised you don't know if it's stationary or not.

That's right, that's right, yes.

And then he used to like to go out when they were all on their manoeuvres and he'd, he'd leave me and he'd go off and he'd disappear. And there was one time when I wanted to wash my hair shall we say and I thought well, it's all quiet there's nobody about here just trees and bushes and things. So I went in to a field and it was all very quiet and suddenly there was a movement and I looked and a head popped and a head popped and a head popped all over the field a head popped out so I had to go back and wait. And we had some rather nasty things there. It was the, it was The East Lancs Infantry Regiment some nasty things were, a lot of youngsters came in and, or new recruits and you had accidents, you know, down like with a rifle.

Yes.

And up through their heads and cleaning them and shooting their, each other. And there was one fellow who was outside the garage cleaning one of the officer's cars and a fellow got in the car behind him, he was cleaning the rear of a car, this fellow got in behind, in the car behind him and had, let the clutch in, crack went both his legs. And there was some quite sort of difficult things I suppose happened amongst everybody there. They were all miners, they were very nice fellows and they all used to think the Army was wonderful because they were in, working in daylight.

Yes.

And they weren't going back down the mines when they came out. And anyway I left that and came down to, to drive Buggy. And they were all doctors. He was the, an ADMS, which for the life of me I can't remember what that is now. Anyway we used to go round during the raids and after the raids we used to go round to all the ack-ack

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sites to see what's happening to everybody and what, how, what they needed. And then I became a gas officer and used to instruct the girls on gas, on their gas drill and had the old business of, you know, you'd bring out the respirators and bring out the mask and out would fly sanitary towels, [Laughter] and there was all, they'd say 'This is not a place to keep...' And then I used to drill them up and down Rutland Gate and because I'd been on a, a course.

You must have been a sergeant then by this time?

Yes, I was a sergeant. And we had a, not a sergeant-major what's the next one? We had a...

A company sergeant, a CSM?

We had a CSM and she was always off to The Dorchester and The Grosvenor to see her friends who were all in the military.

Yes, yes. [Laughter]

Or Navy or something, and she used to say 'Peggy, do you mind taking them tonight, do you mind doing this?' And I was always doing other people's night work and all these sort of things. And somebody once said to me 'You know you're jolly good the way you do all these, these, these, all this other duties for people', and I said 'Well, if I wanted them they'd do it for me', and I suddenly hesitated and I thought I'm not sure that they would.

[A 25:02]

Right.

But anyway I was in charge of the house at the top there, I had a room of my own and a pussy cat and who, I was always being adopted by pussy cats who appeared from somewhere. And a girl came up and said 'Sergeant, sergeant there's', or was I a corporal then? Anyway whatever I was. 'There's a soldier come downstairs and she's in the wrong, she got in a bed with one, she has, he has got in a bed with one of the girls'. So I went downstairs and a drunken American soldier had got in and was sitting on a bed and talking to this girl and telling her how beautiful she was and things so I went in and I said 'You shouldn't be in here'. And he said 'Oh hello', [Laughter] he said 'How nice to see you', and he was all very friendly. Anyway fortunately he was very friendly because I talked him out and the other girl had gone I'd sent her off to, because you were able to give orders in those days.

Yes.

Do this and they did it and to phone the police who got the American Military Police.

The American military police, yes.

And came in and brought him out and he, he went out. But I mean none of this is terribly exciting. I can't think of very much else. It's, always having trouble with this

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or that. [Pause] And had a lot of trouble with the air raids and things, I was driving an ambulance then. Then where did I go after that? Oh that's right I was supposed to go to, to an OCTU then. And I, we kept going on to these mixed ack-ack sites all round as well. And there was particularly I remember one in Hyde Park and I was with an officer, there was a gas officer I was with and, and there was a young subaltern there and she was in a terrible state she was almost having a nervous breakdown and she was saying 'I can't keep them apart', because the girls were one side and the men the other and she said 'It's terrible, tell them, please tell them, tell them at headquarters I can't stand it any longer anymore, they've got to come'. And then I got the papers through and Philip Leakey's father signed my papers to, to go and report to an OCTU, and at the same time I was told and that if you pass you'll go on to a mixed gun site. And I thought oh my God I'm not going on to a mixed gun site, and at the same time I got this paper came round any one in the film business would they go in to the Film unit, apply for the Film Unit. So I applied and then I met Bob Johnson on a train, underground train and he said 'Well, if you're coming to Wembley don't go to OCTU because they're all the places are filled and you can only come in as a sergeant. So I went in as a sergeant.

Doing what?

Cutting Rooms.

Cutting Rooms, oh yes.

Yes. Editing and I assisted Derek then.

This is where you met Derek is it?

That's where I met Derek. Although Harry had worked with Derek, or Derek had worked with Harry.

Yes.

For some time before that, he knew Derek.

Yes.

And then we went up with Freddie to the battle school.

Yes.

And you know about the battle school and how they were always being killed and, and backs broken.

Castle Barnard?

Yes, Barnard Castle. And we were, and there was one poor sergeant he was talking to us in the mess about this wonderful gun that he'd got that would pierce the tanks and he went out to test it. Next thing we came out and this body in two pieces was coming past us. What had happened is his, that what they never do, come back on its own

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path. It hit, it hit the tank and came straight back and blew him up. And they were, there was always trouble there. And I got, I was talking to Basil Appleby, do you remember Basil Appleby?

No.

He used to be an actor and then he went in to the Army and he became production manager sort of thing in the Army and then he went and he was a producer in Australia.

Oh.

Did quite well for him, very well for himself. And he and I were walking amongst a little copse of trees or whatever you call them and they started up because it was a frontal attack and what happened was you, first of all you had the big guns blasting over, they'd come over the front and then men would be going up. And then of course, this is where we got so many casualties.

Yes.

Because some of the bombs would drop amongst the men.

Yes.

The men were coming up and as they came up the gunners came, came in and big bangs were still going over the top and they set it off just as we'd gone in for a quiet chat in the trees and the bullets were ricocheting all over the place.

[A 30:00]

Gosh!

And anyway that all, that stopped. And, but there were so many people who got killed. Funny I was talking to Ken Livingstone at The War Museum because he ran some stuff and he's run some of Harry's stuff and there's some pictures of Harry which I saw in our sitting room in Baker Street where he came straight towards the camera and he had a look on his face, a little grin in which he thought if they're in the cinema watching this they'll see me sort of thing, he wouldn't have known but I thought oh he thinks we might see him. And he, but I can't remember what film it was on, and Ken Livingstone has had a look at it for to try and find it. But he said, when I said that the, he said 'What did they tell the families when they were killed'? And I said well, 'Active service', and he chuckled and said 'Well, you can't here'. But my God hundreds of people were killed in battle schools because you were having exactly the same thing, we were doing all the D, D-Day landings as you know.

Yes, yes, yes, yes.

And had exactly the same situations, everyone was being shot at. And what was the other problem which we had which is terribly dangerous which I cannot remember half the things? Anyway they didn't, nobody knew, they had backs broken fellows on

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Tape 1 Side A

motorcycles. And, but Freddie was delightful there because he used to do what you were saying you had to do, and that is they used to tell us what we should do. And he said 'They're not in the Army these are my people and they can't do this and they can't do that'.

Yes.

And he was a, he was really like a father to us all.

He's always been like that really.

Mm?

He was always like that?

He's always like that, yes.

Yes, yes, yes.

John Dearden, no, not John Dearden, I can't remember his name now. Bill, Bill Cocker was there.

Oh yes, yes, yes.

But she's died and June Martel has died.

Yes, yes.

And so many of them. Oh Roy Baker was there.

Yes.

And there was an Australian fellow.

Ray Pitt?

Ray Pitt. What happened to him, he vanished.

Yes.

I think he had the old...

Yes, he did have that problem.

But I saw Roy Baker, Roy Baker came and see me after about fifty years so that got... Oh I rang him up because I saw one of his films and I wrote and said I thought how good I thought it was, and well my grandsons thoroughly enjoyed it and he wrote back and he's been. And he's having a little bit of trouble health-wise with his, his friend of his. And anyway we're going to meet up again but it's a long gap isn't it?

Peggy Hyde-Chambers.
Tape 1 Side A

Yes. Did you work with Thorold when you were at Wembley?

Work with?

Thorold Dickinson?

Yes, he was there.

Thorold was there, yes.

Yes, but really...

You didn't work on any of his films?

No, not on any of his, no. Actually it's all getting a bit faint then, now. And then, oh then we got married and, and Derek was at Denham I think or Pinewood.

But on demob?

Or Elstree or MGM. Mm?

On demob, he was on demob?

Was he, was he?

Well, he must have been demobbed if he was...

Oh he was demobbed.

Yes.

I thought it was a film company. [Laughter]

No, no, no.

Yes. No he, he went on all the series.

Yes.

With Roy Baker. No, yes Baker.

Monty, Monty Berman and... .

Monty Berman and, Monty Berman rang up because, you know, they all ring up where I am.

Oh yes, yes, yes.

Peggy Hyde-Chambers.
Tape 1 Side A

And I haven't sort of mentioned him because he rang up to speak to Lord Grade or Marcia. And Roy Baker of course, is... [Pause] It's not Roy Baker is it? What's the name?

No, there is a Baker?

Yes.

That used to work with Monty.

Yes, Bob Baker.

Bob...

Bob Baker.

Bob Baker.

He's still in, got his little production unit.

Ah, ha.

At Elstree I think it is. But I went to Denham then doing subtitling.

Oh really, oh. For, for what kind of film?

All the English films.

Ah, ha.

For, for translation, foreign trans... foreign translations.

Yes, yes, yes.

Which is quite, it's not very exciting you just have to measure every length.

Yes.

And you have only so many words, as you know.

Yes, yes.

And you have to write it all down and you have to write down all the, all, everything's going on in a scene. I had two typists. One was rather difficult and we used to always get a lot of errors and it was all done, had to be done rather quickly and Sid Brugson [ph 0:34:17] was in charge.

Oh yes, yes, yes.

Peggy Hyde-Chambers.
Tape 1 Side A

And that's when I got, did quite a bit with the unions because he used to take me to the union meetings in which they were all there.

Yes.

And, and I became the person who takes all the subs at Denham, which was the shop...

[A 35:04]

Shop steward, shop steward?

No, not a shop steward.

Okay, treasurer?

Was a treasurer? Yes.

Treasurer.

Which was a job I did not want. This is what I say, I always get these jobs that I just...

[Laughter] Yes. Muggins jobs?

Oh terrible it is. And then I had actually done some continuity before this with other things, dropped in to various things. Anyway then I left that because I was doing all the work and I wasn't getting the money and it was sheer hard labour.

Yes.

And they wanted it at a certain time.

Yes.

And there weren't, there wasn't the staff, there weren't the facilities and I was just... I'm, I've never actually left a job I don't think I've always kept going but this was too much and the money was so bad it just wasn't worth it.

You had been working actually in the labs were you for that?

Yes, in one of the cutting rooms there.

For that, yes, yes.

I had before been working with the Germans, was it Franckers [ph 0:35:33] Ewel Francker [ph 0:35:35] a German editor. We had a couple of German editors who came over.

Oh right.

Peggy Hyde-Chambers.
Tape 1 Side A

Who were very well known in Germany. They were producers and directors and I was very sorry for them because they really were just sort of just workers in the field there.

Yes, yes, yes.

Where I learnt my, I started learning German from them but then... [Pause]

You're pulling on the cable there and that's it. That's it, okay that's right.

Then I, I've, I left that and, oh we went to live on a boat then, we lived on an MTB, we bought an MTB.

Oh yes.

And that was like the Firth of Forth Bridge because you had to start painting it and then by the time you got to the other end, it was seventy-three foot with an eighteen foot beam.

Yes.

It's a beautiful boat. And it was quite frightening though because I'm scared of the water but that didn't matter, I mean I'm on the blooming boat. And with the barges, we were in a little quay down at Gillingham, Gillingham.

Yes.

And the barges used to come in from London full of ballast and they used to come in to this quay and unload, and if it was a high wind we were just high enough out and they used to make a sort of line to get in to the quay and they could hit us on the way. And we were all mahogany, beautiful, beautiful.

Yes.

Everything mahogany. And the deck had three layers, one that way, one that way and one that way. And Derek was working at... Oh God one of the studios, and he used to go up to London and down the other side and then back again and back again.

Oh God.

But he was able to, it was before he went on a main series because he was able to fiddle his time.

Yes.

And he'd get in late and work late and that sort of thing. And our little boy was about five then, and we did have problems with small children floating past, children floating past.

Yes, yes.

Peggy Hyde-Chambers.
Tape 1 Side A

There was a young naval couple who'd bought a beautiful little Dutch barge and they were moored opposite and she came up one morning for no reason whatsoever and saw her little boy floating past but she got him out he was alright. And I, Peter Arundel, people used to come down and visit us and my sister-in-law Skeet's cousin, Harry's wife got an enormous great Fairmile which was twice the size of ours. Ours used to go out and pick up the...

Yes.

The, you know, the well, actually...

The people in the ditch, got ditched then.

Yes, they all used to go to the E-boats as well.

Yes.

We've got the whole history of it.

Yes.

And it was, it was the Breton sailors.

Ah, ha.

And actually I've got a carved Breton sailor found in a locker. But she got this great Fairmile and she had hers gutted and it looked like a flat, a London flat by the time she'd finished with it. But her son Peter came down and he's a very tall boy, about six foot, and Ricky, a little boy of about five, was going to take the milk bottles on to the, on to the land, on to the side.

The quay, yes.

On to the quay. And he had them in his arms, two of them, and he went down the, the... What am I saying?

Gangway?

Gangway, thank you very much. [Laughter]

[Laughter]

And they'd only had one side with the wires and he must have bumped because the next thing was he went over the side. Now I didn't see I was downstairs, downstairs, below and I came up for some reason, came on to the hatch and saw Peter looking down and I said 'Oh my God'. I went out and down, jumped in. I heard Peter say 'Oh let me go' as I jumped and Peter, oh God, Ricky was floating past with these bottles still hugged in his arms and just his face looking up and his body with the water lapping over his face staring up at me. [Laughter]

[A 40:15]

[Laughter]

And anyway I pulled him up and he said, when if I mention it now he says 'Yes, I can remember your skirt came out like a balloon, [Laughter] and you carried me on a parachute' because I had a full skirt.

[Laughter]

Let me go. He's still, he's a great big six footer. He was obviously mobilised.

[Laughter]

But we had quite a lot of difficulties and things with that. But we found that the trying to get up and down to London was too much and we realised with the two, three homes.

Yes.

Ours and theirs, it was too much. So we had to do something else so we came back to London, or went in, came in, went in with my mother, mother's, well, actually bought her flat, and we started writing the books. And he, he wrote. Derek used to come home and have something to eat, a quiet nap, quick nap and then he'd start writing till God knows what hour in the morning. And I used to say I knew the top of his head better than his face because I'd often pass and when he would be down like that and poor fellow and then he'd be off again in the morning and he'd leave me this work which he'd bashed out.

Yes.

And I'd sort it out and straighten it out and edit it and do all the front of the house men work. That went on for quite a long time, as I say we turned out...

Now talk about the books actually?

We sold thirty-six of them, about that, probably more. But they weren't anything. He was going to do the big one that really got going but he was not a businessman wasn't Derek and he wouldn't make a fuss and he wouldn't...

Yes.

And when, he was often asked to direct and he said no, no, he wouldn't because he may only get one or two on the series while if he stayed editing he went right through the series. Because we had these other rents and things to pay you see, which is, you really couldn't take a chance, it's not taking our own chance it was taking the chance for them as well. Anyway we, we kept on with, with those and I went off and did a few other things, I can't remember now what they were.

I must stop you there because I'm going to turn over.

**Peggy Hyde-Chambers.
Tape 1 Side A**

[End of Side 1 0:42:00]

Peggy Hyde-Chambers. Side Two.

Now he nearly pegged out during the process and I nearly pegged out during the process. He got abs..., appendicitis and they just got him in to hospital in time before it burst.

Yes.

And then I got pleurisy and pneumonia. And I wasn't going to hospital, I was not going to hospital and a doctor said 'Well, if you're not, your temperature isn't something or the other by the morning you've got to sign something I'm not responsible for you'. And a funny thing but they were all so, Ricky, and Ricky looked after me mostly.

Yes.

And he had, he and Derek slept in the double bed in one bedroom and I slept in Ricky's single room and I kept having to call or be, I was soaking wet.

Yes.

Kept having these great sweats and I was soaking wet. And I hadn't got the strength to do anything, I couldn't lift a glass of water but what they did is they tried, tied a cord so that I could pull this thing and it went through and through and through to Ricky's hand.

Yes.

And the idea of it if I pulled this, because I was so exhausted no-one woke up, it would pull his hand and he'd know [Laughter] I wanted him. And one night I was sitting here pulling this, I couldn't pull it and I was pulling this thing, pulling this thing, pulling this thing and apparently I didn't get up I was, so I had to be lifted up. But it, Ricky woke up in the morning with his arm up here [Laughter] and no, no, he had no idea. And one morning after the doctor had said this 'If you don't, if you don't go to hospital you'll, you'll have to go to hospital in the morning', and something said don't go to sleep, don't go to sleep. So I sat up on the bed with the thing round me in a terrible state of shakings and weakness and thought I'm not going to sleep, I won't go to sleep, I'm not going to sleep and I stayed all night and I didn't go to sleep and in the morning when the doctor came he said, 'Oh it's alright, your temperature's gone down'. Now why I knew if I had gone to sleep my temperature would have gone up or maybe I would have gone before he came. But anyway we had, we had quite a few problems one way and another. And I can't remember. Oh yes, and when he died, he.... Oh my mother died, she had a cold. Oh she'd gone round and she had a day she said 'I walked all around London to all the theatres that I worked in', and it was all the central London theatres she'd been there.

Yes.

And I'd had an Uncle Walter who used to be for years the actor/manager at The Strand. And my mother had gone round all these theatres having a look at them, and then she came back. She was alright, perfectly alright and she looked very pretty and very well and she had a bit of a cold and I'd sat her down in front of the fire and she looked very nice in front of the fire and gave her chicken and whatever and she was fine and very, very sweet. Anyway about five o'clock that next morning I thought there's something wrong. I woke up quickly, got out of bed, went out and she was at her door and she said 'Oh Peggy I can't breathe'. And so I went to pat her on the back and she just floated down. I thought well, she's fainted but she hadn't she'd gone, that was it.

Yes.

She'd absolutely gone flat. And the same thing happened with Derek. Derek said 'Oh I've got a pain in my chest'. So I said [Pause] 'Perhaps is it your heart, is it your heart'?

Right.

Because I'd had a terrible bout of indigestion.

Yes.

And I said something about 'Was it as bad as my indigestion'?

Do mind the, mind the mike. [Laughter]

Oh I'm terribly sorry.

[Laughter] It's alright.

I beg your pardon mike. And I said, he was thumping his chest and I said 'Is it as bad as that indigestion which kept me up a whole night'. Somebody came and just before they came I was cooking and I crunched a piece of carrot and it stuck there and I was being pleasant all the time and, oh, sixteen hours I was in agony with this thing. Anyway he said 'No, I know'. I said, 'Oh' I said 'perhaps it's your heart'. And he said 'No, I know indigestion when I've got it', and he said would I go and get a book, it was the, the Radio Doctor's book.

Oh yes.

And he loved the Radio, everything he used to go to the Radio Doctor's book. So I went up to get this book and I couldn't find it and I was calling down, 'Where is it, what shelf is it on, I can't find it'? And when I went down he was dead.

Good Lord!

[B 00:05] And that was it. And I started pumping him and pumping doing all the things I knew and doing all the things, and something said to me I'm a crack, I'm a nut here, something said to me 'Do you want a vegetable'? And I stopped. Because I

Peggy Hyde-Chambers DRAFT
Tape 1 Side B

had had this situation of do I go straight to the phone and ring the ambulance or do I try, and I thought I'd try and so I tried to get him back and then that was when I left him and went to the ambulance. And they said that he, he, I mean it was just like that. It was like my mother, it had gone from her leg and with him it was just his heart had given up and that was it.

Had there been signals of that at all?

Nothing, nothing. He never had nothing wrong with him at all. Mind you he used to say 'Oh my God, oh God, oh my God'. 'What's the matter, what's the matter?' 'Oh God', and you'd say 'What's the matter?' 'Oh I've pricked myself'. And he was always doing things like that and I'd say 'One of these days you'll do this'.

Yes.

And he always stubbed his toe or something, and people won't, I won't believe you or anybody won't believe you. But I did believe him and I went to try and find this flipping book but I didn't know it was, he was going to die. And he, he was obviously in pain. He used to get cramp a lot. I think that was bad, you could see the back of his leg.

Yes.

I don't know why people get this, you'd see the veins. Anyway however, he didn't make too much fuss about that, he used to just make a fuss about the tiny things. I must leave your equipment alone.

[Laughter]

And when he'd gone, when he, when it all sort of came together.

Yes.

He hadn't done very well. Mind you one couldn't blame him because the money came in and was spread out.

Yes.

In so many ways. And we were rather in debt at that time, but still that was, sorted all that out. But it meant I used to see other people buying their houses and being able to sort of get themselves settled but it never seemed to be able to work out that way because we never really were able to make enough.

Well, I mean you were supporting three families really aren't you?

Yes.

Yes, yes, yes.

Peggy Hyde-Chambers DRAFT
Tape 1 Side B

But they've, they've gone now. I mean my mother-in-law died some long time ago, she fell down the stairs and there was a big panic he was very worried about that because she was on her own. But she was quite a difficult woman because she used to, if you went to see her or if we went to see her once a week she'd want us to go twice a week, if we went twice a week she would want us to go three times a week. And she used to ring up and there was one particular instance where she rang up and said 'Peggy, I'm going, I'm going, I'm going'. And I'd got a small child and something else and something to finish and all sorts of things and I'd said 'What's the matter, what's the matter?' 'I'm going, I'm going' and the phone went down. So I thought oh God what do I do? So I rang her neighbour and her, I said 'I'm afraid would you mind going and seeing Mollie, I'm coming over as fast as I can but she's in a terrible state'. She said 'No, she's not'. So I said 'Well, she's just been speaking to me on the phone and she says she's going', and she said 'Oh she's down here talking to my husband about blackberries. [Laughter] And she used to do this. Oh she was a devil, whatever you did for her you had to do more, it was very difficult.

[Laughter] So, so after Derek died what did you, you, you started to go back to work?

Well, after Derek, no after Derek died I was in an absolutely state of...

Yes.

Oh God I was in a terrible state because I just didn't know where to turn. And I thought now who can I go to who will give me advice, who's a good businessman who will give me advice and tell me what I, what my choices are now? I thought Denis Rogers because he'd been Derek's assistant for a very long time.

Oh yes, yes.

And if you remember, well you won't remember but he, when he was working for Derek he set himself up in his business which he's still got, Tinny Sound.

Oh yes, yes, ah, ha.

And I thought well he's, he's got an idea, he'll tell me. So he came to see me immediately, offered me some money which I said 'Thank you but no', but I thought was very kind of him.

Yes.

And he said 'Come and work for, oh come to lunch with me tomorrow'. So Denis's lunches used to start at one and finish at five. So I went to one of those and he and start, I start tomorrow he said. And he, he, I worked with him, and that was sound tracks from what's that thing with Roger Moore and they're on a boat?

[B 10:08]

The Saint, The Saint?

No, it wasn't it was a film. It was something like Bounty or something. Oh anywhere I hear it I think that saved my life that, that film. I was getting all the effects out of it for some weeks, probably three or four months. And then Denis said that there's an ADR company starting up in Mayfair and they want a, a secretary, administrative secretary, how about you? I've told, I've told them about you.

ADR, what's that?

Automated Dialogue Replacement.

Oh is it, yes, ah, ha.

And it's a very classy place in Mayfair.

Yes.

And what they do is the artists come and when they finish the film, as you know they get a lot of background.

Yes.

They re-voice themselves and they all came there all the big artists because they liked it because it was just in, on North Audley Street. South Audley Street and just by The Dorchester, and they could stay at all the big hotels and they come and they re-voice themselves. I've got pictures up and there's the studio. And I did all the bookings and administrative things and all this, all that sort of stuff. And they, I was there for eight years. And then [Pause] it's, it started, it, it was belonged, it was owned by two Americans, two editors, two sound sound editors. One was Gilbert, Gill, oh golly I can't remember their names. Gill and one was I can't remember their names, perhaps it's a good thing. And they, they'd put money in to it with, with I'm fading now, what's his name I've just told you, help me?

Derek?

No.

Rogers the, yes.

Yes, that's right, yes Rogers. And anyway I said to him 'Are you dropping me right in the middle of it'? And he said 'No, no, no, you can do it', everybody says whenever I change they say 'No, no, you can do it'. So anyway I went in and I did it, got it and these Americans it was all a bit difficult because there was a certain amount of working it in amongst everybody. And there was an Englishman who was managing it, and anyway I was there for eight years. And then the manager bought it and the manager had got his ideas about the finances and he decided that he had people that would be better to have in that me, than me.

[Laughter]

And, and so while I was on holiday I got a letter saying 'Dear Peggy, thank you for everything you've done but don't bother to come back' and this, that and the other, and I was absolutely shattered.

Good Lord!

And I really was.

No, no redundancy at all, nothing?

Oh well, nothing, no, just two weeks. But then as I'd left to go on this week he used to ring me on a Sunday to tell me what had happened.

Yes.

So that when I went in I'd be *au fait*. And as I walked out he said 'I'll ring you on Sunday and let you know', and I started on my week's holiday whatever it was I started, it was on the Tuesday I got this letter saying 'If there's anyone, Eric will bring it round'. And I was shattered and I immediately got on to, I can't remember his name now, a very nice one that I know because Derek used to be friendly with him too at the union and I said what should I be having.

Yes.

And he told me exactly what I should be getting and he said 'I'll speak to him for you if you like', and I said 'Well, that's very kind of you but I'll do it myself but if I do have a problem I will be grateful to come back to you'. Well, I wrote my letters, [Laughter] which I've got copies of and I got my letters and I got this weeping, heart shaking person gave me all the money I needed, I should have had.

Yes.

But he was going to get rid of me with two weeks.

Gosh.

After eight years. It's a terrible shock, you know, to have that thing happen.

Yes, yes, sure, yes, yes.

Anyway then I thought oh gosh what do I do now? So I had a friend who said 'Come and work for me'. I only went part-time but I worked for him and he was a, he used to do re-voicing, he did re-voicing, foreign versions type re-voicing and he was just off New Oxford Street. And I stayed with him for about a year and then Marcia had said to one of the fellows down below...

[B 15:08]

Marcia, Who's Marcia?

Marcia Stanton is Lord Grade's, yes.

Ah, ha, yes.

PA.

Yes.

And right hand woman. And she said, he said to him 'Do you think Peggy would come'? Because they had, the receptionist was going, 'Do you think Peggy would like to come, would come'? So he said 'Yes', I mean obviously ask her business.

Yes.

Anyway she rang me and I said 'Yes, thank you'. Went to see her and I said 'The only thing is I can't just be a receptionist I'd go mad'. So she said 'Well, there's other things you can do and there's script reviewing and you could help John and do things for John', so he's the producer and director there. And so I said 'Well, if there isn't anything can I do my own work'? And she said 'Yes, yes, yes'. So anyway I went on that and I do an awful lot of things, an awful lot of things.

When you say your own work, what were you doing as your own work?

Well, I do, I do, I'm doing all sorts of writing work so I've got whole scripts of my own.

Oh right.

And I'm working on how I can because I haven't really gone... No I won't say any more about that. But working on re-issuing things that we have.

Yes.

Which is much quicker than doing it all yourself.

Yes.

You've got it all there and sort of sorting it all out.

Yes. These are, these are Derek's books?

Yes.

Original books, yes?

Well, they weren't all Derek. You see a lot of them were me.

I see, oh as well.

But as always.

Yes, yes.

I mean when I said, I was saying something about work the other day and I said to Marcia 'You know I'm doing some of my own', and she said 'Oh doing some of Ricky's'? And I said 'No, mine'. My God and everybody used to say oh it was Derek's work but actually an awful lot of it was mine.

Yes, yes.

But it went out, he used to go out, he did a lot of romances and things, all of his went out under pseudonyms.

Yes, yes, yes.

I don't think many of them went out under his own name.

Who was the publisher?

Well, we had, we had the big place up at the tower. We had a few, quite a few publishers and I keep seeing them now in books and I can't remember any of them. Oh dear, publishers? [Pause] Oh God.

Mills and Boon was it?

No, we didn't go, we didn't, no. We actually didn't achieve Mills and Boon.

[Laughter]

No, we were, because he did westerns and thrillers and Sexton Blakes.

Oh yes, yes.

And he did, he had... 'Oh I'll get them', I'll have to bring them out they're in there. We've got some hard backs. We did a lot of... Oh God, never mind. People do remember, forget names and things.

Yes, yes, yes.

But the editor of the westerns said to me because I used to do always be the man who had to take the stuff and get the publisher to say 'We, we haven't quite finished we've got these chapters but...' 'Alright, alright, when can you let me have them'? I used to do all that stuff and the salesmanship. And this editor said, he had an opening line which it was the time of *The Snow Blindness* and this is when the old click, click, clomp, clomp, clomp come, well you wouldn't make that noise coming through the snow, and that was *The Three Men From Tucson* and he said 'You know he's so good at westerns' and he said 'Why doesn't he stick to them all the time'? But Derek didn't, he, he did other things.

Yes.

And he liked to go off and do other things. But the westerns went terribly well and he, he did thrillers and things which there was a, they were published all over, we've got them in this and various languages. But the trouble was we needed the money, the money came in and the money went.

Yes.

And this is the trouble with writing.

Yes.

And I thought I must have a steady income, it's such a stress because it's so hard writing with the fact that you know the bank's waiting for the money to come in and you're trying to bring this thing to life. But on the side of course, knowing that in the film business you can always, things can fold round you and having a boss that's only just reached his fifties.

[Laughter]

I, I always was working on my own things to, you know, get a little.

Yes.

Well, of course, you know. And so this is why I get myself in to a bit of a muddle because when I come home I try and get as much domestic done but you notice there's paint everywhere, all over, this, we haven't got the carpet yet.

Right. Well, not to worry. [Laughter]

And I find it quite hard trying to keep up with, with doing it. But I've found a way of doing small things in which in that way you don't have such a heavy load on you by having to get it finished. But this idea of mine I should be able to disguise them enough so that the people won't realise that they've gone out in, oh God.

[B 20:17]

[Laughter]

New, new books, new, new something's one of them. I don't know why I can't remember them. I think I must be getting tired. I can't, anyway they're all in that cupboard there. And I can't think of any more.

Right.

It's all very boring isn't it?

No, not at all. It's a very interesting thing yes, yes.

There are lots more things that have happened, it can't be that dull all my life surely.

It wasn't dull dear.

Hard work.

Oh sure. Which, which, you know, looking back which was the, which was the part that really you enjoyed more than the other? Was there a, you know?

No.

No, alright.

I didn't like any of it.

[Laughter]

[Laughter] It's all been striving and stressful. But I, the thing I'd like to do most is just to be able to sit down at my little speed writer.

Yes, yes.

And pour the stuff out without having to think oh God I must stop, oh I must do this, or I must do the other.

Yes.

And go off and, and earn money for other people, from other people I suppose. I'd like to be independent.

Yes, yes.

And to be able to just write and turn it out.

Yes, yes.

But it's always been a bit hard because you see even while Derek was writing we had so many other things going. A:- I had to keep all the work going, and then we had all the Tibetans in. There's when, when the Dalai Lama, Dalai Lama first came over it was all done, or most of it was done was from Christmas Humphreys, Ricky was a, was a secretary...

Yes.

To Christmas Humphreys and it was done in Ecclestone Square but twenty-four hours a day.

This is the, your son was the secretary, yes?

Yes.

Yes.

It was all being done in our sitting room over there. All night long the phone was ringing and all day people were saying 'Could you tell me where he's going to be, if I could just stand on the pavement and see him'. And Ricky went round with him and it was so much work. And then we had Tibetans come over that were refugees and the Lamas came and they arrived with nothing but slippers and they had no money and they'd stay and Ricky would set up funds for them.

[Laughter]

And I'd be doing all the fund work. And I'm terribly good at signing Lama's signatures, I could do hundreds of those.

[Laughter]

And he set up this, and I forget what it's called now but people used to send in things and Ricky would help the Lama write his little whatever it is he's going to tell them.

Yes.

That they wanted to hear, or that he wanted to tell them that they should hear. And I would do all this typing this and setting all this up and that was hard work. And then...

You say you were typing. Did you, did you go to a typing school at all or anything like that?

No.

It just came naturally?

Well, it didn't come naturally.

Hard work?

Actually I did, yes. Well, it did. Well actually Ricky's the same and Derek, Ricky has typed ever since he was a child because I said it something you really ought to do and he's got two fingers you see.

Yes.

And the two boys are the same.

Yes.

They're doing it.

Yes.

But because I've given them my old typewriter. But actually do you remember, you know Felix Elmer?

Yes, yes, yes.

Well, they're all very, very pleasant to me and he used, a lot of them used to sit and chat to me these actors, and because I was only a little girl. And he, I said to him I wanted to be a continuity girl and I had to know shorthand and typing, and at the end of the film he gave me some money and he said 'Now I know you can't, you can't go to school to learn it but you can go to evening classes. So there's an evening class in Burnsfield Road you go there', and he gave me the money to enrol for this evening class. And I went there for a very short time, but anyway I went there enough to learn the rudiments of what they're supposed to do, and of course, they covered the keys.

Yes, yes.

And you had to use all four, five fingers.

Yes, five fingers, yes.

Well, I got going. I knew exactly what I'd got to do but I've left off my little fingers they don't seem strong enough.

Yes, yes.

They always seem to, so I just use three.

Yes.

But everyone's using, you've used four fingers don't you? But I only use the three. And, but the shorthand I didn't but myself I've studied speed writing.

Yes, yes.

Which is very good. I'm inclined to let things lapse that's the trouble, and my German I let that lapse and my Italian, which I used to learn those because I hate housework, and while I did housework I'd have books and tapes going and I'd be learning a language so I didn't realise what I was doing.

[B 25:04]

[Laughter]

And I find, I can actually satisfaction when often actually only the other day I was, somebody, always here asking you the way and they start to tell me in English and I say '*Sprechen sie Deutsch*'. '*Ja, ja*'.

Yes.

So off we go.

[Laughter]

And I'm able to tell them, and they're very pleased that someone can speak the language.

Yes, yes.

And I'm very pleased too because I don't get a chance to talk to anybody really.

No, no.

So I let things lapse. But I was thinking today I must bring out my old tapes because what I do is I have them running while I'm...

Yes.

And, and I have the books. I thoroughly, I'd love to speak lots of languages but I, I work on the principle that if they can talk to us, and they're not grammatical but we can understand them I can do the same there and as long as you know that's a *tische*, and that is *ein buch*.

[Laughter]

And that, that's a, I forget what that is. And *dass ist links* and *dass ist recht* and *dass ist bord* and I've forgotten what they were all used with.

[Laughter]

But if you know what they are you can, you can make yourself understood.

Oh yes, sure.

And that was quite enough for me I didn't expect to be terribly fluent.

Yes.

But I learn, I did go to an old lady who gave German lessons locally at one time. Not here, and I found that very interesting but to go to a class I would find this a bit too slow for me because I'd like to learn it.

Get on with it? [Laughter]

Get on with it, yes. I don't mind if I'm not grammatical. But I find it very good company at home.

Yes.

And I go to sleep with these things going off in my head *gut Morgen Herr* what not.
[Laughter] *Dass ist Frau Braun.*

[Laughter] *Yes. That was great. Right we'll pause there.*

[End of Side 2 0:27:58]

Transcription Queries

Page/Time	Query
5 0:05:13	Harry 'Dayville'? Spelling/Doubtful Word. Make-up at Elstree.
6 0:06:43	Jack 'Pickley'? Spelling/Doubtful Word. Assistant at Welwyn.
8 0:11:10	Herman 'Glendenning'? Spelling/Doubtful Word. Film studio worker.
8 0:11:12	Herman 'Glendenning'? Spelling/Doubtful Word. Film studio worker.
18 0:34:17	Sid 'Brugson'? Spelling/Doubtful Word. Film studio worker at Denham.
19 0:35:33	'Franckers'? Spelling/Doubtful Word. German film editor at Denham.
19 0:35:35	'Ewel Francker'? Spelling/Doubtful Word. German film editor at Denham.