BEHP0002 T Bryan Langley Transcript

C. ACTT HISTORY PROJECT 1988

Lighting Cameraman

Interviewer Arthur Graham

SIDE 1, TAPE 1

AG: Bryan where were you born and when

BL: I was born in Fulham in London in 1909, December 29th, so it's really 1910 almost.

AG: What kind of schooling did you receive.

BL: My parents lived in Uxbridge during the First World War and I went to the local secondary school there and my father was an opera singer and he was touring all he time so he carted me off to a public school, what they called a public school in Somerset and I was there all during 11 to 17 and during my holidays I joined my parents on tour with the opera company so I had a secluded upbringing.

AG: When did you enter the industry.

BL: I entered as an unpaid assistant during my holidays from school working with the H.B. Parkinson Company. My father was acting, singing opera shorts, silent films oddly enough. The idea was an artist would appear on the stage and sing to accompany a film. My father was an opera singer and during my holidays I went with the film company while they filmed various operas and my father would be singing and acting in the thing. I worked as an unpaid gofor as we call it now during the holidays and when I left school at the age of 17 i went straight to Mr Parkinson's, H.B. Parkinson's company as a trainee because I had no photographic ideas or any ideas whatsovever. All I knew is that my father had arranged for Mr Parkinson to take me on for them to find out what was most suitable for whatever talents I had. Mr Parkinson asked me through every department he had, negative cutting, positive cutting, vault work, I used to hump cans of films up and down Wardour St to a chap called Wally Dolberg where in later life he was chief projectionist and I did all these things as well as assisting with the projectionist and helping in the film labs with Percy Anthony and Leo Kass and with due course Mr Parkinson noticed I appeared rather strong and asked if I could carry a tripod up and down Wardour St around London I suppose to say bus fares and I humped this tripod up and down all over the place. Mr Parkinson was making a series called Wonderful London which was famous and is in the National Film Archive. His son Roy would be able to tell you about these things. Anyway in due course I found on top of the tripod was a camera and I practiced in my lunch hour loading this camera and in the end I was able to do it against a stop watch with my eyes closed, I could do it now, in my mind anyway. We had two cameras, a wooden Debrie so called and a metal Debrie, Super Parvo and we made a great number of two reel films some of which we did at Stolls Studios usually using sets from the previous production. The sort of films we were doing, these were silent films, had the titles Ave Maria, The Rosemary, Rock of Ages, all

these religious things. I suppose the idea was to get some chap on stage to sing to accompany these films. Anyway I cut my teeth on these films and we worked also at Southall Studios which used to be an aircraft hangar in the First World War and Worton Hall Studios and on one wonderful occasion we heard the talkies were coming in the shape of Dark Red Roses lit by Eric Cross and it was going to be a night shoot. And I stayed up all night watching Eric Cross and these other people shooting Dark Red Roses, this was about 1928 or 29 and they had incandescent lights and I think the director was Sinclair Hill. I remember him saying to the actors whatever you do don't dry up, just say anything which comes into your head and you must talk. This was the principle. This was the advent for me for the talkies. I must pay a credit to Mr Parkinson, not only did he pass me through all his departments, in every department, he also had me trained to drive, I suspected at the time he wanted me as an untrained chauffeur, anyway he had me taught to drive at the British School of Motoring and he sent me off the the Regent St Polytechnic to attend what I think was the first course on kinematography, with a k in those days, and one occasion Mr George Pearson, I think it was George Pearson at anyrate, no it was either Mr Newman or Mr Sinclair, one of those two came to give us a lecture on the camera he'd made for Mr Ponting who went to the South Pole to film this expedition. He told us that his camera had only one claw to shift the film but Mr Ponting said this is ridiculous, we must have two claws to shift the film. And Mr Sinclair said alright I'll put you in a second claw and he told us confidentially he put this claw in so that it didn't touch the edge of the perforation. I must confess to not being a very good student but that was my fault. Mr. Parkinson certainly fulfilled every obligation that he had to my father in every practical sense and I would never have had an all round training if it had not been for him And I found this in later life invaluable. In my later career I had to be in charge of a film laboratory and I took this, to this control, management without a great deal of doubts because I'dd seen it all happen, Percy Anthony and Leo Kass dumping their film, in the lab I took over they had machines with cogs but I was able to look after it pretty well and I shouldn't have been able to do that if I hadn't had my training with Parkinson.

AG: From what you said Bryan you obviously started work some time in the 20s, when exactly was it.

BL: I was at school in Wellington in Somerset and I left there at the end of term in 1927 so I must have started in August, something life that, in 1927.

AG: Where was Parkinson's place of work, was it in Wardour St.

BL: No, it was Little Denmark St, off Charing Cross Rd and it was located in the laboratories, the first floor up, R. E. Strange Company. H. B. Parkinson had a whole floor in Mr Strange's Laboratory and on the ground floor in the basement Mr Parkinson had a film vault from which I would get on suitable occasions nitrate film, I remember the smell right now of nitrate film in the vault, one of the films Mr Parkinson always trotted out was Married to a Mormon and this film whenever the Mormons were coming Mr Parkinson would cash in on this film and I would get it and I would remember on one chilling moment I went into the vault and the door shut and I was then experimenting with smoking and I reached in

my pocket for my matches, fortunately I hadn't brought them that day so I'm still here.

AG: A certain amount of danger attached there.

What wages did you get

BL: I can't remember. I've been trying to remember. I don't suppose they were magnificent. At the end of my time at Parkinson's which was in 1930 I was the chiefcameraman and lighting so called, I was photographing at any rate quite a number of Mr Parkinson's films and I had the idea I was getting about £5 a week which was a hefty salary in those days. I suppose it was considerably less than he would have been paying to Frank Cannon who I displaced I suppose is the word, there was Frank Cannon, Sidney Eaton, Alf Tunwell and Bert Ford. All of these were freelance cameramen who turned up and when Mr Parkinson found out I could a handle with great success, I had a strong right arm, he took a prudent decision and promotted me and reaped the benefits financially to my benefits too. I think it was about £5 a week.

AG: Where were you living, how did you get to work.

BL: In the first World War, my father was an opera singer he was in the British National and the Royal Opera Company, he was in the Scots Guards during the war and we moved to Uxbridge at the outbreak of the war and we lived in a house, 23 Hillingdon Rd opposite where they were building the RAF camp, a big camp for the Royal Airforce and I went from there to school by train, into Paddington and down to Somerset. And when I got my job I used to walk from our house to Uxbridge Metro Station and take the train to Baker St and walk from Baker St through to Little Denmark St. I could have taken a tube from Baker st to Oxford Circus and I suppose I often did take the tube from Baker St to Oxford Circus but I also remember walking quite often and I passed that magistrate's place, across Wardour St and along Manet St and at the corner of Manet St was Kingston and Lynes and we had all our cameras serviced there. And on one occasion I went to Kingston and Lynes and saw Mr Baird the inventor of television with Arthur Kingston concocting some machinery and somebody said that's the man who's invented some crazy idea. I didn't take any notice at the time. That was a little hilight of my life, seeing Mr Baird in the business of inventing television. Anyway I worked there. You asked me about the travel. I traveled from Uxbridge to London for two or three years and then my parents moved to Notting Hill and they had a flat there and when Mr Parkinson closed down in 1930 because of the talkies I got a job the next day as it were at BIP Studios and we moved then to Whitehouse Ave which is a little road by the side of the studios. I only got to BIP because one of the ladies at R. E. Stranges was a girl called Pat Palmer and she taught me negative cutting or positive cutting, something like that and when Mr Parkinson decided to shut down, he had no option because he couldn't afford to buy these sound recording things I was a bit upset, wondering what to do and I mentioned it to Pat Palmer, i suppose I mentioned it to everybody. She said why don't you go and see my brother Ernie who is doing something up at Elstree and I went to see Ernie Palmer and said Pat sent me and he said go and see Bill Haggerty and he interviewed me and siad you start as soon as you can so I started

at BIP thanks to Pat Palmer who in later years married a chap called Freddy Pugh who is 90 years odd and rides a bicyle.

AG: Bryan in your early training you did lab work what do you remember about the conditions and so on and how lab work might differ from today.

BL: Mr Parkinson sent me down to R. E. Strange's developing department, laboratory and particularly the negative developing part which was run by Percy Anthony, the father of Bryan Anthony. Percy Anthony had one eye and way a cameraman before he became a lab manager and the labs had great big drums on which the film was dried. We would shoot film in either 100 ft rolls on Imo or 400 ft rolls in our Debrie magazines, and they would also be chromatic or ordinary film or laterly panchromatic, Ordinary film is blue sensitive only, ortho is sensitive to something I don't know what. Panchromatic is sensitive to everything. These films, the exposed films were given to Percy Anthony who would unwind it on a frame which you would wind, the frame would stand in a horse and the frame would be unwound out of a magazine so 400 ft of film would be held on this wooden frame, never touching, one on top of the other, and this frame of exposed film would be dumped in a bath of developer, D76 I suppose, and dumped in there for so many minutes and then put into a stop path and then a hypo, a hypo when the rack was taken out of the tank to put it the washing tanks it dripped on the floor, the floor was covered with duck boards and underneath the floor were all these liquids dripping of the frame and consequently the labs smelt wonderfully I think of hypo. Whenever i go to a laboratory nowadays I always ask to go where there's some hypo so I can smell this lovely smell of hypo. The film after it's washed is then brought out to unwind. And I was given this job to do of unwinding the film from the frame to a giant drum about 5 or 6 ft in diameter, tip it onto one part of the paths and unwind it slowly and this drum was driven by a motor and it due course it dried. And I also had to pass the film through a chammy leather in my hand to wipe off the excess moisture. In the days of ordinary film and ortho film in a laboratory you had a red light so you could see everything in a kind of red glow. But when they invented panchromatic there was no light but a very dull green light, you could hardly see anything. In those days the habit was for the chap in charge to visually inspect the negative to see if there was the right density on it and I remember on one occasion peering over Percy Anthony's shoulder as he lifted out the whole tank and sucked out on his cigareet, a little red light and dunk it back again. It couldn't catch fire in a laboratory because everything was wet and smoking in those days was thought to be good for you. When you died in the first world war they used to put cigarettes in your mouth, Woodbines, so nobody thought about this. We dried the film and Percy Anthony also did the titles, I think he had a camera like a Williamson and photographic titles, all silent films had titles and someone had to photograph the things and then R. E. Strange's had automatic tubes for positive film developing which went up and down the building from top to bottom, giant tubes of positive developer, I didn't of course have anything to do with those. And if I may while we're at Parkinson's and before we cast into oblivion, I'd like to tell you about our entry into the sound recording business. Mr Parkinson somehow got involved with an inventor of sound recording techniques and this consisted of connecting the debrie camera which in the end I had to hand crank and that was connected by chain, bicycle

chain to a cog on the handleshaft to another cog which turned the turntable of the gramophone and the idea was that you'd go out and buy a lovely gramohone record of say Caruso singing recorded with the very, very best techniques of the time, His Master's Voice, and it would probably cost 1 sh and sixpence. This record would be given to an actor, a singer who would be told to go home and learn the song just like the man sings it, so the next day he'd come and I'd mount the camera on the tripod, the special tripod and my chains and cans and things and gramophone disk and we'd put the gramophone disk on the turntable and I'd crank and I became so expert in cranking this thing that the sound would never waver or warble, I was mechanically as good as the machine I thought and we made dozens of films like this and the actor would sing away up against the sky and I suppose Mr Parkinson had a cinema somewhere where the whole system was reversed, there was a turntable connected to the projector and you could see the man singing. Anyway my end was just cranking the think and making sure the exposure was right. And then Mr Parkinson made a fatal mistake, he hired a director, hitherto it had all been done by him, he hired this director who said we'll knock this singing business to six I supose. He had the invalid car company dolly made for me and a turntable and the idea was we would go on location and we went to Twickenham, I remember very well, we tracked along some chaps singing, like it was singing on a gramophone. The director said cut Bryan so I stopped turning and the director said the next set up is here and we moved everything round and the actor couldn't pick it up. The director got the needle back in the grove and we tried all day and we never got the thing back into synchronism and so the thing was abandoned. Nowadays I think we realise if we'd started right from the beginning and got the actors to sing everything twice in two positions that would have been alright, we could have managed but we couldn't pick it up in the middle of the gramophone record in synchronism and this was a bitter blow to Mr Parkinson's sound recording hopes. The quality of the sound was first class, it was very much better than anything you could hear up in the cinemas because of the bad sound recording and inefficient systems. I think that is worth nothing down.

AG: Did you have anything shooting or in the laboratories to do with colour.

BL: Yes, in silent films. We had a system developed called tinted toning. Tinting consisted of ordering anyone of upteen coloured tints of which the celluloid, the base, was coloured. One I remember was called Pathe pink I remember and there was all sort of hues the idea being that all the transparent parts of the film, the hilights, when projected would come out whatever the hue was, the tint was in the hilights of the film. Then someone found out that if you treated the deposits, the silver deposits, the black part, they would be toned the same colour so in Parkinsons we had quite often had films which had pink hilights and blue shadows so you had an impression of colour and it was very attractive and especially fire sequences and deserts, the tinting was a very attractive thing. I believe it was a very difficult thing to do with the toning to get it consistent but the tinting was certainly a very good system, much appreciated and people would compose their scripts and write on their scripts pathe pink here or frosted blue there or whatever. Also while I'm on what was in the scripts, the directors used to put down the camera

speed. Normal camera speed was 16 fps and it was the practice then to undercrank or overcrank various things according to the nature of the scene. For example I think boxing matches it was always thought best to undercrank boxing matches so they appeared more animated. Dancing you overcranked a bit so it became more graceful and these things and directors would specify.

SIDE 2, TAPE 1

AG: Can you give us an outline of your subsequent career, where you worked and what you did.

BL: In broad terms I was in silent films from 1927 to 30. I was at BIP from 1930 to 1937. By that time I'd been prommotted to lighting cameraman and I then left because I thought my salary of £20 a week was not adequate for my exalted position as I thought it then and I became a freelance. BIP being very kind people hired me at £30 a week, mainly at Welling so my annual income was about the same, about £1,000 a year and while I was freelancing, this was 37 till just after the war started I worked at welling Studios, Broadmore Studios, Teddington Studios, Highbury Studios, Amsterdam Studios and I was a very busy cameraman. Came the war I thought I ought to get in the act and after a time they succombed and I joined in the very early days of 1941 and I was in the army about a fortnight before I was on overseas training and I went to the Middle East and Malaya and that location took 4 and a quarter years overséas during which I never had one night when it was not red hot or sweaty or awful. Then I think in 1945 I was shipped home to England and by that time I'd become an old swet and I joined the Army Kinematograph Services at Wembley Studios because Wembley Studios was near my home at Grange Park whereas Pinewood was at Iver Heath would have meant staying there, I could have lived at home and do my soldiering by the bus from Grange Park to wembley Stydios and I did various things in the AKS including , then ABPC, the name BIP had changed to, got me out of the army and very kindly back to Welling Studios, they had no obligation because i was freelance, nevertheless they got me out of the army and back to Welling studios on the payroll, very nice. But they had moved up from doing quota quickies into high class films such as Thorold Dickinson's Queen of Spades and Piccadilly Incident, it was way out of my quota quicky experience, so I was hired out to a number of small studios such as Highbury Studios and I did second units for films at Welling such as Piccadilly Incident, I went to Trinidad on that film. After a time I began to get a bit despondent about being at Welling and never lighting any of these lovely big pictures which I'd imagined I'd be able to do and I used to sit in the camera room very glum and I read in the paper, Kine Weekly, where is the Kine Weekly now, anyway I read in the Kine Weekly that a thing at Pinewood was starting called Independent Frame and Donald Wilson was in charge.

Donald Wilson before the war had been an assistant director at BIP Studios and after I had joined the Army Film Unit on my first trip to England I went with Borradaile, Osmond Borradaile, I went on a ship from Liverpool to Lagos and this ship was fillled up with survivors from Dunkirk and the other halp was medical students on the tropical medicine. And one of these Scottish survivors from Dunkirk, all of them going to the West Indies as you got twice the pay because you lived half the time because of the tropical diseases because of the medics, anyway one of these Scotch blokes asked me one day my name and I said Langley and he said that's a funny thing because in Scotch I'm Maclangley. I said I've never heard that before. He asked me my background and I told him BIP and I told him about Donald Wilson and he said if ever you meet Donald

say chin chin or something Scottish to Donald when you meet him. Reading about Donald Wilson in Kine Weekly I'll go to Pinewood and pass on this message from captain MacLangley, so I went to Pinewood and went into Donald Wilson's office and said hello Donald. He said hello Bryan, when can you start. I said I haven't come to start I've come to mass you a message from Mr MacLangley and he seemed quite please but then he repeated this question could I start quite soon because they were starting Independent Frame film department and tehy wanted some cameramen to do models and travelling matte. Henry Harris who was then doing that work was about to leave, I didn't know all this at the time but I gathered afterwards Henry Harris was departing for some reason. I thought about this and I'm not terribly happy at Welling so I asked Hamilton Inglis and Jock Dean if I could tear up my contract and leave to join this fine place at Pinewood. They very kindly agreed to tear up my contract, wished me luck and off I went. I left welling on the Friday and started Pinewood on the Monday which is not bad and very much more money. £60 a week to start with and I stayed there 10 years at Pinewood. I went there in 1948 and I was there till 1958 and Pinewood started to not renew the contracts as they came to the end of their years. So when my contract came to an end Arthur Illcott said sorry Bryan this is television so I said goodbye. A miracle I got a job the very next day after Pinewood filming something for some man from advertising about beds or carpets or something which made the man a millionaire, a super millionaire, then I met you Alan and you said why not come to Ealing and jump on the back of the tiger that's eating the film business, learn how to shoot film for television. I thought that seemed very sensiible and I was was very grateful and I went to Ealing. I was at Ealing from 1958 to 1960 and without making you blush Alan I regard my time at Ealing as my university because there I met people who had backgrounds other than film or theatrical, acting. I felt my whole life had been in this groove and at the BBC I met people who had been to university and religious people and women who had been actresses and now became producers and they had a whole different world and I rubbed shoulders with these people and I learned from them that if you don't know what to do you should jolly well ask. And many young people came from television Centre, came to Ealing to do a bit of filming for a programme and these young people would no nothing whatsover about filming and they would ask me as cameraman what to do and I was able to advise them on several occasions. I learned this positive thing if you don't know you should ask. I also learned at Ealing, I'm going on here a bit but it's very important, two other things I learnt at Ealing, - one, how to shoot in with 16mm, my whole life had been 35mm, great big things and great big crews; the other thing I learnt at Ealing on some occasion, no very often I had an assistant who was bone idle and didn't bother to turn up on occasion and the producer was brought up with the belief the show must go on, you couldn't stop becauase somebody didn't show up, you had to do this stint, on these rare occasions I had to reorganise my thinking from a full crew with all the trimmings to do it yourself or don't do it at all. This was also brought hom to me by a BBC cameraman, I was sitting next to him in the BBC camera room and this was a rather Elderly cameraman and I said where are you going to next Dougie and he said I'm off to South America next. I said oh yes, who's going with you. He said it's just me and the producer, a two man crew. I said how can you do it, loading and humping all the stuff. he said they can't afford the airfare for an assistant and all

that happens is that everything takes a little bit longer because I've got to load a magazine and I've got to unload it, I've got to dust the camera, I've got to think about what to do, make out my timesheets. It takes me a bit longer but I can do it myself. He did this. Also there was David Attenborough and his cameramen wizzing round the world doing a two man crew operation because you couldn't do it any other way. So I learnt three things, one, if you don't know ask, two, 16mm, three, do it yourself. So come 1960 Film Centre asked me if I'd like to apply for a job at the United Nations. They'd been given the job of getting people to apply for the post and there were similar people all over the film world, Canada and France, asking people the same sort of question. I thought right, what have I got to loose and I applied. Eventually I was interviewed and eventually chosen and I went to see Jack Newitt who was then the king pin at Ealing and said I had this lovely offer about three times what I was being paid here, all zeros and dollar signs and I regarded it as one long vacation in Beirut. He said you're quite right to take it and at the end of the year come back here if you want to. So I thought what have I got to lose and off I went and I went to the United Nations Relief Work Agency and I was there for 7 years and I was invited to join the staff and became the international film technician/cameraman. At the end of 7 years economy was always one of the problems but it became more of a problem and they decided to stop some of the filming activities. The plan was to get rid of all of our Arabic staff and getting rid of me and my secretary. Phyllis came over and we had a flat there adn the plan was to drive from Beirut to England and we got directions from everyone as to where to go and what to see. This was June 16th, the Arab Israeli War, the 6 day War started. We became refugees from Beirut and in the end we got back to London. I felt concerned about what was going on out there and one of them was Reg Crawley at BBC Ealing and I said Reg I'm sure you're be very pleased to hear I've escaped from Beirut. I thought this, me, was red hot news. He said fine, when can you start. I said I can't start till the end of June till when my contract expires, they're paying me and can ask me to do anything. I stayed at home for the rest of June and July 1 started at the BBC on what I thought was a rehabilitation course to accustome myself to English light and conditions because I'd been used to sunshine and I was at the BBC as a holiday relief cameraman from June until the end of the year. During that time I shot a film with John Betjemin called Up the Edgeware Road or something like that and we had a camerajEclair camera, that film went out and it was seen on television by the wife of a producer. She rang me up and said her husband was on holiday at the moment in America and she wanted to know if I was free to start on January 1st in India. So I went to Reg and said I've got this offer of a series in India. He said it so happens Bryan I was loath to tell you but your time was coming to an end, you've had your six months. So it was a happy co-incident. So I went to India to work with a chap called Java Abas an Indian person who had been in the Traning School in India during the war and he came to England had had gone to the BBC as a newsreel cameraman and he had graduated up to being a producer. I went to shoot with him and we shot a great series of about 30 half hour films for Canadian television. i came back and worked with him for about 18 months and at the end of the time unhappily for him he had to shoot up shop, we needn't go into the reasons why. I was then however old it was, 57 or something, I was too old to be employed by anyone so I bought from Java Abbas the camera he'd bought for

his film company. It was a Ariflex camera, it was about 9 months old, I bought it at a proportionate discount and I set up shop as it were as a freelance cameraman working mainly for the BBC as a contractor, 2 man crews, three man crews, four man crews, whatever they said I did. This continued for a number of years and then I got other work of course working for other producers and this continued until 1982 or 3 when I hip trouble and I had to have my hip joints replaced. I put it down to carrying too many Mitchell cameras in my youth, squashing my hips flat. Anyway whatever the course, I was really no good as a cameraman. i couldn't walk sufficiently quickly. So I had to stop being a contract cameraman. Then United Nations Relief Work Agency handed me a film in English Laboratories and gradually I became their representative in the UK. I'm their film consultant now. I'm still working at the United Nations acting as their gofor, go backwards and forewards. I'm still in work and I'm 77 at Christmas. That's enough of a run down.

AG: That's excellent. To go back and cover some of the ground again, you've mentioned a number of studios you worked in like Worton Hall and Highbury. What were the various studios like, what were the condition like in them, what were they like as studios.

With youthful eyes I thought they were wonderful but thinking back at BIP and Welling the original sound stages were draped in great big blankets which contained a lot of dust and were terribly inflammable and why there weren't more fires when you think of all those carbon arcs, I thought the idea of parting the curtain, going onto the stage was wonderful. It was like going onto a circus. Another little how it was memory, whilst at BIP I was hired out as a camera assitant to Walter Blakely to Gainsborough Poole St on a film called the Stronger Sex which was the first film after the great big fire at Gainsborough Poole St and now the equipment there was a mixture of mercury lights hanging from the rafters and incandescent lights so actors looked sometimes horribly blue and sometimes jaundiced yellow. Much of the equipment you asked for they'd sometimes say it's been destroyed in the fire gov. So it was pretty hard at Islington on Another thing at Welling, Welling had been completely equipped with arc lighting lamps when they were run by British Instructional Films, came the talkies these light were absolutely useless because they howled and whistled and hummed and so at Welling there were crates and crates of lamps which were never unpacked. A terrible expense of course. Another problem we had was in the development of sound at BIP the original microphones were burried in bits of the set and actors would walk up to a microphone and say their bit, walk to another place and say their next bit, microphones didn't follow. Then they developed bamboo poles and then some bright chap invented the Lasiton Booth which Otto Kanturek my boss described as the Loch Ness Monster because it was staked out undulating all over the set casting enormous shadows, it was terrifying from the cameraman's point of view. Another problem was that the sound man at BIP and other studios always used to be in a glass fronted box, he didn't sit on the set looking at the action, he was up there looking at the levers and modules. Another thing was the sound was recorded on film so you never heard it till tomorrow when it was developed and printed, so you were never really sure how it was. At Stoll's where we made a number of films, they seemed cavernous the studios. At one time we went there and they had a giant set

which stretched from one stage to another through a kind of tunnel. Then I remember walking through this thing doing our Rock of Ages scene or whatever it was on the corner of this set and it was enormous.

I'd say the greatest difference between then and how was the weight of the lighting equipment because the lights were mostly old military search lights. For example we had 1000mm sun arcs with fascet mirror reflectors, you could almost stand inside them, these things were enomously heavy, all the lighting equipment was heavy, every light, every arc light had to have an electrician to keep the arc burning properly to stop the howling. The cables were heavy but of course there were a lot of people available and this in turn gave a lot of work to a lot of people. Then later I'll never forget they invented colourtran and I'll never forget a man came and said look two kilowats of light in that, and I didn't believe him, lifted it up with one hand, two kilowatts of light, unheard of. The light was wonderful and cameras, the first stage of sound required cameras to be in a booth, the booth was just in the centre at first and then they put it on wheels and and then the booth revolved and tracked nevertheless the crew sitting inside this thing, Jack Cox or whoever it might be, I was pulling the focus.

SIDE 3, TAPE 2

BL: A further word upon the subject of crewing which is probably heresy to some people, when I was contracted to the BBC Normally they would ask me to arrive with a two man or three man crew meaning a cameraman, a camera assistant and a sound man. And I was once asked to arrive on location in WAles with myself, an assistant, a soundman and an assistant and two electricians and lights. When I got there I found that it was for BBC Education so I was thunderstruck that this vast expense which I had to pay for as a contractor for an education budget. i asked the producer what was the idea and he said they'd learnt by experience that we get more mileage out of a cameraman if we get a double set of electricians setting up the lights and a dolly on which the camera sits and can float from set to set you can shoot more film in the least time and it's the most inexpensive way of shooting. So I came to the belief that the job should dictate the amount of crew required. On a feature film of course you must have everybody as tradition demands, but on documentaries and one man off, when you think of the poor cameraman who has one day to go up to the moon, he can't take his assistant with him. So there are occasions when one men and two men crews are the only way.

AG: You've mentioned various cameramen, which of all the cameramen you worked with gave you the most help.

BL: Well the greatest help was Otto Kanturek he was a refugee who came to England to BIP from Nazi Germany. He as a Czech I believe, anyway I was put as his operator and he didn't have a very good command of English but he did explain to me a lot of his lighting techniques, his principles and in due course as a cameraman he lit and I operated on Blossom Time, he was then promotted to director and he got me elevated to lighting cameraman on his first directorial assignment. Literally I owe more to Otto Kanturek than to anybody because he lifted me up from operator to lighting.

Who else. Jack Cox of course. He was a very good master. He would give me a lot of information in a sort of round the corner way, he would say things. I've found in my life that people in the film business have been exceedingly generous in passing on information. If you want to know anything simply ask the right person, you'll get told.

AG: You mentioned your service but you skimmed over rather lightly. What exactly did you do during the War

BL: Having joined the War Office Film Unit as it was called then and having been shipped over seas at remarkably short notice with a great big revolver. I'd never had any military training. And I said to the man in the War office when I was in the OTC at Wellington I'd learned to four fours and I noticed the soldiers marched around in 3, shouldn't I learn what to do. he said no. We think that it's much better going as a cameramen uninhibited by military regulations and he said you can be jolly sure if you do commit any faux pas anyone there will kindly or otherwise correct you. So it worked out. I'd ridden in the same car as generals and field marshals and hadn't felt all sat upon by their rank. To me they were just people to be filmed. The only time I came to regret

this lack of training was when we had a crank handle college at India, of course, we then went into another league in which we had a whole gang of trainees and troops and for several months I was in sole command, my CO Jerry Keane had been killed and I didn't have any clue what to do as far as awarding punishments and drills and I had to rely heavily on those people who had been luckily enough to be trained but had been brow beaten possibly in the process. Coming back to the question, I went over on a troopship and we went to West Africa and then I flew in an aeroplane right through the Congo down to Cairo and then I was there a short time and they said the Germans had landed in Crete, a lovely story, they're coming down like snowflakes i hear, the man said, and I thought about G fiilters and blue skies and whether 23A would be better and my mind was purely photgraphic. And we went to Alexandria and soon after we arived Alexandria was bombed, I mention this now because Isaw a travellogue on television the other day about Alexandria and I saw the wall under which I crouched on the seashore. Anyway we got to Alex and were put on half an hour standbye to go to Crete and the retreat was started. And every half hour or so ships would come in fromCrete loaded with so many personnel that theysaid that if all the people on the destroyer had gone to one side it would have tipped over. Incredible, absolutely stuffed solidly with people and the guns were twisted and i filmed all this, the arrival of people from Crete along with the usual cameramen and all the time we were trying, someone was trying to get us to Crete to film the rest of the story, the parachutists. Happily we never went and so we came back to Cairo and the man said hard luck old man we're get you to Cyprus, they're going to attack there, we'll get you there before they come. And the chap said we'd better take just what you can carry and a lot of film. I said how about getting the film back if they do attack. he said you'll have to improvise. Famous army words, improvise the shipment of exposed film. Anyway I went to Cyprus and it was a couple of months filming everything and preparing to the top of Mount as a trogladite. We got bombed by the Germans, i think they came from Crete, the Italians from Rhodes and Vichy France from Beirut. And their bombing techniques were unbelievable, absolutely three different systems. You could stand on the ground and say Vichy French today, you really could by their actions. Anyway, that didn't happen, so back to Cairo and they said better luck next time, we'll send you off to the Far East, Singaphore. I went in a flying boat, and imperial airways flying boat, 300 miles a day, Cairo via Persian Gulf, Karachi, Calcutta, Rangoon, somewhere in Siam, Penang and Singaphore. And arrived in Singaphore in about September 1941 and of course it was all peace out there. Lights on everywhere, no guns, lots of gin slings. I've got a photograph of my cameracard and they gave me a lovely camera car, a baker's wagon but with a roof rack and I drove up and down Malaya filming all the defences as I was ordered to do. Then the Japanese attacked Malaya and I filmed on the way back. I got disabled on Christmas day and I was shipped back to base on a hospital train and happily for me I wasn't that seriously upset to be in hospital, I could be an outpatient and after about a couple of weeks I was back in working order to film the last bits of the war, The Great Causeway, I filmed that being blown up, about six feet or so and the airraid damage and I might say that when the Japanese attacked Singaphore on December 8th, I heard all the aeroplanes coming and I wasn't at all put out by these Japanese because I'd been taught they couldn't fly, shoot, couldn't walk, they were crosseyed and they didn't worry me at

all. Having been through the Blitz in London I was a bit cocky. Anyway we went down to the docksid and we saw the bomb damage, we filmed that and we had a photograph of these troops dancing, we all danced at the news America had been bombed at Pearl Harbour because it meant the Americans coming into the War. Fortunately for me the day before it capitulated, I and the rest of the war correspondents were shipped off to Potavia to carry on with General raybrook, SE Asia Command and then the Japanese invaded that and we were all evacuated again. Any old boat going to Ceylon and from Ceylon I was ordered up to Burma and that fell before I arrived and I had to go to Calcutta and I filmed a lot of things there and then they decided to form a training college in India along the side of the Army Film Unit so called crank handled college, a very good description and I had the syllabus sent out and we adapted it and we trained a lot of people there and I get more satisfaction out of that because four or five of the lads I trained became professional cameramen in India or Burma afterwards, at least my bit of the war did some good for somebody. After four and a half years I came back to England, joined the Army Kinematograph Service at Wembley, filmed a few things. went to Germany at the end of the War to film the reconstruction of the Rocket V2 operation. We filmed the whole thing as it unfolded. The plan was to reconstitute the operation of the rocket business including manufacture, testing and firing and as the things unfolded, Alex Britten who was one of my camera sergeants and George Ashworth and Peter Ulwork, he had just joined the army before I went to Germany and he was sent out to be as a private. I was a captain with a big revolver and pips on my soldiers. But being the film business Peter would call me Bryan and I would call him Peter, we were as one, we were brothers of the lens as you might say. Nevertheless I mention this because when the first rocket was fired I found our cameras would only point up to the top of the tilt and it wouldn't go vertically up as the rocket did, I hadn't thought of that, so after a timethe rockets flew out of our viewfinders. Our solution for the next time round was to get a gun mounted, we were military minded by then, and George Ashworth went to dockyard with a gang of German prisoners with the idea of getting a gun mounting which we could fire the camera vertically. While George was off our first position had been 1000 yards. The next position which was this particular one was 500 yards away from the damn thing going up and we were busy building trenches into which we could dive if this rocket went haywire as it often did. And Peter Ulwork was showing the German prisoners where to dig the slip runs. The Germans were really very crafty. We were doing the digging and the Germans were smoking our cigarettes. And I was talking to somebody saying how long George would be and Peter said why don't you do what they did on Look Up to the Stars, I said what's that Peter. He said we had a thing called a cheese which you mounted on top of the tripod and it went straight up like this. And in five years I'd forgotten there were such neceties. So I got the Germans to make a cheese out of wood which we lashed to our Newman Sinclair tripod mounted with a Newman on the top and we were able to point up vertically to the sky. And of course when George came back with a big lorry and gun mounting and all these prisoners, they were all very cross, everybody was very cross with me and young Peter. We were able to film this rocket up in the air and the next time we were 5 yards away from the rocket. I shot all this thing. About a year or so ago the Imperial War Museum got in touch with the army film unit, Phyllis and I were invited along and they showed me this film of the rocket. I'd

never seen the rushes and having seen this, if only I'd seen it then I'd have decided to have become a director because it's very good. I'd never seen it till 40 years later. After that ABPC got me out of the army back into civvy St into my demob suit.

AG: To turn to something different, how did you first get involved with the ACTT.

BL: It was a funny think you should ask Arthur, it was you at BIP. You were recruiting and I joined up. I suppose I joined because I thought it was a good thing to be in. With my background of theatrical individuals I had no appreciation or knowledge of trade union business or anything about unions or co-operation. I just did what seemed to be best for me. And joining a union which I thought was going to be like a guild and would introduce me to people must be good so I joined. This was I suppose 1934 or 35 I suppose,

AG: 33.

BL: I was one of your recruitees.

AG: What are your recollections of your first days of the ACTT.

BL: I really don't have any other than I must have been keen on it because I was on the general council and we used to have meeetings in Wardour St with Thorold Dickinson and when the ACT moved to Wardour St to George Elvin's house in Mill Hill I used to go along two or three times a week to help in whatever way I could like as licking envelopes and sending things out. In other words giving a hand, I must have been keen but I would imagine it was more on a personal basis other than any union or socialist point of view because I didn't know anything about these matters in those days.

AG: What do you think ACT's standing was.

BL: It was a beginning organisation in a beginning industry so it couldn't have had very much effect but nevertheless it was sufficiently well established by the time the war started they could have children's parties. My son Michael and Phyllis when i was overseas went to these parties at Christmas and other times so they must have had a big organisation and sufficient organisation to run these things. How they were regarded by producers I don't really know because I was freelance by them. I'll give you one example. In my whole life I've never been paid a penny in overtime which is pretty rare. I've had time off at the BBC in lieu as they call it which I thought was marvellous so i was never involved in the nitty gritties of union life.

AG: You said yourself you were on the general council. Did you hold any other positions in the ACTT.

BL: Yes I was the chairman of the camera committee. Somewhere between 1958 and 1960. We used to meet in the ACTT offices in Wardour St once or twice a week and I found that very interesting, very nice.

AG: Do you think the association played a useful role in the shaping of the industry

BL: Yes I'm sure of it. In particular the laboratory point of view because the laboratory workers because the work is regular employment and it can be easily chizzled away. Freelance people are less likely to be imposed on. But I do think. I'm sure the ACTT has been and is and will continue to be an essential feature of life. I've no doubt there have been excess in the ACTT's background and will be in the foreground but by and large it is a necessary thing. I regard it ideally as a kind of agency between workers and management. This is my personal view nowadays. But we couldn't continue without the ACTT, for the employees it would be dreadful. I have one particular case it it was an actual benefit for me when I was freelancing. Some bloke asked me to appear with all sorts of goodies on the set and he welched on the payment of about £500. To a small freelancer this was catastrophic. I got in touch with Bryan Shemings at the ACT and he got in touch with the legal bloke at the ACT and after a lot of argy bargy my money arrived. I might tell you that the cheque from this particular bloke arrived postdated, backdated and every evasion possible. But in the end through the ACT I got my money. I don't blame this bloke. He was let down by the people he was working for. Had the ACT not been there I would have been short of £500.

SIDE 4, TAPE 2

AG: We're on the different types of film stocks. What were their differences and what were their requirements.

BL: Well originally film was blue sensitive only. It was called when I started ordinary film and I arrived the time orthchromatic film was in common use. I mention this ordinary film because Mr Parkinson, one of his strategies was to photgraph landmarks in London, teashops and monuments and so forth and mark the frame and you would photograph these things and fad out on the lens diaphram, then you'd mark the frame, wind back, put down where it was shot and where the sun was and where the camera was. Years later when I arrived these cans were produced, I was told to go to a certain place, i can't remember if all the frames were developed, anyway point the camera at this thing, turn the handle and fade it at a certain count. So we dissolve it then and now. The film I was exposing was ordinary film which was blue sensitive and the consequence of shooting with blue sensitive film is that anything which is red or yellow doesn't expose it simply comes out as black. Any anything which is blue comes out as white so you get a pretty contrasty affair but it's very crisp. Shall we say it's different. I did a number of these scenes either as cameraman or as an assistant. With orthochromatic stock. I can't really remember what it was sensitive to but let us say green. The sensitive part, it was rather like verichrome, about half way to panchromatic, I don't really remember but it did have some blind spots and this was the normal way of shooting. Jack Cox once told me when i was assisting that actors who had blue eyes like Brian Aherne they had terrible problems being photographed on ordinary or ortho stock because the blue eyes vanished and they became like people without eye pupils. So Jack Cox's method was to shine an arc light into their eyes on which there was a red filter so this would give some modulations in grading on the eye parts. It meant with ordinary and Ortho lead buses came out black and black tulips came out very dark and merky. Then of course with the coming of sound it meant you couldn't use arc lights, and that meant you had to use incandescent lights which were very red sensitive and it meant that the film stock had to be sensitive to yellow light particularly, incandescent light, 32 5a degrees. So this panchromatic stock was used and I think it was called Super X and it graduated up to plus X and double X and four Xs and I'm sure allold cameramen know their filters off by heart, A1 and A2 and 23 As. I certainly did, I can remember them now. Then stock went into colour. The end of pleasure from a cameraman's point of view in a way.

What were you saying.

AG: You were talking about film stock. Over the years changes have taken place in the frame size. What were they and how did they affect production if at all.

BL: They certainly did. The original frame size was what we call the standard frame and this extended from edge to edge of the perforations and from frame line to frame line and it was 1" by 3/4" and then when sound came, the first sound I think was on gramophone disk and then they had sound on film and the sound had to be printed onto the positive and

it meant the frame size had to be reduced and eight of an inch to the left which left it with a square frame so they cut off a bit at the top and the bottom and you ended with a frame considerably smaller than the standard size frame. I think it was 16 by 11mm.

That was the Academy frame and of course this was the standard size and you often see it in old fashioned newsreel. If you look at an old-fashioned newsreel of the First World War, you'll find their heads are cut off, their feet are cut off and you can't see what's on the left of the screen because it was in camera and in the negative but when it's printed it's printed it's printed with as it were an academy gate leaving room for the soundtrack. I don't think there is any more to say about it, is there.

AG: What happened with the development of wide-screen, CinemaScope.

BL: I've actually never had anything to do with that. You're talking to the wrong person.

AG: Well then we're go onto something you obviously did have something to do with, the Independent Frame. What exactly was it and how did it differ from ordinary production.

BL: Independent Frame was a process devised at Pinewood. at the end of the War Mr Rank thought that British films needed mechanising, more scientific, and he got a gang of scientists from Watts and Watt, the radar men, down to Pinewood to make filmmaking more scientific and it was called Independent Frame. One of the people Vivian Bowden, he was the principal man on the radar, he's now a lord. Then there was Dr Loins, he was a chemist and he left independent Frame and went to Rank Laboratories and became their chief man. There was Robert Holt and a whole number of people of very high academic scientific qualifications. The idea was to invent ways of making film production more speedy and this consisted essentially of draughtsmanship. They had draughtsmen galore making plans where to put the camera and how high the projector should be to point the back projection plates on the screens and at times you would have a set up where there'd be three projectors coming from three different angles so you could do a pan say of 45 degrees from one way to another way because the three screen projected and everything was right and the size was right. In the end what seemed to bedevil Independent Frame was that the scriptwriters and actors and directors couldn't keep up with the pace of these advanced methods and consequently films were all hurried and awful. And another problem all the planning was done before the shooting started so that if the director found something was awkward or difficult he had to shoot because it said so on the plan and it had to be in a certain position. Now all that lead to the abandonment of independent Frame but what has survived out of it and what we should be very grateful to Mr Rank for is three great things one of which are the giant rostrums some 10 or 12 ft square on which sets can be built off stage and the whole thing rolled onto the set the day before shooting and simply bolted together. That was an enormous advancement to building on the set. Things were built off stage in the carpenter's shop and wheeled into position. Another thing which we should be grateful for is all this back projection, back projection and front projection are direct

descendants of Independent Frame. You should really talk to Charlie Stanton about this, he is the man who developed the back projection. But to give you a very small example on the big stage at Pinewood they built at the end of it a long tunnel like a tube tunnel and at the far end of that was a giant lift thing like you might see in a dockyard. The projector which is a triple projector of course, three projectors into one so you get more light, would go up and down ever so high and ever so low and the projector was really a floating object in this tunnel all worked out on the drawing board. I believe one of the draughtsmen was John Hawkesworth who was one of the producers of Upstairs, Downstairs. It's the same name but it may not be the same person but if it is the same person. If it is the same person you should talk to him because he would know it as a draughtsman. My connection with this was in the travelling matte aspect of Independent Frame and this depended on having a beam splitting camera which was made by George Ashworth and the beam splitting camera consisted of a camera in which there were two gates at right angels and in between the gates was a prism and through the prism was passed on prism one image and reflected from the prism was another image, one was photographed on blue sensitive film only and the other of course plus x, this of course was in the black and white days. Travelling matte of course had a great advantage compared with back projection in that you could shoot it now and put on the background at leisure with a different background, if you didn't like the background you could change it. This was the theory and the practice. And I had ten years at Pinewood doing this and we went to the smallest studios, for example Pathe in Wardour St to film a Triumph motor car dashing through the Alps on a children's film. And we had to squeeze up against the back wall and the blue backing squeezed up against the other wall which was not very far away and inbetween was a Triumph Dolomite car and the actors were in it. We did all these things, weeks and weeks of shooting, and afterwards of course the cameramen went to the Alps and shot the background and the two things were united, stuck on top of each other. This went on and there was hardly a British film made in which travelling matte wasn't used. All over England and we went to France 5 times doing travelling matte so it was a a good thing. At first I thought it was marvellous and it was marvellous for me. I met these scientists and learnt all these technical things. And in the end it became repetitious and boring and I was particularly incensed because on one film, Voyage Home, Journey Home at Pinewood, a film about a ship coming from Latin America to England, and the whole film was shot in the studio against blue backing, the whole bloody film except a few location shots done by Peter Hennessy and when the film was finished and printed somebody said to me I saw a lovely picture the other day, a pity about the three or four travelling matte shots in which you saw the black lines in it. I nearly burst my boiler, the 95% of that film, it was unnoticed it was travelling matte, but the 2 or 3 shots with black rims round and I got the feeling in the end travelling matte was recognised as filming with black lines around it and I became disillusioned. While I'm on this can I say while I was at Pinewood I went to see high definition films on an official visit at Highbury Studios, Norman Collins was in charge of it and high definition films was some way of shooting with 1000s of lines of definition on a television screen. I don't really understand it very much. This was really part of the evolution of television. But they suffered from the same thing as Independent Frame, their great problems

was that the scriptwriters and stories were churned out at sufficient speed to match the shooting. We had the same problem at Pinewood. You couldn't match the output. You couldn't mechanise thinking seemed the conclusion of that time.

AG: Talking of these processes did you ever have anything to do with the Schufftan process.

BL: The Schufftan process yes. I came across it at BIP studios and this was really a wonderful process. It had the disadvantage that it had to be set up on stage and all the arts and all the craft necessary were done on the stage so it locked up the whole stage for maybe a fortnight while it was being married together. The system was there was a lathe bed, one end of which the camera was mounted and it could move in all directions on gears. On the other end end was a cradle holding a mirror at 45% and the mirror was surface silvered which we said was German silver. A set was built on this studio floor say up to head height and you'd have a miniature set built or a photograph or a model to be reflected through this mirror to coincide what was built in actual size. The set might be a 10th of the scale of the actual set and the job of the Schufftan technicians was to scrape away the silver so that the reflected image and the actual image would co-incide and marry up one with the other. Off course, the mirror being relatively close to the camera would be out of focus so that the mingling from the model to the actual was almost imperceptible so long as the lighting was level. Naturally if you overexposed one or the other you could tell it but generally speaking it was jolly good. They could do all sort of things. I remember some disaster happened and all they built on the stage was a window frame and out of this window somebody had to hollow stop. The rest of the set was a model reflected in through this mirror, most wonderfully. But it had the disadvantage it locked up the entire stage so it was superceeded by hanging mattes and front mattes, old timers like me regard the Schufftan process as a bit of magic.

AG: Another think you've mentioned during the course of this is that you worked on quota quickies, what were they and what were the working conditions like on these films.

BL: Quota quickies in my book is the reason why British films are so good today. They passed a law that a certain percentage of all footage screened on British screens should be made in British studios, they should be originating in British studios. I don't know what the percentages were, it was a quota we'll say 10% of all things seen had to be made in England. Now the films, they had to be made and they weren't going to be made to attract people so they had to be made very economically, cheaply and the schedules were very often 18 days, 12 days I suppose, and the films were often just 60 minutes long, an hour long but many people of my generation worked on them and I wouldn't have got my job as a camera man if it hadn't been for quota quickies because there weren't enough cameramen to start with and they couldn't afford very expensive cameramen. In some case the situation was abused. I remember on one film I shot, something about Sexton Blake, a man coming out of an office into a motor car. The director deliberately made him cross the road and come back again because you got paid per foot. The return was a

£1 a foot so if you could do a long pan you got more money for the least output. I think they were a good exercise, a good training ground for everybody. I don't thing there isn't anybody who hasn't benefitted from quota quickies. But of course, many people were exploited no doubt but they did learn their trade and I sometimes wish they had it nowadays.

AG: Would you say there's any ressemblence between the quickies and some tv series.

BL: I have a very limited experience of tv series. The one I did which Alan produced which was English by television I must confess to thinking it was going on for ever. Never a minute early, never a minute late and it seemed to go on and on and on. A quota quicky went on if you were lucky 18 days and that was the end of it. So there was really in my view no comparison. On one you had a unique one-off bash on the quota quickie. My experience of this one television series was that it seemed to go on forever, I could never see the end of it, week after week. Thank you for having me Alan.

AG: Have you ever worked on tv comercials or cinema advertisements.

BL: I did a few while I was at Pinewood I was hired out to the Rank Screen Advertising place and I made a few. I was a bit shot because all things I'd been brought up to believe sacred, such as exiting left and coming in right, were discarded by one of the producers because I remember on the occasion the motor car drove in from the right and stopped and the man got out and the director said turn it round and I said you can't its coming from that way and it must and he said no, no how else can I see the other side of the car if you don't turn it round. I was green in those days and thought it was heresy. I had very little experience of tv commercials.

AG: Turning to the personnel, how have the crews changed over the years.

BL: The question of crewing is very interesting really. When I started, of course I was an assistant to various cameramen. In the silent days you had a cameraman and an assistant and when the talkies came there was the lighting cameraman who used to operate and his assistant and then some one to do the clappers and fetch the tea. Then the operators were brought in. It so happens I was the first operator. We had an American cameraman come to BIP called Denny Gerard and i was put to be his assistant and he had one look at the George Ashworth blimp on the Moy head and I suppose he said this is not for me and he protested saying in Hollywood they had operators who worked the cameras while the cameraman got on with the lighting. So he told me to work the handles. I was terrified, stayed up all night worrying about it. But I survived the ordeal and became the first operator, certainly in BIP and possibly in the business. And so then we had the lighting cameraman, the operator, the assistant, the focussing assistant and the clapper boy. Then the next stage was we had multicamera shoots at BIP with the second or third cameras and they had a loading room, so you had the lighting cameraman, the operator, the focus man, the clapper man and the loading man so five plus grips to push the gear up and down the trolley so it was really a

six man cycle of people to operator the camera which is very necessary and proper. When I was at Pinewood doing the travelling matte there was always myself, in charge of the travelling matte, and my assistant and we would be attached to whatever film unit was working, so there would be that regular film unit plus me. Then when I went to the BBC the crew suddenly shrank down to me and an assistant when he arrived and then when I went to the United Nations more often than not it was just me on my own, myself alone as was the title of a film I shot once, meaning Sein Fein, Brian Desmond Hurst directing. Now I've come to the belief you must have as many people as necessary to do the job and producers must agree to this. Also against this when circumstances say it's lunacy to take a full crew on some distant shoot, it's lunacy to insist on this and as an example there wasa chap called Tom Stobart climbed up Mount Everest all on his own, no assistant, he got blackballed by the ACTT or was it the ACT, for doing this. Censored. In those days they did not have mountaineering camera assistants. Nowadays there's one on every mountain top and I really do think that films are made, documentary films in particular in which the minimum is one man who can do everything, it's very inconvenient to do everything and it's better to have two people. And I have worked on a number of documentary films, films which have a minute budget, on which they cannot possibly pay for a great crew