

This recording was transcribed by funds from the AHRC-funded 'History of Women in British Film and Television project, 1933-1989', led by Dr Melanie Bell (Principal Investigator, University of Leeds) and Dr Vicky Ball (Co-Investigator, De Montfort University). (2015).

BECTU History Project
Interview no: 202
Interviewee: Elisabeth Furse
Interviewer: Roy Fowler
No of tapes 2
Duration: 163:02

NB: The time codes given here are estimates based on readings from the original cassette recording.

Tape 1 Side 1

The date is the 1st of July 1991. We're at 17 – right - Chesham Street, in London. And the interview is with Elisabeth Furse. Elisabeth, tell me, first of all, when and where you were born, if it isn't too ungallant to ask you that?

Why?

Well it's always a little ungallant they say to ask a lady her age.

No.

You don't mind?

No. I was born 31st of August, midnight actually, 1910, in Kaliningrad, which was called Konigsberg. Right?

Yes.

That's it.

Right. And you have mixed ancestry you told me?

Yes, Russian and, German and Latvian.

Right. Could you briefly sketch...?

No?

The family origin, your father, no? You....

No, no. It's not interesting.

Well I was curious what your father did and, and, and whether your mother also had any particular traits that lead you into your subsequent lifestyle?

No, no, no, no, not at all, not at all.

Right. Okay.

My father was a kind of a medical man who went into drug stuff, you know, and became a, was a very rich man, you see.

Right. Would you care then to sketch how you ended up in SW1 in London, in...?

Well I married an Englishman, in Nineteen..., 1930, I married that English man in 1934 – '33.

Was this to escape Germany?

No, that was because I, I was working politically as a young Communist in Paris against Hitler. I was going into Germany and I, doing escapes and the French Police came to my hotel and said the Germans asked for my extradition on, on, on criminal charges, you know. And they said I've got to change my, my identity. And I was given two choices. One was to have an operation and having my hair changed and my

physique and have a whole set of false papers, I was stateless you see, or else I had to marry somebody. But they wanted me to go on working, that's why, against Hitler, do you understand? And I was an absolute anti-fascist, and believing, totally believing I would be ashamed today if I hadn't been what I had been that they let us the start on something else. And so I married a young English journalist called Coker, Albert Coker, and, who was a friend of a friend of the Humphrey Slater's, who was a well-known intellectual Communist Union, and friend of mine and he had a British passport. Then, after some time I discovered the corruption, the terrible corruption that existed at the top of the Communist movement. That was when Stalin started his extermination stuff and I left the movement. That's it.

Right. So, I suppose the obvious question is how you came to....

I always came to England, and I was educated in Europe. I was an educated girl.

Yes.

You know.

I was going to say how you, how you ended up in, in the British Film Industry, but...

No, that is, no, no, that's something quite different.

Right.

I mean England and France, I mean Europe was my paper, paper, you know, I'm a European.

Yes.

My papa was a European really.

Right.

And believed in it.

So this, it wasn't just a matter of your activities for the Communist Party?

No, no, no.

Right.

I was brought up as, as a European you see. My father never wanted me to be a Russian exile or refugee I think. But it was because that Russian actress, Anna Sten, a friend of my mother's, arrived in Paris on her way to, to London. She saw me starving. And, I was at university then, I think, and she said 'Come to me, come with me to London, I'm bored anyway', her husband was very boring, she was always bored with her husband, 'and be my private social companion, secretary, the company will pay', so I came to London, you see. And started over with Anna, you know, having chocolates and cup of tea and talking about men and, you know. And then I got to know the company, you know, the director Fyodor Otsep, and the producer, a man called Klement, Klement, yes, Klement, he called himself Klement. And the man who financed the whole thing, called Robert Garrett, an Englishman. Klement was Hungarian, Hungarian Jewish, I think again, but they all were, you know.

[05:10]

And, and then we went to the studio, you see. And I went with Anyushka to the studio. And one day, Mary Field, I think, I think it was Mary Field was the, the so-called continuity girl, sitting by the camera with a block, taking notes, and she fell ill. And Anyushka said to Fyodor 'Use this girl, she's done it everywhere, you know, Paris, Rome, Berlin, anywhere, she can do the job'. And then she said to me 'You know that job is well paid, it will pay for your studies and, and to make two or three films a year and then you can pay for your studies and finish your studies'. So I worked on as a continuity girl. That is when Tony Wall came I said, she was shooting next door somewhere, and I had no shutter, I didn't know the difference between a camera and a, and a loo I said to them. But, to be quite straight I was always a woman, I was feminine you see. And to me men were there to help them and to help me, I'd do

anything for a man because I love men, and they were there to help me. So, and Anyushka bribed them all for cigarettes and drink, you see, the boys on the gantry and so on, 'Help her, help her', she said, you see. So that they said 'BGNG, NGB', you know, and they're shouting, I didn't know the difference one or the other. They said to us 'Well I would explain it to you afterwards' you see.

And so I wrote down what they told me, you know, the props boys, the boys on the gantry, the camera boys, even the cutting room boys, you know, watch out for this, watch out for that. Luckily that film had fourteen script writers, the script was changed all the time.

You haven't said the name of the film, do you remember it?

A Woman Alone it was called.

Right. And this is...?

There was, there was a story in a Russian village, you see. And there she was a Russian poor peasant girl and the prince comes along and all that. And they engaged of course, the ballet on the lot, to dance on the lot, you know, outside at night after they came from, off Covent Garden and every night it rained.

This...

They never took, they never took a medicine report

This was the...?

So they had...

The Ballet Oust. Yes?

What?

Was it The Ballet Oust?

Oust, The Ballet Oust.

Yes, right.

Of Monte Carlo. And, so they had to rebuild the whole lot, you know, the Russian village in the studio and I mean it was, it was mayhem, you know, it was absolutely mad, it was wonderful. And then they, Wilcoxon was having an affair with Viola Tree and then he tried to rape me on, on top of the, the, The Dorchester where he stayed, you know. 'Come upstairs sunshine, he said, we'll look at the stars'. I was woof, not half.

Right.

And it was a wonderful thing actually but I thought it was shelved, you know, I thought it was shelved because I never saw it. But my editor checks on everything. Because after, also my memory, not only that because of libel and everything. And she checked and found out that it was not shelved, it was called something else in Russian.

We should explain...

Russian.

This is your book editor, not a film editor.

Yes. Yes, my book editor.

Right. Because you, you have written a book. Right.

Well I haven't written a book, I just dictated in to the, that machine there you see. Because I didn't want, I, I'm not interested in myself at all, not at all.

So this was, what, you say 1934/35?

No, no, no. It was '34.

Thirty-four?

The beginning of '34. Yes.

Right. At Elstree, BIP Elstree, yes. Tell us about the people that you remember. Tell us about Anna Sten, because...?

Anna was the Russian girl of all girls, you know. She was sucking sweets, being very sentimental, listening to music and talking about baking and clothes, and being just sweet and stupid, very nice. She's, still is alive I think, in New York.

Is she?

I, I think so.

Ah, ha.

So...

And was that, you know, well, do you have more to say about Sten?

Of Sten, no, she's a typical sort of Czech, you know, with her little personal, or the equivalent director, no, no. They were, to me they were people like everybody else. You see the trouble with me is that people are to me only, I can only tell you about people if they strike me as human beings as special. And so everybody to me, whether they're Kings, Queens, Popes, to me they are people. And I have absolutely never in my life felt any difference between a film star and myself or anybody else, other than they...

[10:06]

No, but they have characters and it's that I'm...

They have characters, well they have characters, if they have characters, they have.

Yes.

You see. But Otsep was the, was, was the typical Russian couture man, you know. He was a cultured man and he was utterly involved in his film making you see. And Anyushka was an actress who got there and she, she just enjoyed life. Her husband bored her, he was called Frenke I think. And he kept, he kept on giving her white foxes because she liked white foxes. Those were hung over underline of her tits, you know. And, no, it was just very, very simple, very... She stayed, she stayed in here in Victoria in this mansions, got a room at Pall Mall, you know, I stayed with her in, whatever they're called, Victoria. And the others stayed in The Dorchester. The Dorchester was then chic, you see. And, so we struggled through, re-shooting, re-takes and re-takes and more re-takes. Luckily, luckily for me, you see, because nobody worried about the continuity of anything, because there was no continuity, because they were re-shooting and, and, and changing the script all the time you see. So that film was my first film.

Who...?

And that's when I became a member of the ACT.

Right. Tell us about being recruited into the ACT?

Oh well Tony did that, Toni Rowe came to me, we had coffee and she said 'Listen, they're starting a union', or have started a union because we were getting such, such a bad deal because, you see, people worked, young people worked in films came all from rich, rich people and they went to work for nothing, for the fun of it, or the excitement of it. And we, the workers, were badly paid. We were practically, it's now like that, you know, people work at, at Fortnum's or Harrods, are half as much paid as at Woolworths, or Marks and Sparks, you see because of the, of the, the cushy [ph

11:55], you know. So filming, at, at that time all the girls and boys, or mostly boys, worked for nothing in films and, and made us, they gave us very bad deals, the ones who worked to do, earn their living. And that's how the union started, because of the living, you see.

Yes.

And because, also the producers made a lot of money and we had nothing, you see. I mean I know I was paid £4.50 a week as a continuity girl, you know. And we worked night and day with no time, with no hours, we had no, we were lucky if we got bacon sandwiches and a cup of tea at three o'clock in the morning. No transport, nothing, you see. We just were there, working, working, as I say night and day, there was no difference you see. So the union had a very good *raison d'être*, a, reason to be, you see. And I joined it of course, immediately, because I was always a social, socially conscious person you see. And that's how then. Then I went on to work...

Have you continued by the way your activities with the party?

I'd finished.

You had? Right.

I didn't finish being anti-fascist, I belonged to the anti-fascist league, young, students league, anti-fascist, I never stopped being anti-fascist because fascism was stupid, very stupid. They are narrow minded.

I wondered if there were much of a Communist connection...

Yes, I mean who, of course, the ACT was founded by Communists, you know, of course, utterly. And was run all the time by Communists, including that, that, that criminal called, what was he called, the one who has just left?

Well, do you mean Alan Sapper?

Yes.

You do?

He's a, he's a criminal, he's a...?

Why do you say, why do you say...

He's a guilty man, he's a guilty man.

Why do you say he's a criminal?

Because his life, I happened to know one or two of his mistresses, and his life, and his life, I mean to have champagne, and they told me, and that, you know, and to be a Communist. I mean he is the typical, he is the typical corrupt Communist, you know, who uses the movement, the workers' movement, for his own benefit. He is, not George Irwin, George Irwin, was clean, very clean. We rented a room for him on Shaftesbury Avenue, you must have heard that on other tapes have you?

No. What, what, you mean when he retired?

No, no, when he, when we engaged him.

Oh, I see, yes. Yes, 90, it was Piccadilly Mansions wasn't it. Yes. The office was in Piccadilly Mansions?

That's right.

That's right.

For thirty shillings a week and he got two pounds a week.

Yes.

His pay.

Yes.

And the room was thirty shillings a week, I remember so well because we discussed it very, very profoundly.

How active were you in the union?

No, I...

You were not?

I was not, no.

Ah.

[15:00]

I, I mean I was active, I went to all meetings. But I wouldn't because they were all run by Communists and I, I, I didn't want to have anything to do with the Communist Party because I've, well so many of my people, my friends were killed when they went to Moscow. They were shot and disappeared and all that you know.

Who were some of the Communists who were active in the Union then?

They were all.

All of them?

Ralph, I, I mean Ralph Bond I knew was a Communist.

Right.

And his, his wife, Bessie.

Yes.

And Sid, of course, was.

Yes.

They were all.

Yes.

They were all Communists. In those days it was okay to be a Communist.

But George was not, was he, George Elvin, was he?

Yes, George Elvin was?

George, George was? Yes, right.

But not, it was not made public. His wife was Russian, Soviet Russian ballerina do you know. Elvira was her name, was, what was her name, Elvira, or something like that, yeah. He married a Russian girl, Soviet Russian girl, you see. But George wasn't, his, his father was, you see, I think. His whole family were, they were well known as, as Communists. But they didn't talk about it because we wanted to, the union to be known as, as, he was a sort of front man, a nice front man, he was a nice decent person. Danny Garner was too, I think. I think most of, most of them were, they all were because all of the meetings were entirely on the Communist Party directions, you see. And I, I mean, I, I joined the Communist movement because I was a rich child, you see, and I, the money that made my life pleasant did not buy me what I needed and wanted. And I left to, to, I only know that now, I left, not political, I was not at all politically trained or anything like that. I left for purely emotional reasons, most of us did, my kind, for emotional reasons. I left because I wanted to die for somebody, for something, live and die for something. Do you understand?

Yes.

As simple as that. I suppose in the early days, the Christians' days I would have been a good Christian you see. If I'd lived with Christ I would have washed his feet and gone to the gallows with him. That, that kind of thing you see. So it is, it was purely emotional and I was right to, I've never regretted it because I, I learn my father cut me off without a penny, and it was very wise of him, he said 'If you, if you want to belong to the working class and the poor go and live like them'. And that was very clever because I'd been so hungry, and later on in the War and everything else, nothing could touch me because I was... And I was hungry because I wanted to be hungry. I didn't, no, no, it was my, I was a self-made poor, still am. I don't know how to explain it to you. But some people are born to be rich, some people are born to be poor. I'm born to be poor, I'm good at it because I live like a millionaire sometimes, you see. Money does not give me any pleasure at all because I like, I like challenge and hard work. I like a hard life, not a soft life. I don't like soft chairs, you won't find a soft chair here. So film making was very hard and was very good for me, you see, because it was hard work and it was a challenge because I didn't know anything.

Yes.

I couldn't type, I couldn't do shorthand, I had no, I had no, no training, practical training, whatsoever.

But from a political point of view it was immensely frivolous was it not?

What?

The film industry and...?

Oh no, it was very serious.

The product of the film industry, the...?

Oh sure. But.... [Coughs]

To paraphrase then?

We didn't, we didn't think of that in those terms, except the documentary boys I feel, I mean the shelves unit and, and they had a sort of, and the post office union with, with John Gresham [ph 18:50] they had, they had political aims, you see.

Right.

They did this. But I was in pictures, you see. So...

So, I was going to say let's then go back to that time at Elstree, was there just the one film that you worked on?

No, no, I went on then to, to a film that was made of my mother-in-law, future mother-in-law's book, called *The Children of The Fog*, about the children in the, in the, in the slums. And she was called Pamela Haden-Guest, I married Haden-Guest, then, you see, Peter, her son, I met, she said 'Come to lunch', Sloane Street, here, round the corner. And I met Peter and Peter came from Oxford and we had a love story and we married. And I went then on making, worked. We went to Paris in 1936 because he wanted, he finished Oxford and he wanted to become a ballet dancer of course. We were old friends with Margot and people like that, you know. And he wanted to go to a professor to, to dance, you know, to a Russian belin [ph 20:00] in Paris. And so we went to Paris, and I worked to in Paris for a bit. And then I got pregnant and I worked, I did her film and the director was a German called... I can't think what. I tell you who was in it, strangely enough. The first film she ever did as a five or six year old girl was the girl who sings in Paris, the English woman, the English singer called...

[20:30]

Petula Clark, do you mean?

Yes. And, and, and Linden, Linden Travers. They were all child performers. I've seen Linden all of my life throughout, you see. They were in that film, as *Children of The Fog*, they were as, as, as slum children, yes, it was a story about, you know, the slums. And then, that, I think that was the Riverside Studio I went over... Would be the Riverside Studio. Ah, yes, then came to London, Renoir, with his film *l'Île des Veuves, Island of the Widows*, 1914 War film. Renoir came, Pierre Renoir. And...

Yes, excuse me, he came here to shoot?

To shoot.

To shoot?

To shoot. Bilingual, that's why I saw it, you see. And, with Danielle Darrieux and Pierre Renoir. And the English were... I think it was Viola Tree but I'm not sure. And they shot that in two languages, you know, in, bilingually, of course. And the director, the French director was Claude Heymann, I think. The English, well, I don't know anything, English director. I was only involved with the French.

Well how did you, fit into this? You say he was French...

But the two sons, the two sons of Renoir, they figure.

Yes, yes. But was Jean Renoir directing or producing?

Producing, and Pierre was acting.

Right.

I mean my, Amber, my, my editor checked on that. Because I got it all muddled up, you know.

Right.

I got the two brothers muddled up.

Yes, well that's right, Pierre was the actor.

That's right.

And his father was the...

I got them muddled up and I thought...

Great, great producer.

Pierre was producing, so I got them muddled up, but she did all the, she did all the research on it, you see.

Yes. Where was that made? You said that was Riverside perhaps, or Elstree?

Yes, no, no, no, that was in Elstree.

Right.

Again. I popped over to Riverside and then, at least...

We're still what, mid 30's are we?

Yes, I met my mother-in-law in Elstree studios because I knew her because she and Rebecca West were best friends, they were running the Committee Against War and Fascism in London. And they brought over, they collected money and brought it over to me, I was the, the go between because I could speak languages, and I could do this, and I was a young girl, a good family. So that my Communists bosses, like Ulbricht and Tito, you see put me, put me out as a link, you know, to, to serious, nice people, who came over from London and brought money they collected. You see this is what happened for the, for the victims of Hitler's fascism. Well I looked after the victims because I got them out, you see.

Yes.

And the money didn't go to them, that went to, all to their cars and their mistresses, that's what, you see, this is where the corruption came in, you see. And I was broken-hearted because I got the money and then I hand it on to my, over to my bosses, and they give, I don't know, £10,000 and they might, might give me £100 you see, to feed my poor comrades, you see, who'd had had a terrible escape from torture and everything else. That is how, it sounds very naive but that is how I discovered there was corruption, you know. And that is purely morally I left, you know.

Yes.

There. And, so, and she, Carmel, my mother-in-law was very, became very pro-Communist because my, first of all she hated, her husband was terrible to her and he was a Labour MP, Labour Peer, you know. And, and also David, the eldest son was killed in Spain you see. So, anyhow, but that was, this was before that you see, that, David was killed in Spain in '36, yes.

So, you, this is your second marriage now?

Yes, my second marriage.

Yes.

My first marriage didn't exist was just...

On paper?

Yes, pure, purely on paper. A very nice man, very nice young man, but it was purely, arranged by, by, my comrades for, so that I should go on working with him.

[25:00]

Right.

And it was what we call a *mariage blanc*.

Yes.

You see, and why do I say 'we'? Funny.

Well say we, say we, why not?

Isn't it funny, isn't it?

No.

Because the people, my friends here, say 'You're one of us Elisabeth', but I say 'No, I'm a foreigner'. 'But you're one of us Elisabeth'. 'No I'm a foreigner'. Anyhow, my children used to say Mama the boys like you although you're a foreigner', you know, my sons at school, you know, when I was, 'they like you though you're a foreigner mama'. It was very funny. Well go on, let's go on. Work? So I worked, this is what I can remember, this is what I can remember. I can remember there, there, *A Woman Alone*, I can remember *Children of The Fog* and I can remember *L'Ile des Veuves*.

What do you remember of 'L'Ile des Veuves', that must be a relatively obscure thing?

And Danielle Darrieux was the, was the, was the French star, was furious with me because I was pregnant, I didn't realise she was a lesbian, I didn't lesbians exist, I didn't know that homosexuality existed, you see. It was only, only much later, I, I discovered that she hated, hated, lesbians they hated pregnant girls, you see. And I didn't understand why she was so nasty to me. I was pregnant then and that baby I had aborted, you know, that I had, I had to, my mother-in-law insisted on that. And no, what I remember of it? No we just worked and everyone was very nice, very nice, very civilised people. They were very civilised, intelligent people to work with and to be with. A lot of noise of course, guns, you see. No, no, no, I'm sorry. [Pause] I'm only good on people when they strike me really as something very special.

Yes.

And none of them struck me as special.

Okay, well then move on in memory, what, what do you recall next?

Well now comes, now comes, now comes Paris. And I went into *Joie de Vivre*, to work on the aftermath of *The Marseilles*, that was fun. You know, they're re-shooting things, whatever it was. And, on the dubbing too.

Wasn't that quite late in the '30s, wasn't that about 1938?

Yes.

Yes.

No, it was 1936.

Was it? Right.

Yes.

And that was Jean Renoir too, was it not?

Yes. He, he was shooting, they were doing the, I was used for the dubbing, they used me for the dubbing, you know, and translating, and the released script in English and so on, you know. So I did, because then I was pregnant again you see and my eldest boy was born in '37, in February '37. The Spanish Civil War, I was quite busy there helping the refugees and the refugee organisation and so on. And I, and then I earned some money translating and, and script translating and so on. But I was not shooting because I had the baby. And I had tuberculosis, my old, my old tuberculosis came back, and the baby got TB through my milk. So then I had to go to Austria, the mountains, with the baby. And was '37, end of '37, beginning of '38. And then I did

some work too, some work, oh it was in Paris, we were in Paris, you see, living in Paris. I did some work in *Joie de Vivre* again. It was for Americans, it was some American stuff, you know. Released scripts and some shooting, all, all bits and pieces, do you know. I could not take in, I could not take on a, a, a contract because of the baby, I had nobody to look after the baby you see.

How much time were you spending working in films would you say? Was it just occasionally or was it constantly?

Yes, I was working week by week.

Yes.

That's all just, week by week. In '38 I stopped, '38 I stopped and I had personal problems. And I did, I translated, that's right. I translated, just books and articles, things, and we're still in Paris. Came '39, the war broke out, we had a house in London, my husband went to America, my mother-in-law left, my husband went to America in, in May '39 and never came back. I mean he came back to pick up his Peerage, you see, that's all, with The House of Lords, we're not doing that stuff.

[30:06]

And I stayed in France and went to war. Right, simple as that. I went to war, I went fighting to war you see. And I went to Special Forces, you see, and, so there was no film making, you know. And then I came out in, in '43. I was in prison and suddenly I was told, you know, that well I was, never tells you the inside, that I was exchanged. Because suddenly I, I was supposed to have been shot, you see, for having organised escapes of British pilots and so...

Were you in the occupied zone?

Am I now, yes.

No, were you in the occupied zone, or in Vichy France?

No, the unoccupied zone, which was occupied, it became occupied, you see.

Yes. Now do you, presumably you cover all this in your manuscript do you?

Yes, of course.

Right. So we won't go into that then.

No, no, no, no, no. That is nothing to do with that, I just...

Yes.

As a War worker, I did what I believed in.

Right.

To me that was, I was, that was evil I was fighting, I was really fighting evil. And we all believed in it so it, do you know, I was not alone in it.

I'd be curious about your contacts with the French film industry before the War and during the War. People such as...

No, not, nothing during the war, because...

Nothing at all?

The people, the only people who worked were collaborators. We, we did not, we could not go near them you see.

How about the, the late 30's then, people like Marcel Carné, or, or...?

No I didn't.

No.

I didn't, no. I didn't live there...

René Clair?...No, you didn't know?

No, I was cut off there.

I wondered if you knew any of those...

No, no, I was cut off there. They didn't have a union actually either, you see. The French didn't have a union until much later after, after the war. And they're union is not important at all. I know from my children in, in Paris who work, you know, my son-in-law's a director, producer, and my daughter is an editor, you see.

Right.

And the union stuff doesn't mean a thing. They go, they, they leave home, they get up at six, they leave home at eight and come back at midnight. They get overtime, you know, but, but not like us, you know.

Okay, so you came back to this country in '43?

Yes, of course, came back, we had a house, well my house was bombed. And I went straight back into film work. They wouldn't have me in the Special Forces because I was too well known to, you know, I was what, what we call *brûlée*.

Yes.

You know. I volunteered and volunteered, they wouldn't have me back, send me back, dropping me back, you see. And so I went to film work and I worked in Islington in Gainsborough. I did *Miss London Ltd* and then I did, oh I did a lot. I did Denham, and I worked on one or two war films.

Do you remember the titles, and who was in them, who made them?

No.

Miss London Ltd, wasn't that Val Guest?

Arthur Askey.

Yes.

I did, for money, pure money, I did two of Arthur Lucan's, *Miss Riley*.

Oh yes, yes, 'Old Mother Riley'.

Yes, I did that for money really.

Right.

Because there's not as, I was paid, very well paid there.

Were you?

I had my little boy and I had no money. Because my mother-in-law wanted me to go to America, because they wanted me to go to America because British subjects in America with families were not called up but without families they were called up, so they didn't want Peter, she didn't want Peter to be called up and wanted me to go over, in the middle of the, you know. I said, 'No I'm', you know, and so I had no financial help at all you see. And, I had my little boy in nursery school, put in nursery school in Missenden and I slept there, when I wasn't working, when I was working. And then I took any work that allowed me money because I was bombed, I had to get furniture and all that.

Right.

Sort of thing. And...

Where did they make the Old Mother Riley films? Not that it's important, but I'm curious about the conditions, and you say you were well paid, which rather surprises me?

Yes, very well

Because I would have thought that...

Very well, very well paid.

I would have thought they had very restricted budgets.

No.

No.

They didn't behave like it.

No.

Not Elstree, Denham.

Well it isn't, it isn't important.

You know.

What do you remember about Arthur Lucan?

Pinewood.

Arthur Lucan and Kitty McShane. They had a very strange...

I'll tell you something interesting, I worked with quite a lot of comedians. And I found that comedians were the meanest men in, in the industry, as actors. They are mean as actors, because basically they hated to make people laugh, you know, they hated to be loved, all they wanted to be Hamlet, so did Arthur Lucan.

[35:10]

Yes.

And that wife of his, Kitty McShane, was an absolute, the end really, you know...

She was a monster was she?

She was a monster.

Yes.

She was monster.

They had a very strange relationship did they not?

I know, none of us could make out who was the man, who was the woman in that, you know. I think they must have been the first transvestites, something, you know. I mean he is probably the first, Barry Humphries is the next one, wasn't he?

Yes. I suppose, yes.

Yes.

Well no, actually, there was an enormous amount of transvestism in the, in the British Music Hall, was there not? There were all the sort of female impersonators and male impersonators. Hetty King, for example, was a very famous male impersonator.

Well I'll tell you one thing, the ACT gave me always privilege of first right to jobs, not because I was good but because I was Haden-Guest, as a comrade, do you know, the Communist thing, and I really resented that, you know. Because of, not my father-in-law, my father-in-law was a Labour man but, and he was, I mean he was moral, he went across all the time, but, to cross the floor, I think three or four times.

What was the Communist connection then with...?

My brother-in-law, David, he started Cambridge, he started the whole thing in Cambridge.

Ah, ha. What, you mean the various cells at Cambridge?

He was, the beginning.

Yes.

Yes, 1932 he was on it, you see.

Recruited by...?

No he wasn't recruited, down here recruited, but he was never an agent, he was much too, he was a scientist, he was crazy. He was just crazy.

But he was, what, the talent spotter?

No, he just got people to, to join the, and the, what are they called, the, not prophets, what are they called, the...?

The Apostles?

Yes, The Apostles. But David was the first one, you see, David Haden-Guest, and he went, also he went to Gauting to study in Germany.

Is your son Anthony Haden-Guest?

Yes.

Yes. I've made that connection.

I'm not proud of him.

No. I don't know much about him.

Oh he's a well-known journalist.

He, oh well that I know, yes, yes.

Yes.

And a bit of a character in many ways.

Not a bit of a character, I call him a, a genetic casualty. He's very much like his grandfather, you know, and he's very insecure, he really is insecure, he's like somebody born with one hand, you know, he has no reason to be insecure and he, he's got one or two nice sides to him, he's my son. Until I die I'll be his mother and look after him and stand by him, but I'm not back washing. After all it's not his, it's not his fault nobody, neither you nor I, we are born with our genetic structures.

Yes, yes, yes. Yes, I try not to make judgements about anyone for that reason.

I mean you don't make judgement, you analyse people. I, I say have you got this from so and so, you've got this from so and so, try to improve, I said to all my children, you are not responsible for your character and personalities, but you are responsible for improvement, that's what's called civilisation. You've got to improve on yourself.

Well not everyone succeeds.

No, it's difficult.

I, I fear. Yes.

I did, you know, I, I didn't like my parents, so I, I really worked on myself, I hope I did, yes. Anyhow, so I worked, then I worked in studios, and then... No, then I got, then I landed in, in, in Shepperton, and there I was lucky, because Thornburn, you know the, the studio director, liked me, liked me. And he didn't mind my being pregnant all the time, having babies you see.

What time, what year is this now, roughly?

That was '47, '48, '49, '50, '51.

Right.

'52, '53.

So from '43 to, to then, you were freelancing at various...?

Yes.

Studios?

Anything at all that stays in your memory from, from those times, any, any particular films?

Oh yes, oh yes, when my daughter, when I was pregnant with my daughter Anna I was working with Larry Olivier on *The Beggar's Opera*, you know it?

Yes.

And they, they had a barn there, you see, a barn scene. And the publicity man came up, Tom O'Brien was his name, and he begged me to give birth on the 20th, 20th of

December, they were striking the set on the 20th. 'Darling', he said, 'please have that baby on, on the, in the barn, we can say "Christ born at Shepperton"', you know. But she was born on the 22nd, two days later after they struck the set, and they were broken-hearted, they were practically rebuilding it and wanted me to lie down and have the baby, you know. But, no, I don't know, I, I worked, I went from Carol Reed to David Lean, to Guy Hamilton to... I didn't like Percival, the producer, I didn't get on well with him. I had one producer I was, I'm still friends with called, he, you ought to go to him. He's called, he's called Ray Anserat [ph 40:12], he's still alive. He was producer of the this, this...

[40:20]

I know the name, but nothing more than that. Right, okay.

With Korda, he is, he is, he lives in Madia Vale.

Really?

Ray Anserat [ph 40:30]

Well I'll make a note of that.

And he, he gave me a lot of work actually.

And track him down.

You see, yes.

Right.

And then I worked really in Shepperton, more or less, on and off all the time going from picture to picture, release script, release script, shooting. And, and then I did so many, I did films in Switzerland and in, in France.

Locations, all, all French films?

Locations, locations.

English pictures on location?

Location, yes, location.

Right.

Location. And, and did the run on, on Monte Carlo Rally and, and....

Well now you've, you've mentioned David Lean, what...?

I had a son there, I had a son there you see.

You're jumping ahead, you're jumping ahead then, sorry.

David was a bit embarrassed, you see, because he knew me through his brother, and my, my husband, you see, and do you know the boys...?

Well tell us about that connection?

The, the boys are always embarrassed when somebody in an inferior position, you see, works for them, when, when socially I was on his level, you see, normally, you know, continuity girls were ordinary secretaries, jumped up secretaries, like stewardesses are jumped up chambermaids.

Well David was rather grand anyway wasn't he?

He, well he was grand, we were all grand.

Yes, yes, but you, you see what I mean?

He didn't get very grand, you know.

But he was a director wasn't he?

As a director, he was grand, no, because he, not family wise, not background wise. You know, he was grand as a director, because he was a very good, splendid director, you know. And, because also he, he kept himself very aloof. Carol did too, but Carol Reed was even grander than David Lean as, as a, as a person, you know, because socially he lived in, in, in the, sort of, near royalty life, you know.

Well he had a curious background, did he not?

Well, yes, the Baron.

Did people know that at the time?

But he married Pam Pempey [ph 42:25] who was supposed to have been the Duke of Windsor's illegitimate daughter, you see. And, no, the two of them were, were gentleman, simple as that, they weren't grand, they were gentleman, actually they were gentlemen, what we would, what one calls a gentleman.

Yeah. That was the...?

And that was the difference between them and, and most of the others, you see. They were gentlemen from, from structure, their inner structure, plus their social life, plus their education, you see, plus their marriages, plus, you know. They were gentlemen these two men. Very few directors of the others, I mean the, old, old, Val Guest wasn't, I worked with him.

Well now, can we deal with these people one by one so that we establish your feelings about them. Shall we start with Val Guest, your, your memories of...?

Well Val Guest was cold...

Your memories of Val Guest?

I mean I had, you know, Val Guest, I, I kind of suffered, you know, I had to work you see.

How did you suffer with Val Guest?

Well it, it's, it's the sort of way they direct, you know, the way they direct themselves on, on the set. The way they behave to people.

But he was a very organised director, was he not?

He was a very technically, very efficient director.

Right.

Very efficient.

Was he rude to people or unkind to people?

No he was not, no he, he, he, he made people feel he was the director, you know. He, he was, that's, Reed and, and Lean they didn't have to make people feel they were, do you understand? Whereas Val Guest had to pull his weight, you know, to, because of his women too, you see, it's very much the women, their wives and their girlfriends, you know, that give a man a, the members of...

Did Val abuse his position as director where women were concerned?

No.

No.

He was just, no, he was, let, let me see what, who else I worked with. Guy Hamilton, I worked with Val Guest, I worked with, I can't, gosh, there are so many.

Well I'd like to concentrate then on David Lean, and Carol Reed, what, what you remember about the two of those. Let's start with David Lean, now you knew him through your husband's...?

His brother, his brother. His brother was a friend of my husband's.

Right. Okay. And...

But I'd met him just like that at parties and things.

Ah, ha. So you knew him slightly socially but that was...?

Yes, I met him through, either a do in Oxford or London, you know.

[45:00]

Yes. Well, well give me your estimation of his character, the sort of person he was? Before you do that...

David Lean.

Let me turn over the tape.

[End of Tape 1 Side A 45:28]

NB: The time codes given here are estimates based on readings from the original cassette recording.

Tape 1 Side B.

Yes, David Lean.

Unlike Reed, he was mainly, I think, an academic, a thinker, and a doer, but a thinker first, and then a doer. Whereas Carol was a showman, you know. David Lean was not a showman, David Lean was, was a thinker, a thinking, a thinking director and a thinking man. And Carol was much more of an emotional and extrovert, you see that's that. David Lean was an introvert and Carol Reed was an extrovert, in a very gentle way not throwing weight around. But Carol Reed was, you know, all nice and easy, open, you see. Whereas Lean was tight, you know, tight, very tight, and you couldn't go near him when he was shooting or, do you know, it was very difficult, because he was all tied up, you know, in, in this work and all that.

Were people frightened of David Lean?

Yes, people were frightened of him because of his aloneness, I was not frightened of him because I knew that he's kind, you see, but the ordinary film maker, film technician don't know the David Leans of this world.

You're saying he was very remote?

He was remote.

On the set?

Yes.

Yes, yes.

He was definitely remote.

Was he close...

He was, he was very polite, very nice, very well behaved, never threw a fit, you know, neither did Carol. Some directors threw fits, but he didn't. Oh, and I worked with Pascal of course.

Oh well let's talk then, let's finish with Reed and, and Lean.

I forgot about that.

And then we must go back to Gabby, certainly, yes, of course. So, so...

He was a joke, he was a joke.

I know, but we mustn't hop around too much, we'll try and stay...

Yes.

With one person at a time. Anything more that you would say about Lean?, we accept his talent, of course, it's his personality.

He always knew what he was doing, you see, he had a sort of story bought, built into himself.

Yes.

You know. So did Carol, he, he had it all clear in his mind, he knew exactly what he was doing. But you see Carol Reed had been an editor, of course, and so had Lean.

No, he, Reed, Reed...

So everything they filmed before they shot them.

Reed was not an editor, Lean was, but Reed was not. Reed was always...

I thought he'd been an editor.

No, he'd been an actor, then he was a stage manager and then he was in the production department, and not only ...

But he always knew what he was doing.

Yes. Right.

You know. Very calmly and very quietly and very clearly, and they said to me, 'Remember when we've got to cut, cover that with a long shot and a mid shot, track here and track there', but they knew, I didn't have to tell them that, have you covered the scene, they knew they'd covered the scene.

So he also was technically...

Yes.

Very...

Oh yes

Professional?

Absolutely, absolutely.

And very good with actors, is that right?

Very good with actors.

How did he work with actors, very quietly or?

David?

Well, either one, David Lean, and, and, and...

Yes, David Lean very quietly, like a sort of professor, like a teacher. Like in, much more paternally. Whereas Carol was one of them, became one of them, you know. Could actually show them how to act, you know. Physically, you know, could, could produce it you see.

Was his ancestry known at that time, did you all know that he was...?

No.

Herbert Beerbohm Tree's son?

No, I dealt, with...

No.

No, I, I didn't, I, I wouldn't have.

No. I wondered if that very grand theatrical background shone through?

But I worked with Irving.

Laurence Irving?

Yes.

Mm, mm. Well that's another name to...

And we lived opposite each other in St. James' actually. What did I do with Irving?

Was it possibly 'Uncle Silas'?

That's right.

Right.

I worked, I did *Uncle Silas* with Katina Paxinou, who became godmother to one of my daughters.

Right.

I was pregnant with Katya.

Let's...

And that was funny, with Jean Simmons.

Alright, let's...

Well you know a lot about films.

Well you, you doubted it before.

Of course I worked on *Uncle Silas*, that's right.

I would like to...

And I was pregnant then.

Exhaust one before we move on, right. So we've got two names now to come back to. Anything more about Carol Reed?

About Carol Reed?

Well what, what are the, the, the sort of images that come to mind when, when one mentions Carol Reed?

A beautifully balanced, gentle and pleasant man who never frightened you and who never made you feel uncomfortable, who made you feel good.

Tantrums?

No, never.

How did he deal with the brass, with the front office?

With who?

The front office, the money people, or, or, or the production management people?

Oh no, he, I think it was Percival, was his producer.

No, I'm saying how did he deal with them, how did he deal with the money people if they came and he was there?

I don't know, I wasn't there.

I wondered...

[05:00]

I was on the floor.

Right. Matters of budget, matters of schedule?

No, I was on the floor.

Okay.

None of us on the floor knew about these things.

I wondered if you were privy to any meetings or discussions?

Weren't interested either.

Right.

I mean if I'd wanted to, I, I, I wasn't interested.

Okay. Is there more to be said about either one of those two, Lean or Reed?

Well I think that Carol was very good in the choice of women.

Yes.

And Lean was very good in his choice of lone women.

Are we talking now of their private lives or...?

Yes, I think, as a woman, as myself watching them.

Were any...?

But Carol Reed had more happiness and peace with his woman, whereas Lean had torture, was a tortured man, basically he was a tortured man, you know.

Why...?

That's why, I think that's why he went on to, he went for an Indian woman in the end. And Englishmen always go for coloured women when they've got problems, sexual problems.

What was the basis for that, for that torture do you think, that self-torture? I've heard people say that he was homosexual at one point in, in, in...

They all were. I grew up with them.

Right. Were they?

Yes, I know, I know, you see, I mean I grew up with Eton and, and Oxford, and I knew them all, you know, and they, I mean my best friend used to say to me, he was Eton, Oxford, said to me, 'Darling we're all homosexuals', part... No he said, 'Whether we, sexually or not we are, you see, because we prefer the company'. But he, he, he, he explained to me their attitude to me, saying 'You are the most dangerous person amongst us because you are W-O-M-A-N. We want nannies, we don't want a woman who wants to be part of us and walk into our lives, we are potential homosexuals' they said to me.

So you, you agree with the French Prime Minister?

Oh absolutely.

Who has recently said...

Absolutely.

That what...

And they, and they, and they said to me, you see, 'We want nannies, we want people to look after our house, the children and leave us alone to our lives'. It's very interesting, you know, because they, all they knew, of course, you see, you see, from eight, eight year, from eight onwards they had nothing but boys with them, you know. And David Lean definitely wasn't potential, and he had, he had, he must have had sex problems because, as I say, he landed with a, with an Indian woman in the end.

Yes.

And usually they, I mean I'm not saying, I don't know anything but as a woman I...

*What about his choice of women, they were really rather tough women, weren't they?
Were they, were they the nanny people?*

No, no, no, they were the...

Ann Todd, or Kay Walsh?

No, they were all tough little blondes first, you know, he went for blondes.

Yes.

Tough, the little ones, you know, who looked like, a little like Michèle Morgan or Ann Todd, who look like little angels, they're usually, that I learned in film making.

Did they look like...

Shall I tell you what I learnt in film making?

Do, please.

That all men, actors, all men, and all women who are supposed to be sex, sex subjects, or whatever they're called you know, are usually completely sexless, like, like, what's her name, that lovely woman I worked with, Ava Gardner on, on *The Flying Dutchman*. And Ava Gardner used to come to me and say 'Darling what is a libido'? And 'What is an orgasm'? You know. I mean they, those women like Ava Gardner and Marlene, Marlene couldn't care less about anything, all she cared about is her house being clean, you know, and, and, and scrubbed. And the ones who were the sex maniacs are nasty. But people like, like Ann Todd or like these little blondes, you know, and still are, quite rightly, when I meet them.

What was it, professional ambition or mastery or mainly...?

No that's the way they're made, you see. I think that women...

Was it power?

And men too, for instance, Robert Young, for instance, who was a sex symbol as an actor, you know. He was, he couldn't care less, he only wanted a cup of tea. Whilst Leslie Howard was pretty busy, who was so professor type and sort of specs and all that, you know. It's very interesting, all the men who was so beefy and so on. But the, the thin and, and hungry looking ones were, were the ones, you see, it is they, people are usually the opposite of what they appear to be physically, you know. Physique, their physique does not tell their true self. It's very interesting, that you learn in film making, I learnt that in film making, very much. Later on in life I, I, I found the evidence of it, but in film making I learnt it, you know.

Right.

Very interesting. Like, like comedians hate, hated people because they, they laughed at them, and they, their profession was to make people laugh. And people like Larry Olivier, all he wanted was to make people laugh, not weep. So, I mean, the human being is a, is a funny thing because the theatre is really a replica of mankind, you know.

[10:00]

I'm sure that's true, profound and, yes, and true.

It's astonishing, I studied them, you see, this is what, what made it, to me, as a human being, so interesting, my job, that I could study man at it, at it, basically at it, at the truth, you see, at, at the...

Well let's apply it to particular people.

Am I boring you?

No, no, no, no, no, no. But I, I do want to keep it within the relevance of the film industry.

Well that was, *Uncle Silas*, I worked on *Uncle Silas*, that I did you see. And who was directing *Uncle Silas*?

Cyril Frank.

That's right, now he was a, he was a professional, he was a pro. That's right, I remember him. He was a weird professional director. Nothing special about him, nothing, and no charm, nothing, he was a, a worker, you see. And then we had Katina Paxinou, what is it?

It's alright, no, no, no. It's okay.

Katina Paxinou that wonderful Greek actress, you know. Who used to say, shout on the set, you see the boy, workers hated pregnant girls, you know, they didn't like having pregnant girls working, you know, the British working class always embarrassed about it, but...

You were pregnant again were you?

She said, she shouted, she shouted 'Come on boys, get a chair for that poor girl, she's pregnant, can't you see she is pregnant'? And the whole studio was absolutely trembling in, in, in I think, in, in, I don't know, in shock, you know. And then we had Jeanie Simmons there on that one, you see. I did, I did, I did Joan, I did the other one, ah, Elizabeth Taylor, in *Ivanhoe*, that's right.

Well that would be...

With Michael Wilding, when Michael Wilding was courting her, sitting there and, and looking at her in the chair whilst he was...

But that would be considerably later, so...

When was that?

That would be in the '50s, sometime, I think.

That's right. I was, I did that, I did *Ivanhoe* and I did *Uncle Silas*. I didn't like Elizabeth Taylor at all.

Well...

Jeanie Simmons was sweet.

Yes. What, what about Laurence Irving, you mentioned him?

Well he was a gent.

Right.

Every inch a gent, a theatrical gent, but he was a gent. He was, what did I do with him, was it?

He was the producer on 'Uncle Silas'.

That's right, that's how. And since he lived, we lived opposite each other at St. James', he was at Apple Yard and I was in Bay House he used to give me a lift, that's right. And he, that's right, he was producing then, and I had tea with him or coffee or supper with his wife. But he was, he, he was, he was a real old-fashioned sort of Edwardian gent, you know. How, how he survived in the theatre I don't know, because he, he, no cut-throat, I don't think he knew the difference between a pound and a franc. He was there because of his mother, Ellen Terry.

Well also his father.

And his father, yes. Now I was in, in prison camp with Gordon Craig.

Were you?

In France.

Yes.

Who was then already sixty-five or eighty or something, seventy, married to a much younger woman, with a child.

Yes.

And he talked about his, he was Ellen Terry's son wasn't he? No, whose, whose son was he?

I, did, he had a son by, oh, I always get confused. Gordon Craig was...

Well Terry's son, too.

That's right, yes. Yes, I've forgotten his father.

Another father...

He has a son called Edward Carrick, who's always, an art director in films.

Is he?

Yes.

I didn't know that.

He's retired now. Duncan, he had a son by Isadora Duncan, did he not?

That's right.

Yes.

Then he married a woman much younger than himself, thirty-five years younger, they had a little girl.

But he, he is Ellen Terry's son?

That's right.

That's right, right.

Well he talked to me about it.

Right., okay. I think we've got that straightened out. Right, okay. Well you, you say that was in prison camp, where, in, in...?

In France.

Yes.

Oflag 142. They put all the people with a British passport in there. It was interesting that camp. But anyhow, now where were we?

Where were we? Well I think we were going to talk about...

You see I can't give you much, you see, I...

Well. No, it's alright.

It's bits and pieces.

Bits and pieces are fine, that's really what most people can offer. What about Gabby, dear Gabby Pascal?

Now, he was terrible, he was.

Right.

He was, I mean he was...

And when...

Enough to create three Hitler's.

When did you meet him?

You know. Well, when I worked for him.

But when, when...

It must have been '34.

Right. So...

And he would, do you know what he used to do? He used to stand with the back to the set and rush over to me and say 'How much time'? You know, how many seconds I shot, shooting.

[15:06]

What was...?

All he was, Gabby, all he was interested in was how much time we'd shot in the day or so the, the half day, you see.

What was the picture? Do you, do you remember, the name of the picture?

No. It was before he did the Shaw.

And he was directing or producing?

Producing. I don't remember, I think the archives will tell you. And I must be there as a continuity girl because there was none other, none other but me.

Was that in this country or was that...?

Yes, in this country.

In France?

No, no, here, in London.

Here?

Pascal.

Was that the one time that you, you, you worked with him, on that one picture, or, or were there others?

I think I did two for him.

Yes. What did...?

I loathed him, I loathed him, I loathed him.

Tell us, tell us all you can remember about him.

I can't tell you how he upset me. What?

Tell us all you can remember about Gabby.

Well he was that little man who was showing up all the time, shouting about time, making people work, saying tea time, finish tea, you know, finish coffee, back to work, work, shoot, shoot, shoot, you know. And it was, he was terrible how, how, why Shaw gave in to him I've never understood it except he was so comical. I mean Shaw must have thought he made a, a, a clown you see. Because he was a clown, but a nasty clown. I mean he, he did nothing else but scream about time. And I was the victim because I was the timekeeper you see like the football thing, I was the continuity girl, you know, I knew how many seconds, how many minutes we shot, you see. I used to cover the director often, saying that we shot more than we did, you know. 'Oh Mr Pascal we've done thirty-five minutes, no thirty-five seconds'. 'You're sure it's not twenty-eight'? I'd say 'No, no, it's thirty-five'. It's, that's all he was interested in, in time, you see. But time is money isn't it, as they say in America.

Well, yes, they were, it must have been a 'quota quickie' working on a very limited budget.

Well Pascal was shocking, was shocking, absolutely shocking. What happened to him actually in the end?

He died of cancer in New York, about '52 or three I, I knew him.

That's fifty years too late. Yes. He did a lot of harm.

Broke, he was broke when he died.

Ah.

Trying to make a stage musical of 'My Fair Lady', of, of 'Pygmalion'. And his widow, whom he hated...

My daughter is doing a musical of George Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris* in London.

Really?

Well she's given a theatre in France.

A stage musical?

Stage, yes.

Stage musical, right. Well, I don't know how, what else can we say about Gabby, if anything?

Nothing.

He was...

You know, he had a limousine, he had a chauffeur, you know, and all that crap.

Out of the budget?

Yes, out of the budget. I mean and he was working, that's normal. And he always had these, what we call 'brothel creeper' shoes, we used to call them in the Army 'brothel creepers', you know, with little spots on top. These shoes, black and white shoes, Spiegel had them too, the same shoes.

I think I know what you mean, yes, yes.

Do you know, they had sort of fancy, fancy toes.

Weren't they called 'correspondents' shoes'?

Yes.

Yes.

Yes, correspondents...

Co, co-respondents' shoes.

Yes, that's right, they're called co..., because the 'brothel creepers' were the other ones with rubber soles.

That's it.

And suede.

Yes, yes, they...

Because the boys in, in Cairo had them, and the shepherds. Yes, that's right, the, the, the Army and the 8th Army had them.

Desert boots.

Yes.

Okay, your, your thing about Shaw, I think, the answer is Shaw was very susceptible to flattery.

That's right, you're quite right, yes. You're quite right. I knew him, I met him. I became, I became a vegetarian at the age of fourteen because my governess took me to see St Joan.

Yes.

But I had tuberculosis all my life, you see, and it was very bad for me. So, they didn't know what to do about me, they sent me to London with my, my governess, to see Shaw, for Shaw, and, and Bergman, an actress, who was a favourite actress you see, he sent me there. And I went to Shaw's house in, flat here in Whitehall, Whitehall

Court or something, big white flat. And I adored that man through his writings, you see. And then he took the Mickey out of me. 'Why why a silly girl', he said, 'you know vegetarianism is not for little girls and all you know'. And then he treated his secretary and his wife so badly, because I stayed there for two days you see that I went off Shaw completely. To me, there isn't, I will like his work of course. I think he's going to be a classic, don't you think so?

[20:00]

Oh yes, yes, yes I think so.

Not, not Wells, you see I knew Wells.

He was no great thinker, but he was a lovely, a marvellous man of the theatre but...

Yes.

The prefaces now read very strangely.

Yes.

They're very much of their time, they, they haven't survived.

So Shaw was a... Most people you meet, do you know, and I've met most of them in my life, my long life. You should never, if you, if you respect and love somebody's work you should not try to meet them, you only meet the shell, you know, very, very few people come up to the value of their work because you meet something empty, something...

Has anyone not disappointed you in that respect?

Yes, André Gide, has not disappointed me.

André Gide, yes.

He's never disappointed me, never, never. He, he behaved just as he wrote and just as he was, he was utterly genuine, gentle, intelligent, honourable and never hurt people, you know.

Romaraol Lal [ph 20:59] was, was, was... Rebecca West was very hurtful, I know her very well, you know. Her son, Anthony, is my son's godfather, but he died now, you see. It was a close relationship between Rebecca and my, and my, my, my mother-in-law.

Did you know HG?

Yes. I met him. He was funny, he was witty, but he was not nice, not nice at all, not nice at all. Not, not human, not, they were all so, they were all so, so cocksure and so full of themselves.

Vain, vain, yes.

The Bloomsbury Set you see I, I moved into that because of my mother-in-law and my father-in-law, they lived in Gordon Square you see and the were part of the Bloomsbury Set, you know, Helen Wilkinson and, and Elder Brooks [ph 21:50] and all that, they were all so vain, and they really thought of themselves as if they were something out, outside, you know, and...

Right.

And it terrified me, I, they were terrible people, you know, most of them.

Let me ask about one person out of the blue, and that's Jean Cocteau, did you know Jean Cocteau?

No, I had not met him.

Yes.

You know, these letter's come out now, and been published, these love letters to Jean Marais.

Oh have they? I didn't know.

Yes.

In France, or here?

No, in France and in Germany, not here.

Yeah.

I'm trying to have them published here. No, I know Jean, I met him in, in the Cafe Flore, of course, before the War, you know, where everybody was, you see. Not Flore is now a homosexual cafe not, it's Duma Goona [ph 22:25] but it was Flore where we went to every night. Young, you see, to see the old boys, like, like Cocteau and like, like Picasso, and like, like, Tristan Tzara.

David Beira? [ph 22:40]

Yes, they're the, all there, all the old, old boys, and we sat at their feet and listened to them. And Cocteau was very much of himself, very much, and very, very sentimental. I think, he behaved very sentimental, well when he had a lover, I had as an au pair boy one of his lovers, a young Spanish boy, whom he sent letters and all love letters and all that, and who was enchanting. And he was very good to him you see sending money and, and, you know, he was a Spanish working class boy, he was now working in the hotels I think, managing hotels. No, Cocteau, I, I don't know, but I would want to, no, you see, homosexuals, are you an homosexual?

No, no.

Because homosexuals, I'm not trying to be careful. Homosexuality I do not like, because I like fertility, I don't like sterility. And I don't like what sterility causes in, character-wise, personality-wise you see. I've got one son who is an homosexual and I've got one daughter who is a lesbian. So I mean I'm blessed, you know. And, you see, I don't like the injuries are done by homosexuality, I think that basically all homosexuals have got a guilt complex because of the sterility of misusing the seed, and putting in the bottom instead of where they should put it, you know. That's how I feel, I feel they have, they've got a big guilt complex which they don't even know. But I hate homosexuals and I don't ever get done. I've got only two people I'm close to who, one is coming tonight, who are homosexuals, but they're homosexuals, you wouldn't know they were homosexuals. They are not, they're completely at one, there's, I don't know they're, nobody knows they are. Not that they keep it a secret, it just is not very active or something, whatever it is, you know. Anyhow that Cocteau was a homosexual...

That's...

I know that.

Oh yes.

And a very busy one.

Yes. Right.

I tell who I met who was lovely, it's Bardouse [ph 24:40] and I'll tell you why I met them all, all the writers, because they met me when I was the Communist, young Communist, they made me go to all the big people to sign manifestos, you know, against Hitler, against Mussolini, you know, manifestos. And they sent me because first of all I spoke languages, second of all I was, it's called a trustworthy girl. And the people like...

[25:10]

Microphone.

Ah.

You're, you're making a noise with the microphone.

Ah, sorry.

Your beads are over it now. I'll stop.

I did, I did do some more work, where did I do it?

Well we're, we're somewhere in the late '40s now and you've moved to...

I think you ought to come back because I really ought to think. I've never thought about it...

Are you...?

At all since, before you came. I have not given it a single thought what came now, comes straight out of the back of my memory, you see. But maybe I should think more and, and...

Yes, right.

And let you have, would you like to come back tonight?

Oh yes. I can't tonight, no.

No, not tonight, no, no.

I thought you said tonight.

No, do you mind I said.

I'll, I'll ask...

We're resuming on the 4th of July, a few days, a couple of days later. Right, so...

Today is the 4th.

Today is the 4th, yes. Do you want to back track on anything that we talked about on Monday? We covered '34, '35 in, at Elstree, yes?

'34, '35. '36 I went to Paris and I had a baby. At the Spanish Civil War, I worked in that, you see, the committee and all that. And, and then, '37, '38 I was in Paris, all the time.

Yes.

We were in Paris all the time, you see. And I, I did some translation and... Oh sorry.

It's okay.

So it wasn't in, on, was it?

Yes, it was picking up.

And, *merde*, excuse my French, oop. I've put too much water in, *voila, voila*, yes. Sure? Milk to stir and sugar.

Alright, thank you. I'll start, we're, we're starting now, okay?

'36, '37, '38, '39, '40, '41, '42, '43 I started again, right.

You came back in '43?

Yes.

And how did you re-establish contact?

No, Forty..., at the end of '42. Well I just went to the union, I knew them, I knew Ralph very well, Ralph Bond, and his wife, Bessie. I knew them as kind of friends, comrades actually, as Communists, when I was a Communist.

Yes.

And of course, I had number one priority for work, whether I was good or bad, it didn't matter.

Because of your political affiliation?

Yes of course. No, I had been, but they, they, to me, to them I was a paying guest, I was, and, because of David, you know, I, I was untouchable. And I left the Communist movement in '34 forever, never went back. Even the Spanish War I was very much doubtful about it and I didn't, you know, I knew that the, to the common term 'the political fight' between them and POUM the Trotsky's was more important than the fate of the, the Spanish people, well I saw that all. Anyhow, I worked on some scripts, I know that.

Were you...?

I worked with...

Were you freelance, or were you permanently employed?

Yes, always freelance, yes I was always freelance.

Right.

Always freelance.

When did you...?

Because I was always pregnant, you see.

Yes. When did you meet up with Val Guest and go on to that picture?

With who?

Val Guest, on this one...?

Oh Val Guest, oh that was through the union, through the ACT.

But I say when, when was that?

That was 1943.

Right. So this is in....

Beginning, just early.

This is the first film that you made...

Yes.

When you, once you came back?

I think that was the first one I did. And that was terribly funny, we had a long, very expensive crowd shot on, on Waterloo Station with Arthur Askey walking with a newspaper up to a kiosk. And six weeks later in the studio we had the close ups, you see, revamped.

Yes.

And neither the dresser nor I remembered whether Arthur wore a plain shirt with a striped tie or a striped shirt with a plain tie you see. And of course, he wore the wrong thing, he, he walked up to the kiosk and wore a plain shirt with a black striped tie. And in the long shot he wore a striped shirt with a black tie. And everybody through, went through hysterics and, and Fred Gunn said 'Alright, we do the rushes and we ask our families to come along and see them and see who'd, whether they notice it'. They didn't.

No, no, people don't.

I was saved.

Some people do, but very few people.

[30:00]

I was saved. No, I notice things, you know, all the time. But that was a, that was a big, you know, I, I really had got it in the neck there. And...

Tell me your memories of Val Guest. That was his first film as a director?

Another, another vulgarian.

Yes.

Sleeping around, all the girls had to sleep with him to get, get work.

Right.

It was the 'director's couch' stuff, you know.

Yes.

But he was a nice man, and he was quite professional, you know. He was, he was sort of, you know, he was a technician man basically. No feeling for what's called the artists or anything, you know. But they did it themselves, you see Arthur Askey was very clever, he was a very good director himself, you know, and he basically, basically directed himself. But the girl, who was the girl? I think Anne Shelton was in it.. I don't quite remember. Peter Graves was in it, I think. You know, all that lot.

Yes.

The old timers.

So nothing was special about that film then?

No, nothing special.

Yes.

Except that the, the, the cultures and the studio would work and, of course, I was very upset with news of France, and Fred Gunn was very good, he found, caught me weeping in the corner, in a corner, you know.

What...

Over my friends.

How easy was it to get work during the War?

Oh, it never stopped. For me it never stopped.

No problem?

I don't know whether it's because of I, I, you see there was a big publicity about me, not about my work in France but I came out as the first British girl out of France, occupied France, occupied Europe. And of course, there was big newspaper stuff for

front page and, and I was the heroine, you know. And I was on BBC, and I was on NBC and Ed Murrow had me on all the time. And so of course, they gave me all the time jobs, you know. You see when I arrived my mother-in-law wanted me to give it straight, I had the American papers and all, they wanted me to go straight to the States. I told you that, didn't I?

You did, yes, we covered that.

So I didn't have a *sou*. I wasn't given any help at all because they wanted me to go to the States to save Peter's life, you see. So I had to earn every penny somehow by hook or by crook you see. And take, I worked, and luckily Ed Murrow saved me without knowing it, he got me on CBS you see. I got a guinea a minute for talking about France and conditions and so on, you know, War conditions. So, that's a lot of money, you see. Within two weeks I had thirty, forty guineas, which was a lot of money you see. When you think that our salary was four guineas a week or five guineas a week. Now I bought Anthony a bed and I bought some clothes and I, you know, and some food, and, and paid a girl to look after him whilst I worked you see. And it was interesting actually, I mean I think I was as hungry in London then as I had been in prison but the boy had to eat you see. But it didn't matter, I mean I'm not talking with self-pity. Everything I did I chose, I've never been a victim. I've been a fighter, will you remember that, never a victim.

Yes, and I'll record it.

They like, they like to think of people like me as victims, not true, we fought, we knew what we were in for. We put our head on, on the chopper. And therefore we are not victims, we are fighters.

Yes.

And so all my life I've been a fighter. I've never been a victim, I've never sacrificed anything. I gave and gave and gave because I, I'm born that way you see. That's all. As you are born to tape, you know, you.

Am I?

Yes.

Well we'll...

Some people are born to give and some of them, people are born to take. That's, that's how it works actually now, you know. And, and so, so there I was doing, going from film to film until I landed in Shepperton. And Shepperton I landed I think in '48.

Well let me ask you if any of the films in between stand out in your mind, or any of the people that you worked with, for?

Well there, well, yes, I tell you *Uncle Silas*, now who directed *Uncle Silas*?

We touched on this the other day, Cyril Frank, it was produced by Laurence Irving.

That's right, Cyril Frank, and then, and, I think Bob was on the, on the, on the camera, Bob Karloff.

Bob Krasker.

Oh God, yes.

Yes, yes.

Bob Krasker, yes, the Australian.

I think he was, yes.

Yes, yes, yes, the good looking Australian.

Right.

I think he was a homosexual I think.

I think he was too, yes.

Yes. And, and, and we had Katina Paxinou, and we had Jean Simmons and we had, oh...

Well we talked about it, it was Derrick De Marney.

We had Viola Tree didn't we?

I, well I don't remember Viola Tree in that.

No, no, no. And anyhow...

Derrick De Marney was the current Marney.

The amazing thing was that, was, was, was Katina Paxinou.

Yes.

Who was not only a great actress, but she was a great woman.

Yes.

And she defended me too. 'The English', she said, 'they do not like pregnant women, pregnant women are sacred. Boys...', she shouted on the... 'She is sacred, don't you understand?', and slapped my belly, you know, and said 'can't you see she is sacred?' The boys absolutely fainted with...

[35:12]

She, she sounds...

Embarrassment.

She sounds very much like the parts she played in, in 'For Whom the Bell Tolls'.

No, she wasn't.

For example, Pilar.

She, she didn't, she played and she wasn't, she was a very a good musician actually in life. And her, and she brought on, she, she trained in that young, he became the great director called Michael, Michael...

Yes, I know who you mean, Cacoyannis.

That's right.

Yes.

Who was then a little boy, of, of twenty-one, and she pushed him in and, and, and trained, her husband was wonderful too, who has just died now, last year, 98, or 97 years old, you see. And, and, yes we did the treadmill there, there, there, for the first time in my life I came across really the, the special effects stuff, you know. A lot of special effects on ... [Inaudible 35:55] ...always, you see.

Was, was not Gabby shooting 'Caesar and Cleopatra' down there at that time, or was that a little earlier?

Yes.

Yes. Did you...?

I think he just finished, he was just finishing that, yes.

Did you resume your acquaintance with, with...?

Yes, he wanted me to come over to work for him. I don't why, because I was surely the worst girl ever, you know. The cutting rooms, they had nervous breakdowns over me, but only, and I had good, I had a good relationship with all of them.

Were you fun on the set, was that it? Did you keep everyone laughing?

No, yes, no, I, I, I loved the work, I love man, I love man, M-A-N because I am W-O-M-A-N. Nothing to do with sex, that is the sort of thing apart. And because I love man, I love looking after him and doing things for him you see. I love it, I love it, you know. And I do and they do it for me. It always works, I'm not the little sort of slave. I, it just, it suits me, it's right, do you understand? It's true, it's honest. And I'm unafraid of man and not being loved or to be exploited or being this, or being very, completely fearless, I mean I, it never entered my mind. To me man was my, my pal, my mate and my superior. Because man could think, man could open doors, man can mend a shelf. Man can, man, man can take decisions, I can't, you see. Man could do everything I couldn't do, and I could do everything he couldn't do, so it worked. And then I was always in, in, in sympathy with the actors. I have got a great sympathy for actors, not in their private lives because then you meet the shells of them, but their efforts and their, their, their sufferings, their, you know, their, their struggle always affected me.

Have you never wanted to be an actor yourself?

No, they always wanted me to. They always wanted to go on, I mean Max Reinhardt wanted me to go on stage when I was fifteen, never. I always wanted to be behind the camera, not in front. Also they wanted me to be, you know, a Régine doing, because I can sing, you see, doing, doing nightclubs. And I've always liked, I always wanted to live in the, in the shadow and watch people in the light. And that was my whole life, I lived in the shadow, and that's why my War work was so wonderful, I worked for men with men, you know, and I was miserable in women's prisons and women's camps. I was miserable with women.

Yes.

Do you understand that?

I do, indeed, yes.

Can you really?

Ah?

Can you really understand it?

Yes, yes, I think, so, yes, but, you know, I'm, I'm here to record your, your impressions.

Yes. So therefore, since I loved men, and films in those days were made by men. Oh you haven't got a cassette in.

Yes, it's working, it's working.

You see in those days men made films, women, Betty Box appeared very late on the tape [ph 38:55] you see. Women were, were hairdressers and, you know, and, and what, and continuity girls, you know.

That's right, yes. Yes.

And I was the only girl with men. So I was happy, and they were happy having a girl who was dedicated to them and not afraid of them, you know. I was never afraid of them you see.

Yes.

And socially, socially I'm okay, I never had any complex, inferiority complex, whether it's Carol or, or David Lean and, you know, they were socially all my, my equals you see. In England it was very important that you were a little secretary who

jumped up into, into the continuity racket, you know. But you see it didn't affect me, I was, I was free you see. So there I was doing my bit. I got on very well, with Korda, I got on very well with Thornburn, you see.

Well...

The man who, when I went to Shepperton the man who ran the studio was a man called Lewis Thornburn you see. And he was a very good psychologist and he allowed me to work with producers and directors that he thought I'd like to work with me you see.

[40:05]

Okay. We...

Because I was not easy.

I just want to establish, we, we've, we've now arrived at around 1948 and you've gone to London Films, with Alexander Korda at Shepperton?

Yes.

Is that right?

Yes, I started on...

Nothing more to say about the intervening years in the '40s, nothing stands out in your memory?

No.

No? Okay.

Pinewood, oh wait a minute, I did, yes. I did a, a, I did a, a, a racing film, feature film called *Monte Carlo Rally*, that was in 1948 going up to and shooting in Zermatt and shooting with... Oh, now...

Well it would be a matter of record, so don't worry about names or dates.

Yes.

Or anything like that.

Yeah. I did two actually, I did two films in Switzerland.

British films or, or...?

British, yes, British.

British, mm, mm.

And, because of my, my, my French and German you see.

Yes.

Of course, and as a continuity. And then, that was '47, '48,. And then I arrived at Shepperton I think, '48, '49.

How did you come to join Korda's organisation? Did you know him at this point?

No.

You didn't know him?

No.

Any way?

I didn't know, I don't know that, that kind of person I didn't know, no.

It was a job that you were, presumably were offered...?

I knew no, I mean we knew, my husband was at school with Everin [ph 41:30] Price-Jones, people like that, much more, Ealing was much more, the, the, the climate that I, you know, that I knew, but I didn't work Ealing ever. I worked, I stayed in Shepperton because Shepperton gave me complete freedom. I did work with Sandy Mackendrick though, I wonder why? And what? I did work with Sandy.

Well, now, was that earlier on, or a bit later?

Yes, but he was such an intense man.

What...?

Intense man, have you heard of him?

Of course I have. Do you remember the film at all? It wasn't 'Sammy Going South' was it? That was the non-Ealing film.

Yes, it must have been that.

'Sammy Going South'.

Yes.

That was in, what? I think the '60s, the early '60s.

Probably, yes, that was it.

1961, '62, something like that.

And he trained my husband in, at Ealing, of course.

Yes.

So I went, and I tell you what, at Shepperton I was the girl, first of all I went on location. They did the Marshall Aid you see, with Jenkins, Jennings, Humphrey Jennings. We did six for the Marshall Aid and that's the only time I, I went on documentaries with, Ray Anserat [ph 42:30] was the producer. The man I hated was Percival, producer, he was so arrogant for me. And there I went to, all over Scandinavia and the director was Dana something. I didn't go with Jill Craigie because I didn't like her, and I didn't go with Humphrey Jennings because he liked blonde and blue eyed girls because he slept with them, the continuity girls always, you know, why not, you know. So Humph, Humph I knew socially, he said 'Listen you're not my cup of tea, and anyhow you wouldn't, would you'? I said 'Of course not, I've always, I...' You know, and the, and he was very nice, he was very, he was a very nice person indeed, intelligent, very bright. Have you heard of him?

Of course.

And, and so I did, that was quite a, quite, almost nine months we did, Marshall, Marshall Aid paid for it, six films, going all over Europe, you know. And then I went, then I went you see *Ivanhoe*.

Well now we've skipped an awful lot because 'Ivanhoe' is in the '50s so let's, let's talk about...

Early, early '50s or late '50s. Early...

Well, early 'ish, I suppose.

Yes, '53.

What else at Shepperton, with Korda?

I did, I worked on Larry Olivier's on the, on *The Beggar's Opera*.

Right, well now tell me about...

And I told you about that, they wanted me to have that baby, they wanted me to have on the set of course, because they, they had a barn scene there.

We, yes.

'Christ born in, in Shepperton', that was the, going to be the....

Right.

Headline, but I, I failed. And...

Anything about that film that you remember? That was Peter Brooks' first film as a director?

That's right, Peter Brooks.

What, what...?

He was very difficult.

In what way difficult?

Very demanding.

Well the director usually is. I mean what sort of things...?

No, some was, it's the way you demand, you see.

What sort of things was he demanding?

Elizabeth Furse DRAFT.
Tape 1 Side B

But he was a, he was quite a bully, he was quite a bully, Peter Brooks, you know, and he was terrible, he was so full of himself as, as only men are who are insecure. My, one of my daughters worked with him in Paris. And, and his wife lived next door to us in Trevor Square we know the, and Natasha. And Peter Brooks, I, I, it was, I went off that, I went off that. When Anna was born, of course, Anna was born 22nd of December '53 that was, '54, '53. And then I went back and, and went on to, what did I go on to. Is that everything?

[45:20]

Well that's a good place...

[End of Tape 1 Side B 519 45:30]

NB: The time codes given here are estimates based on readings from the original cassette recording

Tape 2 Side A.

Right. It's Elisabeth Furse, Tape 2. Yes, and, and then...

David Lean, *Sound Barrier*, Carol Reed *The Man Between*, you know, and *Berlin*.

Did you ever get to know the Korda brothers? Can we talk about them?

Yes of course I knew them.

Well let's talk about them.

They were in the cutting rooms I worked here, now that is interesting. Now I'll you my analysis of them, because I'm, I, I really studied these three boys. There was a mother, a woman, who had a womb, and that womb produced three boys, nothing else. One a businessman and producer, you know, a man who, who, who co-ordinated and made money and fame. The other one, Zolly, a scientist, he was only interested in sound actually. I can't tell you how he behaved in, in the cutting rooms, he was marvellous, hours and hours and hours of sound. Sound, this, that, every door, every door banging was, the, with, you know, was re-done at least a hundred times. And the third one, Vincent, the artist. Three sons, completely different, in looks too. And very close to each other, you know, very loyal, very close, you know. And that was beautiful, you know. All three sort of upp-ish, like people are who are not really at home and try to be at home, you know. All three were definitely what they were, none of them ever, ever, ever belonged here, you know, and they had really, though they married English women and all that they were what they were, you know, each one of them. No, Zolly was, was much more American actually, much more Hollywood-ish than the others, you see. And that's, and, and I knew them because they gave me, gave me lifts. You see Vincent lived in Chelsea and I lived in Trevor Square and then in Bourne Street in Sloane Square. And I, now I'm going to tell you something, I was the

bread winner, every piece of bread my children ate I, every pair of shoes they wore I wore, I earned. And so I always hitchhiked to the studio to save two shillings. I went to Wimbledon or Richmond wherever it was, got on the road and hitchhiked you see and then I got lifts back, you know. And, when I was pregnant hitchhiking was very easy, people were very nice to me, the lorries used to take me right to the studio. And the boys used to say 'Can't your old man earn, can't your old man...? Old man they used to call him.

Well, no, you've re-married by this time have you?

I was married, yes of course, I was pregnant.

We haven't, well we haven't covered that. You, you..

Well I married my husband, Patrick Furse, I married him in 19..., when he came out of the Army.

Right.

Well just before.

Okay, and he...

1945, when I got my divorce.

He, he was an artist you say?

He was artist, after he came out he came...

Right.

Out of the Army in '46, and he thought he was an artist, he was really an artisan, you know. But he, the, the artist sort of thing was a front, was a cover to cut him off people and life.

Yes.

He was a recluse, you know.

His work didn't sell?

He worked, he painted, he drew, he engraved, he...

But his...

He did glass engraving, and he, he, my brother-in-law of course, did glass engraving. And he, he just thought beautifully, he was an intellectual artisan.

Yes. Now tell me how he fits in with the rest of the Furse family?

Well, he's the eldest son to, to the heir of the... My father-in-law was a man called Ralph Furse, who was in charge of The British Empire, he ran The British Empire for thirty-five years, he was head of the appointments. And I got a lot of jobs through him for other people. And then there was Uncle Mike, the Bishop, and there was Uncle Charles, the painter. And there was, there was cousin John Radcliffe Maunte [ph 04:15]. I had lots, and then aunts and aunts, do you know, they're lots and lots of them, and they were all married to Bishops, when I married Pat there were four Bishops in the family I think.

Roger was...?

Roger was a cousin, he was the son of the, he was the son of the, the General.

Yes.

Uncle Bill, he was, and his daughter, his sister too, Judith.

And...

They were both, the children, Jill was my sister-in-law, Jill Furse, you see.

Right. How about Margaret, she was...

What?

Margaret Furse? She, was she...

Oh she was married to Roger.

Right. Oh, yes, of course.

She's one of the...

Yes. That's right. Yes.

Three sisters. The, the, the designer sisters, you know. What were they called, the three sisters? And the Furse family were such a typical English family, you know. They, they were running England actually, you know, at The British Empire because they all served the King then they had something very typical English, which is, nowhere else you find that in the world, I think, the English have got that strange talent, and that class especially, middle upper class, whatever it's called. They can all write, they can all paint, they can all sculpt, they can all draw. They can't all make music, though the Lubbocks [ph 05:11] were Furse, Furses, and they're musicians. So they are all talented people.

[05:15]

And they all act, they can all, I mean they're all, let's call it artistic, you know. It's very, very interesting. And, I mean my mother-in-law was the daughter of Henry Newbolt, the poet. So, I mean, the, my children have got it all in them you see, they're all, they're all in what's called in the Arts, all, not one is, has a practical job. And the Furse's were... So I mean I'm now getting a, a book done on the Furses I think,

because they were, they really, the family went in with The Empire, through The Empire, down with The Empire and out with The Empire.

Yes.

They were the family, the, the Empire builders, you know, because they were obedient, loyal, brave and intelligent, not clever, intelligent, you know.

Not gifted?

My, my husband was more than intelligent, he was very, very intelligent, you know.

Right.

Not his brother.

But not practical, is, is that what you're saying?

Not practical?

Your husband?

He could, he could do anything but he wouldn't.

I see.

He wouldn't, even driving. He, he thought he was, he was in the Rifle Brigade of course and, and being a rebel, instead of going with the Guards. And then he taught the Guards at Windsor to get off the horse and on to the tanks, he was one of the instructor officers. And he could drive, but he wouldn't drive, you know. I mean we, I had to force him to drive the children around, you know. No, he wouldn't do anything except think, and then draw, you know. He was very much involved in the ballet, you see and he was engaged to, to Margot, that's how I met him actually through Margot. And, that was the, the family I married into, and it was very interesting because I, I

quite, I liked them, I liked them. I looked upon them like sort of, like, like sort of people who live in a, in a, in a, in a glass house, you know, sort of cut off from the world. They hadn't, didn't have a clue, you know, what went on really in the world, you know. To them it mattered to be brave, loyal, not in business, but anyway, nobody had to, must, must earn money, that was out, you know. But they had to be in the Arts so, in, in, in the Services and serve, serve, serve, serve, serve, you see. And they all went to Eton, they all went to Balliol, do you know. Balliol was their college, Eton was their school. And their prep school was the same as my children went to, my children went to exactly the same school. And, without the money, without the, the Furses never had real money, you see. They had to let their estate and all that, because they were so stupid at that, you know, they didn't know how to earn. But there you are, I married into that family. And Roger was godfather to one of my daughters and, you know, and Judith was godmother to one of the other, you know, and there they were. The, the more, the outstanding ones were much more the Cunliffes, and they're all, their mothers were all Furses you see, and the Lubbocks, and the Wedderburns. And they battled Mauds, they all had Furse mothers you see.

So they're, this is all part of the interlocking British, English establishment?

I, I, we only had to lift the telephone for jobs.

Yes.

You know.

Are they still at it? Is there that kind of..

No.

Cohesion still today.

I mean the cousins, my children see their cousins, some of them you see. But it's not working any more, the, the, the network worked when my father was alive and uncle

Bill, or whatever, what, and do you know, and you needed a job for somebody you rang up, you know, and the network worked.

It was the Old Boys thing?

Oh it was absolutely Old Boys, you know. On a very nice basis, you know, but it was the Old Boys working, all the way, all the way. So much so that when Mickey Balcan wanted my husband, he wanted it because Roger was at, at Shepperton with Korda, and he wanted to be Korda. And he wanted my husband, who was a so-called artist, to train him in as, as a Roger, Roger Furse you see saying 'I've got a Furse, ha, ha', you know, another, at Eton and all that. But my husband of course, he went there for six months and nine months with Sandy Mackendrick he worked, on the art department. He was trained in, he had a scholarship of what, you know, they paid him. And he couldn't bear the vulgarity of the film making, you know, he couldn't do it, he couldn't stay, he couldn't see it.

Was he as delicate as he sounds, or...?

Yes.

Yes.

He was delicate but very, very stubborn. His weakness was stubborn, stubbornness, and my, my second son inherited it. Stubborn, but stubbornness that takes you to almost stupidity when you're very intelligent, you know, stubbornness that makes you blind, do you know, blind to truth even, you know. It's almost like a disease stubborn, that kind of stubbornness was.

[10:12]

Yes.

I, I know very few people who are as stubborn as that you see.

I...

So...

So...

Sorry.

No, no, no, no, continue. I beg your pardon, I thought you'd, I was just going...

So there was I and I was, I was always a foreigner of course, and, and, and I still am. People say 'You're one of us', I'm a foreigner and I am what I am, you know. When I go to Russia they say 'One of us', that's when I say 'okay', you see. When I go to France they say 'One of us', and I'm glad. But in England I insist on being a foreigner.

Right.

I don't know how to put it, can you understand that?

Yes, oh yes, yes. I, very often I think the more places one knows, the, the more of a stranger one is everywhere. But, have we exhausted the first family, before we come back to the Kordas, I would like to ask you about your recollections of Sandy MacKendrick, if you have any, at that time when your husband went to Ealing?

No, he went to Ealing, he went off every morning.

Yes.

And he came back and he said, 'Oh Christ, sordid', do you know, 'and they're all fighting for jobs' and, you know, and he just, he was just, he didn't fit, he, he was a misfit you see. I mean at Eton he had, he didn't have one single friend, you know. He, he was popular, but not one friend.

Right.

Do you know, and so, and at Yale he, he didn't come up, he went to the Slade, he did it all, and he did, did not have, have one single close friend, you know. His, he was a loner, he's a loner, you know, he's a, and he's a nanny boy, he was brought up by...

Yes.

A very domineering, very strong nanny, and he's, really needed a nanny, and he married my children's nanny in the end after eight, ten years, because all he wanted was a nanny, and he's very happy with nanny.

What is he doing now, being kept by nanny?

Well he, I don't know if he's got enough money now you see.

Right.

He inherited, he designs jewellery, she knocks some silver bits out, you know, and, you know.

I see.

And they're both recluse and, and very happy and completely cut off from the world.

Right.

Cut off, you know. The children go to, to, to him, they went, and I'm not at all, I loved him very much. Well we had, you know, we have in common the War, we believed in. We had in common love for music and love for painting and, and, and our morality, we both preferred to be poor to being rich, you know. We loved our kind of poverty.

Yes.

Which you can only afford if you haven't been poor as a child, you know.

But you did rather well on, on, on this poverty, living on Trevor Square or, or, or... you...?

Well I know we always had lodgers.

Or other fashionable addresses. I see.

No, no, no, no. And I got a very cheap house there, you know, because of my War thing, you know. No, and always had lodgers, always, we had friends, always, you know, I mean Trevor Square was full of, we were six of us, all left the Army, one in the Foreign Office, one went to Marks and Spencer's, one was a journalist, Alexei Poklevski [ph 13:12] a Russian friend of mine, and we all shared a house. And in Chapel Street too, in Chapel Street too.

Right.

You know, my children grew up with about eight students upstairs, you know, different students.

Oh, well that's a very interesting life.

Oh no, I, I, I couldn't do it else, I couldn't have done it, you know.

Right.

But I couldn't live anywhere else because I had to live in the centre of London. Like I couldn't live in a village, if I lived in the country I live right out, you see.

Yes.

To me it's, it's all or nothing at all.

Right. Let's go back to Shepperton then in the, in the '40s and the films you worked on and you did...

But our kind of poverty was not poverty, it was, I mean we always had bread, poverty is when you don't have bread and when you don't have shoes and you don't have a roof. We always had a roof, well not always, we were homeless for nine months. We always had a roof, more or less, we always had bread, we had shoes, and education we managed because on the, the Old Boys network, you see. Everybody helped, you know, everybody, everybody wanted my girls for nothing. Lady Eden wanted my children for nothing because they're bright children you see.

Ah, ha.

And they were all bright and they're all talented and there was no problem ever about education, you know. I could get them to any school I wanted to, you know. But there was a problem of shoes, you know. And they had meat once a week, the children, on Sunday, as they had this, their grub, spaghetti and, and, and lentils, and they're the healthy, and the doctor here said they were the healthiest children in Belgravia, because they were not over fed and over, you know, and they never, I've never in my life bought a bottle of Coca Cola or, or any juice, they had milk or water, do you know. But they were alright, you know. I don't know, I, even now I don't, I don't buy anything but water, I have water, you know, all that silly stuff, the water that you pay for, it's ridiculous, I don't believe in that.

[15:24]

Right.

Anyhow ...

Back to films.

Anyhow to films, back to films, so, you see there was I, I'm going from pillar to post. Then I went to release, each time I was pregnant, you know, I lost quite a lot of babies

because of the War you see. You see in, in prisons and camps they don't give you anything for your menstruation and for the lavatory so you stop, it's timed, you know, psychologically, and you go through premature menopause as a young girl, young woman, you know. When you come out of it, it takes years and years and years to get your, your body back into normal. And my babies died, were born, you know, still born, and all that, you see. And I kept the last four only with injections, daily injections, you know, of progestagen [?], else they wouldn't have lived, you know.

And even then I, I, Johnny I had, and up on the moors, we were shooting in, in, in Zermatt on the corner guard, I started to lose him, I'll never forget the colour, wonderful colour of blood and snow, beautiful, it was beautiful, clean, real red, you know, lovely, like the royal red, you know, that you see in Shakespeare films, you know. Anyway that's what, that, that's what it was all about, I think I, I really wanted a dozen children, but there you are, I was left with half. So, so, so I was working and working then I started, oh yes, then I, then they asked me to go on locations, really big locations like the, *The African Queen* and things, Angie went on that you see, and I did the studio shots, and I said, then I told Lewis Thornburn I could not go on locations any more you see because when I came home my husband needed a woman in bed every night you see because he would, he had all these energies and he was a great lover. I married a lover, not a husband, father, you see. And I divide men into lovers and husbands and fathers you see. And, and so I told no, no more locations, so they said alright, standby studio work, release scripts, you know, cutting room scripts, so I had great fun in, in, going from one to the other, you know, popped in, pop out. And release scripts, I learned so much about the director's attitudes and characters, do you know. Wilcox being so mean, you know, and, and economical shooting, tacking, panning, ten minute shots, you know. Whereas Carol, every second, one frame, one frame, one frame you see. And, David was, was a bit long, a bit longer, a little bit shorter and...

David Lean?

Bit less effective than Carol Reed, less, Carol was much more sort of bang, crash, you know.

Can we take them one at a time, and separate them? Right. Herbert Wilcox, are you talking, he was producing?

And he was, yes. I worked on one of those.

You were on those were you?

Yes.

And he was also, I think, the producer of 'Beggar's Opera', was he not?

That's right.

Was he involved in that particularly or was it all Peter Brook's?

No, I was involved, I was, I was on the floor too for a bit.

No, I say was Herbert Wilcox involved in the shooting of 'Beggar's Opera', or was...?

No, no.

No. It was all Peter Brook's?

Oh no, no.

On the floor, right.

And no, they would never, he would never, and Larry would never go near it, Wilcox, you know. Wilcox was the intelligent man's poor man, you know. He was...

Right.

He was, he was, he was not considered a, a, a director really, he was considered a near director.

Yes.

You know.

Well what else do you know about Herbert Wilcox? Had you met him before 'Beggar's Opera'?

Yes, he was very nice, he's very nice to work with, he was very, he always knew exactly what he was going to do. He had a story board, you know, he knew exactly what he was going to do. And he was very nice, sort of, business like. He looked it too, he looked like a little businessman, you know.

Right.

There's nothing artistic about him at all, you know. And, and Anna Neagle was like, they're like the, all were, these girls, she was really a good little housewife, you know, like Marlene and people like that. All they wanted really is basically cook and run their flat, you know, not interested in sex or anything else, they, they, the vamp women were terribly keen on cleaning their flats or their houses, you know, I found, working with them, you know. It's, it's...

Did you do...?

It's very interesting, it was very interesting, you see these actresses who people think they're, you know, they're...

Well...

That's why they marry men, you know, marry these unattractive men because they don't care basically as long as they get a house and a car and maybe a bit of bloody metal, put something on, a ring, you know. But they don't mind who they, who they share their bed with, you know, because it's not, they're not interested in it, you know. That's how it works. I, I was there when Marlene, that was a funny story, when

Marlene, I was in the, in, as a girl of about fourteen or thirteen, that was in Berlin, and Elisabeth Bergner, have you ever heard of Elisabeth Bergner?

[20:24]

Of course, yes.

Well she was the human being that sort of really directed my, was the most important influence in my life at, early life. Anyhow, she, I was in the dressing room and Elisabeth she's doing *Saint Joan*, Shaw's, and because we lived in Berlin, my parents lived in Berlin for seven, eight years. And in comes Marlene, absolutely, woo, woo, woo, you know. And she says, and Lizzie says to her 'What's marriage like, Marlene'? because she'd just got married to that man called Rudolph Sieber or something. And I'll never forget Marlene saying 'I lie on my back and count the flies on the ceiling'. And Liz, and Bergner is saying to the dresser, 'Take the child out, take the child out'. I'll never forget her saying I, 'I'm on my back, lie on my back and count the flies on the ceiling'. That's the great sex lady for you you see. She was very nice actually, Marlene was very nice, you know. And I saw her there, you know, I saw her on and off and in life, you know, and...

You, you hadn't mentioned that you knew Bergner before?

Oh right, Bergner, yes, I knew Bergner.

How did you get to know Bergner?

But that's part of my book.

Right. Okay, well we'll refer listeners to the book then.

No, that's how I got really into, I, I was, you know, I lived in an utterly old, old bourgeois ambience, you know.

These...

It had nothing to do with what's called Art. And...

These are pre-Hitler times are they?

Of course.

In the Weimar?

It was 1920..., '26, '25.

Right.

Twenty..., and, and I was always a dreamer as a child, and I was completely cut off, alone, you know, completely. And then I had a governess, the only one, who came to me when I was fourteen or so, and she awakened in me the love for poetry, and she let me read and let me, allowed me, and then she took me secretly to the theatre to see *Saint Joan*, Shaw's, not Schiller's, do you know Schiller? Have you heard of Schiller?

Yes. I'm not totally...

I...

I'm not totally ignorant, you know.

No, no, I'm just...

Or uneducated.

I'm testing you actually, you know, I want to know how far, you know, how far your mind...

Well don't worry about me.

Well I am, that's why I'm, I'm involved with you because you are there.

Yes, I know, but it's, it's, it's, it's your memories, but anyway, yes I, I knew...

But I want you to agree, I cannot ignore you as, as, as, as a human, as a...

I've had a fairly good liberal background.

As a personality.

Right.

I couldn't talk to you unless I, I wouldn't talk to you, I wouldn't.

Right, okay.

Yes.

Well Peter Schiller I do know, so.

So, she told my mother she's taking me to, to *Saint Joan*, and mother, of course, thought, well Schiller was okay. But Shaw was not okay, of course, but she took me to Shaw and there was Bergner doing *Saint Joan*. And that was the minute I woke up when I saw her at, as *Saint Joan*, you know, and that wonderful play, you know. I remember, always remember where of an east wind, where of a wind, that beautiful expression, you know, that, and 'Oh Lord how long, how long'? I, well I remember it and I, I, I, you know, I was completely shaken. And she took me out of the theatre and I was, was shaking you see. I said 'What can I do for her'? meaning the actress, you see. Well said... [Inaudible 23:35] ...who later on governess to my children, she was in London, governess to my children. And she said 'Well you save pocket money and then I take you to the theatre, the artist's entrance and you give her a bunch of flowers and you say "thank you very much for", you know, that's how you do with artists'. So I saved and saved, and I remember I bought three pink carnations, I hate them now, I thought very, very chic, you know, with a bit of green in it, you see. And was, it must

have been November because it was very rainy and very wild and the wind, the wind was very wild, and lots of people standing there with little books, you know, and pencils. And she came out of her car with her coat open, I remember she wore beaver, not beaver a, a, yes a coat, like a fur coat, it was open and I stood in the corner with my bunch of flowers. And the other people wanted her to sign autographs I suppose. And I stood there and as she went past me I said 'Here, the flowers', and she said 'Who are you'? I said 'I am Liz'. 'Oh', she said 'that's my name too, come in'. And she took me in to the drawing, dressing room, and my governess was outside. I said my governess is outside, 'Well', she said 'I just want to know who you are and what made you come'. And I said 'Well I saw you in that and she said I should save up pocket money and bring you flowers'. She said 'I want to see more of you', and that's how it started, you know. Later on people thought that she had seduced me or something, that wasn't true at all, but she was a big influence on my life and, I met, and one of her best friends was a Communist and turned me into Communist.

[25:25]

Oh really?

Austria, yes.

Yes.

Who was then, they were chief witness at the McCarthy trial in America.

Who was that?

Against the Communists Movement.

Who was that?

Hede Messmassin [ph 25:35] was her name, and she was the chief witness against, for, for the government, for the American, McCarthy against the Communists.

That was un-American activities.

Yes.

Right. Was Doctit [ph 25:40] Czinner in evidence?

Oh yes, he, oh I knew him very well, but not yet. That, not...

That came later?

That came later. Oh you know all about that? Bimbo we used to call him.

Did you?

Bimbo we used to call him.

Would you like to talk about him? Your memories of him?

Well he was, shall I tell you something?

Please.

He was rather, as a husband, like Prince Philip is to The Queen. He never, ever lost his dignity and his, and he never made it really in a big way you see as, as a director. But he never lost his dignity and his personality as a husband of a very, very famous, and very much in demand actress And I liked that about him, you know, he was very, very dignified and very... I didn't think he was a good director and, and, you know, he was Austrian, oh he was Hungarian, he was Hungarian. And, and she loved him in a way, but then she was also a lesbian, she had a lesbian affair with, with, with Viola, the Swiss, and they lived together, all three, in the same villa. And he had a big dog, a Dane, and I was the sort of child they never had, you know. And they, and, and, she was, in the end my parents were going to, my mother was going to, to go to court against her for the seduction and all that crap, it wasn't true at all. But they were, because my, my father thought actresses were prostitutes, you see, that women you

slept with you see, especially, especially, you know, operetta that were his mistresses. So I was then, I was sent to Switzerland, of course I went to Switzerland, I ran away five times and I met her secretly when she was touring you see. But I was sent to Switzerland and to the 'Pension de Jeune Fille de Bonne Famille'. And then I came back and there was her friend called Hede Gupmerz then, they'd both been to a theatrical school together in Vienna, I'm trying to, to, you know, to, and Hede took a thingy to me, and I think there was a sort of, there must have some kind of, a rivalry between these two women, you know, between Hede and Lis, with Bergner and, and her. And she was actually married to Gerhart Eisler, the, the, the big famous Communist Chief, who, who organised the first revolution in China.

Yes.

1925, '26, there was Gerhard Eisler was the musician, Hans Eisler, and then there was the other. And the sister was Ruth Fischer, who was the head of the Trotskyists, very interesting, very interesting family, they were. Anyhow, Hede was married to Gerhart Eisler, who was illegal then in China, working for the Communists in China, I didn't know that of course. And Hede thought it was a good idea to get me away from Lis and make me into a Communist you see. And I think I was ripe and ready to go and die for others, somehow. Do you understand that?

Yes, yes, yes.

And she turned me into a Communist, and she made me use the, not only that, she tried to get me into the KPO, and I had all sorts of interviews with, she, that was KPO, you call it now KGB, KPO we called it, you see. And it's very interesting because the man who, who, who interviewed me and tried to get me in to serve the cause, you know, people of the world, starving people of the world, I was going to die for them, happy, I mean that, I believed in it, I mean my kind, who came from the bourgeois, from money and so on, were the original crusaders, you know, we were, they really. These boys in, in Cambridge exactly, exactly the same, you know.

Excuse me, we'll resume.

So there you are I became a young Communist you see.

Yes.

And then...

So...

There was nothing to do with friends you see and then my father...

Well it's...

My father cut me off without a penny and then I started living and dying for others.

Madam Bergner then was, was by no means...

Oh she was furious.

[Inaudible 29:55]

Lucky to her, but I was living illegally her, she left England in 1932 early for England for, left Berlin for, for London, you know, and started her career in England, which didn't take further 'queen' and all these 'queens' went there, you know, and everybody, you know, she was, but she never really made it here. She never made it anywhere but there, in her own culture you see. And I used her house for, for my illegal, you know, one of her maids was the mistress to the sexton of the church in Dahlem you see, which was Niem... What was this name, the pastor who was killed?

[30:14]

Neimoller?

Yes.

Neimoller, yes.

Yes, that's right. And I hid my, my people there in, in the church tower and so on, through her and so on. And she was furious with me because I used it for, for, for work, you know, '32, '33.

You mentioned Reinhardt before.

Who?

Reinhardt, Max Reinhardt.

Oh yes, he, and, and there was Barnofski, a man called Barnofski, that was her director. And Reinhardt saw me in her, her dressing room you see, and he said 'I'd like to, to, to audition that girl'. And they made me, but she said to me 'Don't become an actress because it's horrible, you know. If you want babies, you want to be married, you love men, and it's no good being an actress and loving men and having babies'. Anyhow he, he auditioned me in, in *Marguerite* in Faust, and passed, you know, the... [Inaudible 31:11] ...and he thought I was talented and could come to his school, but I didn't want to, you know. I didn't, I'd never, I never wanted to be in the limelight, I never wanted to be known, seen, be, not consciously, I just wasn't interested in myself.

So you were very much part of at least a, a segment of, of Berlin theatrical and intellectual...?

Oh yes, I mean, I knew them all, I knew them all, I met them all, I met everybody. I met Schwitzen [ph 31:43] and, and all the writers and everybody. I met them all, I knew them all. But, remember, I was not a journalist, I was not somebody who watched people to, to, to report to, to reflect, I was with people that I either liked or I didn't like. I respected, I didn't respect. I didn't care a damn, I never, to me, names, titles, money, never meant anything, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, not to this very day.

Right.

Do you know, I couldn't know the difference between The Queen and, and you, unless The Queen is nicer than you are, you know. But I think she is a very nice woman actually, poor woman.

Shall we come back then to what? The early '50s now? I'm not sure we exhausted the Korda brothers, did we? Did we...?

Well what is there to exhaust, because they were, at, the Shepperton studio were the happiest studios in London, because Korda had, gave a wonderful feeling in the studios of freedom, you know, people felt free. And he had a very good man running it called Thornburn, Lewis Thornburn who understood him and executed his spirit, you see. And therefore I was happy because I was free, you know, I could bring the babies there, leave them with the nurse, the studio nurse, you see. And then they put the light, the red light on when I had to feed them you see. And I could be me, I could be me. I mean there was John, John Hollingworth who did *Upstairs Downstairs*, what was his name?

Hawkesworth.

Yes. He was very nice, he was trained there. I worked with him, but he was an assistant art director, he was, he was Vincent's assistant, that's right. He was Vincent's assistant. And then there were the Korda children came up, and all, you know, Michael was, I knew, I saw Michael, knew Michael when he was a little boy of ten, twelve, fourteen, now he's a writer, as you know.

Yes.

And he's with Reinhardt the, he's the editor, chief editor by now in New York. And then Merle Oberon kept on knocking around, you know, and, and people, you know, the women there, you know, they had women. But they, mind you Zolly and, Zolly and Vincent had very sensible women. Vincent married a, a, a, a nurse, and teacher. And Zolly had married a, a very sensible it's, some kind of actress but a very sensible,

except, except Alex, he always knocked around with those sex bombs or whatever they're called, you know, you know. But the other two brothers were terribly keen on solid ladies, you know. That's very interesting, you know, I, I would have, they could have had anybody, Zolly, but Zolly always had terrible backaches, we always had to lie him on the floor and had to walk on him, on his spine, because of his backaches, backaches, you see. There was a wonderful head of the dressing, of the setting, cutting rooms called, who was he? Oh he was a lovely man, there was, Elliott of course, Max Elliott, who was, his boy is David Elliott I think, who is now on television. And they had, the cutting rooms were, were absolutely lovely people in, in, in Shepperton, real nice human beings, intelligent people. And who was the head of it? It might come back to me one day. But Max was the set number two, Max Elliott. And, of course, there were all these continuity girls knocking around, well not all, there was Angie, and Tilly, Tilly was more in, I think she was more in Pinewood. You know, the girls had sort of their, their studios. And Angie was a real professional, she was wonderful. I mean she could, she had the story board, everything ready, you know, and everything prepared, she knew every shot, you know, she was wonderful. So was Angela Matelli, you know, they, they were real professionals, they really made it their life you see. And the directors were their, their Gods, you know, were their, and they were the Goddesses to the director because they did half the director's work. They used to say to the director, quite wisely, 'You've got to do a long shot, a close short, a mid short', bang, bang, bang, bang, 'don't forget', you know.

[35:51]

You said you did the studio work on 'African Queen'?

Yes.

Which means you were with...

I did some, I did with Humph, and Katherine.

Was it second unit, or, or...?

Second unit.

Ah, so Huston wasn't directing those scenes, John Huston?

He was.

Was he?

Yes, he was, I didn't like him. He was too much of a showman. He was too, too Irish, you know, too merry, I don't know, I didn't like him, he, he wasn't really true enough, he was always acting himself, you know. Always, he, he was always acting, he was always being somebody, being somebody, you understand? I didn't like him, I didn't like working with him, no. He liked Angela, because Angela was perfect to him, because Angela was down to earth, neat and tidy, I was never neat you see. I was too much, maybe I was too much of an artistic person myself, you know, too much of, and Angela was a real bourgeois, steady, solid girl, you know. And nothing could upset her, nothing could throw her you see whereas I reacted to directors, personally, do you understand? They could feel me reacting to them, whereas Angie was the English girl, completely cut, cut, cut off and, and not reacting to them, just doing the job whereas my first job was reacting to them. I don't know how to put it.

No that's fine, that's fine. That covers it I think. Makes...

But I'm, I must tell you I'm saying that for the first time in my life, you know.

Yes.

Because you make me talk.

Well this is a very interesting period in British films.

Yes, it was very interesting.

Some excellent films were, were made, especially by the Korda units.

Yes, I, what else was there? *The Ghost Goes West*, now that was before.

Much earlier, much earlier.

That was before. *The Grey Man*, the, that was, no that was Pinewood, I worked. *A Thin Man* or *Grey Man* or whatever it's called.

Well '*The Man in Grey*' was...

Yes.

A Gainsborough film, much earlier.

Yes. That's right.

That was much, well maybe you were on it, but that was much earlier, it wasn't Korda.

That's right, I was there, I would, did, did some work on that.

Right.

And, so I remember, I remember the...

I've, I've given your phone number to Kevin Brownlow who, who is researching the life of David Lean so he, I think, will be in touch. But is, has anything more come to mind about David? No?

He was so private.

Yes, so you said that before so...

And I've, I've never been one of these people who walked into people's lives.

One, one didn't get to know him?

No.

Right.

Actually there was not much to know about him, because his, his, his life was work and you could only know him through his work. There wasn't, I mean most people are like that who are big. There is not much to know about them because their knowledge, their, their selves, is their work. Jack Wells was like that, Shaw was like that, most writers are like that and most film makers are like that. Their, their, their private life hardly exists, you can say, well he loves opera, he doesn't love opera, you know. Or he's got a, he's impotent, he's not, or he's half impotent, he's not, I mean, who the hell cares? Basically it's his work you see and, and David Lean was very much of a Cornishman of course, they're very Cornish people, you see. He was very, he was mystic, very mystic, very much of a mystic I, I think. I think that was his refuge, that's why he, he lived and, I think married an Indian woman, too, he went in for India, for Indian things in a big way, you know. And I always think that when Englishmen go in for Indian things that they are, they are, they go native, you know, they go mystic. It's called going native.

Right. Frank Launder and...

Am I being stupid?

No, no, no, no, not at all, no, no.

Launder and Gilliat I did some with, what did they do? That was something, a comedy. Oh I do, I do remember, I did, the girls, what was it, the girls school, what was it called?

[40:07]

St Trinians.

What?

St Trinians.

Yes, *St Trinians.*

You worked on those?

I worked on *St Trinians*, yes.

Yes.

With Jean Marsh.

Yes.

She was on it. I did *St Trinians*. I think I went on two of those, but that was, I mean, that was ridiculous, it was very good shooting actually, very, very intense and very, good technical shooting, you know, and good acting, very good acting. It was very professional and, and of no consequence, as we call it. So I'll cross it off.

They were very profitable I think, were they not?

Oh yes.

In the, in the...

Well they should be because they made people laugh and people will pay for laughter.

Mm, mm. So that was, they were directed by Frank Launder, did you work with Sidney Gilliat?

Yes, yes I think so. But they were, you know, they were all men, they were all men who walked to the studio, went to the canteen, and were fully, entirely occupied with their work, their minds, you know, were, they're all workers.

Does that also include the Baldings?

Oh yes, the, but the Baldings, of course, had the charm of, of the intellectuals, you know, the intellectual film makers, you know, the thinking boys, you know. Somehow they carried it physically on them, you know. And they were very erratic, they were not solid, you know, not, they, they sort of jumped, you know. And I didn't think they were very individual, individualistic and, and, yes. I mean they were, every director had his personality of course, and the personality worked on, on the way they worked, and the way they, they treated their people you see. There were directors who were good with, with directing and others were good, actually good with actors, you see, they weren't so good with actors were... Well really, I mean David Lean was very good with actors, so was Carol, you know, with people, with actors, you know, you could get into the personality of an actor and you could really help them, whereas Val Guest just directed, you know.

Who was...?

And Gilliat, Gilliat and Launder too, they were just directors, you know, shooting. They were just shooters, you know, shooting so many minutes a day, you see.

*Which was the director, who was the director that you most enjoyed working with?
The most respected?*

Carol Reed.

Carol Reed?

Yes. But that's easy to, you know, he, he's, you know, he's, he was such a nice person, such a... And I knew his wife you see, and his assistant you see, if anybody writes a book about Carol, his assistant is a friend of mine still, she's alive and kicking, called

Dolly Percival, she did all their private, she was the, you know, she was very close to the family, and to Penelope, the wife, and so on, so she is around for Carol. She can tell you all about Carol if she will.

Well there are two books, one I've read is very bad, the second one was published...

Not much to the second...

A few months ago, I've not, I've got a stack of books that I haven't read yet and I...

Guy Hamilton was his assistant.

Yes.

You see. And Guy was very close to him. Guy was a very nice chap, he started in the cutting rooms actually and he made it of course, you know. He did the Bond...

Bond, some of the Bond films.

Yes.

Yes.

Yes. That's right. And you see when I did, when I did, then I stopped, when did I stop? I stopped film making and only did a few, I was called on, you know, thrillingr, something. I stopped, I think in 1955 or six.

For good? Was that it?

For, more or less good, I went back to do, each time I needed money I went back to do a quickie or something like that. But, and I worked with that man, oh dear he did thrillers, chases and all that.

Give me a hint, a clue?

I stopped for good and I had a, a place, I opened, so that I could be a mother you see, the children were growing up and needed me and I started a thing called *The Bistro*.

Well let me flip over the tape.

That's all.

[End of Tape 2 Side A 44:44]

NB: The time codes given here are estimates based on readings from the original cassette recording

Tape 2 Side B

Yes, okay, right. You were saying?

Willie Starr came to me.

Yes.

He's now the head of Columbia I think.

What did he want you to do?

Oh no, then I, then I was supposed to go on a Chaplin one, the Hong Kong one.

A 'Countess from Hong Kong'.

And I met Chaplin, very much, closely, and I disliked him so much. And his wife told me not to call on him. Oona said 'Don't go with, you know, it's not worth while', but, that ..

Was that a social introduction?

That was 19..., that was 1956 I think, '55, '56. I did some, I did some test shooting for him.

Well there were two that he made here, one, the first one, which was '55, '56, was 'A King in New York'.

That's right.

And then 'A Countess from Hong Kong' was sometime in the '60s, I think, early '60s.

No, it was the one in the '50s.

Right.

You know.

So how did you get to know Chaplin?

Because, because J. Epstein, his, his, well I call his loo paper puller, you know, the man who was his runner.

Well let's call him his assistant then.

Yes.

His assistant.

No, but he was a sort of servant really, servant/assistant. Have you heard of him?

Yes.

Well he came to me, and Chaplin came because of that McCarthy thing you see, came to London with Oona, and then I was asked to a party. No, I was asked to give a party, and Chaplin was so vain he wouldn't allow anybody to be, he stood on the piano, he acted, he, anything to get attention you see, astonishing. A man who was so, had everything, you know, could not let other people be. I was quite shocked by his vanity and by his need of being the centre, you know. I was quite shocked, because they were the same, exactly the same, they could have been twins.

Who was, sorry?

They could have been twins.

Who, who was the same?

Picasso.

Picasso?

Yes. They could have been twins, same meanness, same vanity, same sexuality, same everything, because they were the same height of course. Anyhow that, somehow then I, I, I did that job you see, I took at night only, in our house there was a little gallery that went past, is it cold?

No, I think there's a draught, I wondered if the door was open.

No, I don't.

Right.

Do you mind?

No, no, no, no, I thought maybe the door was open.

Or the door's open, yes, maybe.

Right, okay.

So...

Right.

And I started this little room, you haven't heard about it, no?

Le Bistro?

Yes, it was the first one in England...

Well I wasn't...

Because...

Where was it, no I wasn't...

In, here in Sloane Square, in Bourne Street.

No I wasn't in the country then.

It was only for people, you know, for, for, you know, it was very, very intimate. And people, I mean people still sort of meet. And I did that because I felt I have to be a mother and a wife you see because film work became more and more involved. I left home at six in the morning to get to Shepperton, you know. And came back at eight at night, nine at night you see, it took two hours, almost two hours to get there you see, and I had, I was the last to go because I had to do the reports, and the press to come, because I had prepared, I had to prepare everything for the day so, so it was, it was, well I felt I had to do, be a mother you see. And they were furious, Lewis Thornburn was furious, because you see I was very useful, they had me always standing by, if a girl was sick, or a girl, you know, what, whatever happened, I could always, I was always there you see. And I didn't mind, I was not ambitious, I didn't want to, I didn't mind being second unit at all, I, I didn't, it doesn't, as long as there was work, you know. I was not ambitious, I did not have a career and I do not want, I didn't mind whether I worked with so and so and so and so, as long I could, could like them, so I was a useful member of that studio you see.

Was Shepperton as cosmopolitan as Denham had been under Korda?

Yes, it was pretty cosmopolitan, you know. There were quite a lot of Hungarians there, you know. And there was Moura Budberg of course who was always...

Tell me, tell me...

Showing off and all...

Tell me about Moura Budberg?

Playing, playing up. Well she played, well she played her role very well, you know. She, she acted, I mean she's not my cup of tea because she, she, she was a saleswoman, what I call a saleswoman, you know. Charming, attractive, amusing and she had all the sort of panache of that, you know. But, she is, I don't know, I'm, I'm very, I'm very discriminating and I'm very...

What...?

[05:00]

And she used to call me her country woman, you know, and all that, but I never went into her... I never, do you see, there's one thing, forgive me, there's one thing, I never went to their parties because I had to go home. I never went to the bars with them, I never drank with the boys, ever, ever. When they were drinking I was mending socks in the studio, I had a bag full of baby clothes to mend, you know, I had brought with me, you know. And I, I did not join into any of their social lives you see, because I had my own life, like, unlike the others you see. Well I was a mother and a woman you see, and my husband, and so I was, I cut my, and I didn't regret it. So I was not part of the drinking lot and having a jolly good time lot, you know, never, never went to the parties, never. I was asked but never went.

What functions did Budberg perform for Korda? Was she a courtier, or a fixer?

She was supposed to be adviser, she was the script advisor, she, reading scripts for Korda. Actually, for Korda, she was one of the ornaments, you know.

Yes.

He liked sort of having, like people have a garden full of flowers, you know. But that one plant was called Budberg, you see.

There's a very strong intelligence connection to Korda and Budberg.

Well she did, oh yes...

He had been in the service and, and...

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, they're all, they're all gathered in it, and they all passed information all that, do you know. And that is, that was part of their make-up of course too you see. I mean we, I say now 'we', middle Europeans and East Europeans, have that intelligence stuff built into us, most of us', you see. I'm not an intellectual because I have no intellect but I belong to that world you see. And', of course, they came to, to, to all of them, you know, and, the intelligence boys and said, do you know, 'If you're getting a run, let us know what's happening', you see, and so on.

Did they come to you?

Yes, they did come to me and, but I, you see I worked during the war you see. And I did not trust those boys, you know.

Well I think, wisely I suspect.

I didn't trust them.

Right.

I didn't trust them. I knew Philby because my mother-in-law was a friend of him. I didn't trust them, and of course to them I was a foreigner and they only trusted their own kind basically, foreigners were there to serve them. And the French Dogier [ph 07:20] Bureau said to me, 'The English don't know what they've lost in you', you know. Because I was born an intelligence person, you know. But they are much too, they are not intuitive enough, instinctive enough you see. When I was working in, in Marseilles in France and I decided to take my little boy round with a big hat and a big

basket and just let them all watch me I knew I was doing right because whilst I was there they watched, they thought they were watching me, I was doing all the stuff I could do, covered by my little boys, you know, because the French are keen on kids you see, all Catholics, as you know. And they thought I was being insecure, you know, by going about more than openly, flamboyantly you see. I knew what I was doing, I knew it, I was the, I, and I wasn't caught, I was betrayed by an Englishman, you know. They laughed when they did it, they said 'Your own man, your own man betrayed you, none of us', you know.

But, I mean the boys were not stupid but they just didn't, they didn't understand, that's why they've lost Blake, they lost Blake entirely because they're so stupid. They're making, Blake worked beautifully as a boy in, in Holland, beautifully, but they make him, first of all they made him feel socially insecure. He was Jewish, he was Dutch, he was a foreigner with a British passport, right? Of course he spoke English properly, but they made, made him feel an outsider all the time you see in the Intelligence Bureau, number one. Then they made him work with Nazis, ex-Nazis after the War in Germany to fight the Communists. But the Americans were so bloody stupid that they made people like Blake, who was very, very sensitive towards the Nazis, he lost part of his family, you know, and he was there, you know, you don't make him, even if the, however clever or good the German Nazis were, intelligence service were they don't make a boy like, a man like Blake work with them you see, because that is silly. I mean that, that is stupid, psychologically, you see, that's how they lost him. No, no, Philby, they are just different kind, Philby was a born traitor. Philby was one of those Englishmen who go native, you know, England's full of them, you know. I know, I don't know how many, they hate England, Bill Hayter was, the painter, William Hayter was one of them. They hate England and they, in a strange way and, and they'd do anything to hurt their own country. And they come only from one class, middle class, strangely enough. John Amery of course, was one of them. He's middle class too, he was at school with my husband. But traitors I do know, traitors are people who... Traitors are born actually, and homosexuals of course, love intrigue, they're born intrigues, and so they like playing people out as, they're not political at all, they just like to see how things went when they are playing one against the other I think. It's very interesting the psychology of, of what's called traitors. I talked to Rebecca about them, she, she was into it.

[11:05]

West, do you mean?

Yes. She was not as good as I was at it, I understand, I understood it much better. I knew what makes, makes your personality, what's called a traitor. She was much too intellectual about it, she didn't see the sort of, no she couldn't see it properly. Well she was Irish though anyhow, that's it.

Yes. Terminez?

Oui.

Well let's add a peroration to the tape. Let me thank you for a very interesting and wide ranging, and very different kind of interview.

To the others, isn't it?

Yes.

I know.

Yes, indeed.

Because you see film making was only part of my life, you know.

Right.

And that, there you've got an exception, you've got somebody who worked for money, not for career, not to go up the ladder.

You weren't a dedicated, cineous...?

No, well no, I was dedicated to my work, I loved it.

Yes.

I loved it. I just loved it. But I didn't want to go up any ladder.

It was the baby shoes, the...?

No, I worked and I loved my work and I loved the film studio, I loved the smell of it. I loved the people. I loved the gangs, the people of the, of the gantry, and the, you know, the workmen and, you know. I mean film making is the equivalent of building a cathedral, or was, because there's not a single talent that is not, that is not in film making, you know, and this is what's fascinating about film making, I mean feature, feature studios [Beeping sound] It's alright, it's me.

Oh.

It's the door. I think that film making is the most wonderful art form, the most perfect art form of our time in the hands of the most imperfect people, and a dream which turned mostly into nightmare. Because what they're doing with that wonderful form they had, with the wonderful means they had is shocking, that's Hollywood of course, most of it.

It's the conflict between...

Yeah.

Art and industry?

It's about the money and, and vulgarity you see. But the dream it's a, it's a beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, but what do you call it? A beautiful means of, of, of projecting anything, actually.

Yes.

I love it, I love it, you know.

Well it's, it's never outgrown its origins, which...

No exactly.

Were to pleasure...

And again...

Yes?

The most important thing is that every single trade that exists practically is in film making. There's the mason, there's the carpenter, there's the electrician, there's the artist, there's the businessman, there's the designer, there's the sound, everything, every trade. And that was, fascinated me always, I went through the studio talking to the men, you know, and I loved, I loved their, well I loved that, that's what, like War, like the Army, you know. Every trade was in the Army, every trade. You got, you got thirty soldiers and each one did something different. And thirty officers and each one did something different. And they're all together for one, for one purpose. And that's film making too. And to me that was like, it was almost holy, film making, and I loved it. I wish, I mean I had the choice between being a mother and a wife and a human being for others, and a film maker. I could have made it, you know, I'm not stupid and I know I could have made it. But I think I got the best of both worlds in the end, you know. But you've got here the most amateurish person, you know, as a film person, that's me, you know.

[15:05]

Well maybe not amateurish, maybe dilettantish.

Well dilettantish, yes.

Yes, yes.

Yes.

Right.

A dilettante, but a passionate one.

A passionate dilettante, we must call your book that.

I noticed that this, that looking for a title, 'passionate dilettante', that's not bad is it?

I don't know, check, check the readers out.

What do you think?

Well, I think it would make people pick it up and look at it, do you not?

I could not care less, but they do care.

Well somebody's got to buy it, it's...

The passionate, yes the passionate, passionate dilettante. Oh, I'll ring my editor and see, because you did it my boy, you did it.

I'm now going to switch off...

7272746, my editor.

Switch off the tape, shall I? That's it.

Yes, please.

Okay.

Yes.

The end. Not quite the end then, we're, we're resuming for a few final words about Roger Furse.

Roger was the, was the, only England produces that kind of man, you know, a gentleman and an artist, a gentleman in, in the very essence of the word. And he happily produced this piece of art, but do you know with great ease, with great facility and with, without concern, without, but he was completely unproblematic, you know. He married an Estonian and went to finish his life he had, he died of lung cancer. He went to that, that Greek island, or French Greek island called, what is it called? The one between France and, the one, Italy, Italy and, and Greece. What's that island called? You go to Italy and cross over? Corsica, not Corsica, well something like that.

Between Italy, Rhodes?

No, the other one.

Corfu? Crete?

Corfu. He died on Corfu.

Yes.

And he lived there for a long time, you know. But Enas [ph 17:02] was his wife of course, he was godfather to one of my children. And he was just an enchanting man, an enchanting, enchanting person, you know, very lightweight, not intellectual at all, just charming. And perfectly behaved and with great manners and great consideration for his staff who worked with him, you know, very, very great consideration you see. And he, Korda adored him because he was so English you see.

Yes.

And, and so he was number one there with, with Vincent, Vincent was not as good as he was, you know, Roger was the one, number one. Well Larry loved Roger, they all loved Roger because he was loveable, he was just loveable, you know. He was so, so easy, you know, so relaxed, and so safe and secure, you know. Even his talent, because he inherited Uncle Charles, Charles Furse, he's in the, he's in The Tate Gallery you see, all the Furses could draw and paint more or less. My grandfather was a very good sculptor, you'll see I've got something of his. They all could draw, paint, sculpt, write. They could all, they could all, they're artistic, artistic people, you know, and very, very charming, they were all for, very charming, were full of charm. My, my sister-in-law, Jill, who married Laurence Whistler, you know, the glass engraver. She was married to Larry, and then my other sister-in-law married him, when Jill died my other sister-in-law married him, Theresa. And so the whole family, you know, the whole family is... And Roger and Judith and, well Roger's father of course was a General, but he was an artistic General too, he was very unconventional, Uncle Bill. I liked them all you see. Uncle Mike was a bit up, you know, he, he shouted all the time about having babies, he never had a single child, you know. And then there was Uncle Henry, he was in, in, Harry he was called, in, in Kenya, he died of course, playing polo breaking his neck. They, they did all that sort of thing, they always died playing polo and something like that, you know. Well Roger, you know, Roger to be in a film studio with all these funny people, and he being, he being what he was, he was a, he, he was a gent you see, in the, the essence of the word, you know. He could walk, I'll tell you what, I divide the English into 'If' people and 'none If' people, 'If' Kipling, you know. And you can walk et cetera, you know. And, and Roger was an 'If' boy. That was a very, very intelligent thing that 'If', Kipling's 'If', you know.

[20:18]

Yes.

And I love it, I put it over each one of my children's cots.

Did they profit by it?

And, and John Donne, I put over their cots, 'no man is an island', you know. I, I have that sort of...

I hope it had a post natal effect on them.

I hope so. I brought them up. Well I brought them up to think of other people more, more important than themselves you see. But, always, and other people come first but they didn't, I mean they didn't grow into that, the ones, you can't beat genes, it's the genes that win.

It's the genes, yes.

The genes win. So here we have the most poorest report ever about film making, yes?

Well, as I say, though it's an interesting side light. While we've still got a little while...

Angie's got, Angie's got...

Yes.

She's got the real stuff.

Well, indeed, that, that is a career that...

She's got a career, and she's got all the little bits and pieces and how John behaved and John again, and do you know, and how they did this and how they did that and how Humphrey behaved to Katherine and the, you know. She's got it all, you should really do her properly, you know. She is the...

I'd like to, in fact it's, I don't have her card so it's not a ...

Oh, get me your telephone number, I'll get you both together for supper here.

Well yes, although, and that would be fine for a meeting, but not for a recording.

No, but, no, a meeting.

Yes. Okay.

Contact, that's very important.

I'll, I'll look it up and...

I'll see how you go, I'll see how you react to each other.

I'll get it off the computer at...

Because Angie was, is an, she's the continuity girl. I suppose Angela Matelli too, and Tilly, but Angela is the younger than the other two.

While we've still got a little tape left, let me just ask you if there's anything more about Weimar that you would like to say?

About who?

Weimar, the Weimar Republic, your life and times...

Oh Weimar Republic, oh my dear, you count that.

Well...

That was...

The, the, you were talking about Bergner and all the rest before.

Well you see there is a price for everything, and the Weimar Republic, you see the, the, the, the Germans, I don't like Germans, as a people, I don't like them. I don't like people because they are, they are, they're marked, they've got a terrible stigma, and

their stigma is that they suffer from claustrophobia. Mainly they have no open sea, they have no open sea. Now the open sea makes people into free people, they can go, whether they go or not, you know. The British can go, the French can go, the Spaniards can go, the Italians can go. Neither the Poles, nor the Germans can. I'm not talking about the Balkans, I mean it's... And when you, when you, when you are a powerful animal, you know, when you're fenced in like that with that, without that open sea that you're born with, you know, then you become claustrophobic and become very dangerous to other people, because you have to push out. Do you understand? You don't, you don't...

I'm following, yes, I'm listening.

So the, Germans as a people suffer from a form of claustrophobia I believe, you know. I really studied them very carefully and, and that of course, makes them into very dangerous people, because they have got to expand. The Poles too, they do it in a different way you see and therefore they will always be aggressive. And they are very good workers, I mean their life is work. The British man's life is hobby, he, the German's life is work. The Frenchman's life is thought, you know. And they work fantastically, I mean work is their pleasure, you see. So therefore the Weimar Republic, which was the result of the Versailles right in the end, you know, was the death stamp to, to the Germans because they, they, they cannot bear to be humiliated you see, they've got to be number one. Remember Nietzsche, they've got to be superman, and they are superman, they produced Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, and that fantastic Army. And do you know they are superman only in that sense that they have so much strength and that power and so much ruthless power. I don't know how to say more, I, I mean they, the, the Germans are very dangerous people because they are so talented, so strong, so, so hard working, so, so purposeful, you know. Every German wakes up with a purpose and goes to sleep with a purpose, not with a dream, not with a dream. The Englishman dreams, the Frenchman thinks, but the German goes to bed with a purpose, how to be better the next day.

[25:45]

Well I was, the, the reason I asked the question actually, it's a very wide ranging interpretation.

Of course.

Your, your recollections of the artistic life knowing, knowing...

Well that was rich.

Bergman and...

No that was, well shall I tell you why? Because all countries that suffer from decline...

Bergner, I didn't mean Bergman.

All, all, all nations, all people that suffer from decline go into very rich cultural life before they die, you know. It's very interesting. They're not a rich cultural life when they're, when they are at their best, their, their cultural life is at their best when they are on their way out. It's a form of, of, of... It's a form of... Gosh I've forgot, I lost the word. Do you know, when you are, decadence, decadence, that's right. It's from art, and a rich artistic life, you know, which, which to, to me, at least that's how I see it. An artistic life always thrives in decadence, you know. At least that's what I learnt in history, that's what I've watched in my life, you see. Look at England, in its decadence, it's got a very rich art life, theatre, except they haven't got money. When they make a film, excellent usually, their theatre's excellent, their music is excellent. They've never been painters, they've never been visual artists, you know. They're poets, the people are poets, they're a country of, of people's poets, literal, of the word, you see. And people come to England for, for its culture now. And England's in a terrible decline.

I think the so-called western world is. I think that's it, yes. Unless you have any final thoughts?

Yes, I've got lots of thoughts, but, no.

Well, right. Okay, this really is the end. Thank you.

You made me talk you see, I don't, I don't...

[End of Tape 2 Side B 272 28:00]

Transcript Queries – Elisabeth Furse

Page/Time	
Tape 1 Side A	
8 11:55	'cushy'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Uncertain context
14 18:50	John 'Gresham'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Post Office workers union official.
14 20:00	'beliny'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Russian ballet instructor?
29 40:12	Ray 'Anserat'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Film Director.
29 40:30	Ray 'Anserat'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Film Director.
31 42:25	Pat 'Pempey'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Duke of Windsor's daughter?
Tape 1 Side B	
54 20:59	'Romaraol Lal'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Film Director?
54 21:50	'Elder Brooks'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Bloomsbury Set member.
55 22:25	'Duma Guma'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Paris Café?
55 22:40	David 'Beira'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Socialite.
56 24:40	'Bardouse'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Uncertain context.
66 35:55	...effects on... [Inaudible] ...always...
68 38:55	'tapi'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Uncertain context.
70 41:30	'Everin'? Spelling/Doubtful Word Price-Jones – In law relative.
71 42:30	Ray 'Anserat'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Film Director.
Tape 2 Side B	
77 04:14	John Radcliffe 'Maunte'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Relative of Furse family..
78 05:11	'Lubbocks'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Relatives of Furse family..
83 13:12	Alexei 'Poklevski'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – journalist.
91 23:35	Well said... [Inaudible] ...who later... Name of children's later governess.
92 25:35	Hede 'Messmassin'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Friend/Witness in McCarthy purge.
93 25:40	'Ductit' Czinner'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Acquaintance..
95 29:95	Inaudible question – talking over.
96 31:11	Inaudible – Quotation in German from Faust?
96 31:43	'Schwitzen'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Celebrity.

Elizabeth Furse DRAFT
Tape 2 Side B

Tape 2 Side B		
111	07:20	'Dogier'? Bureau – French MI5 type organisation.
117	17:02	'Enas'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – A wife of Roger Furse.