

Disclaimer: This interview was conducted in 1994 and concerns memories of 1930s life; as such there may be opinions expressed or words used that do not meet today's norms and expectations.

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* Cambuslang, Glasgow, 25 November 1994: Valentina Bold interviews Tom and Margaret Walsh

* Transcribed by Joan Simpson/ Standardised by Annette Kuhn

* TW=Tom Walsh/ MW= Margaret Walsh/ VB=Valentina Bold

* Notes: First of two interviews with Tom and Margaret Walsh; Sound Quality: Good; this interview was originally transcribed in a phonetic manner; the original phonetic version can be accessed through our physical collection - please contact Lancaster University Library for details.

[Start of Tape One]

[Start of Side A]

[VB tape introduction]

VB: Right, so I'll just leave that erm quite near you so it picks you up.

TW: Is it running?

VB: Yes, I just put it on just now. If you don't mind—

MW: No.

TW: No, not at all.

VB: But I mean you were saying about, erm, going to the cinema.

TW: Aye. Quota system. Is it running just now? [referring to tape] He told me we've got to take English pictures, he says there's a thing called a quota system and they had to take a proportion of

English films that the, the distribution companies had it all sewn up, it was a monopoly. So that any, any... he said "If I had my way I would show Humphrey Bogart and Errol Flynn, time and time again," he says, "but I cannae." [can't] He says "I've got to take my quota", and he said we suffer, he said because people don't come to the English films, I mean the English, you see the English, my recollection of English films before the war, this is the point I made with Annette, that people in Glasgow, I'm talking of course subjectively about myself, but my friends as well. I've since spoken about this to various friends, they all agree with me that English films were a dead loss. They were class-ridden, they were eh, cardboard characters in which the hero and the heroines talked with jawries [marbles] in their mouth accents, you know they talked with upper, upper Oxford accents and eh, the lesser characters, the servants, the villains, the villains were always either Cockneys or Glaswegians or something. The, the class was through it and Jessie Matthews, Jessie Matthews to me epitomised all that was class-ridden. Now I've since discovered that Jessie Matthews through just, just idly reading about her, Jessie Mathews was a kind of low grade Cockney. She was quite a, quite a talented lassie, she could sing and dance and she, she, I don't think she was awfully good looking, she was... I've got a thing about English actresses, they all look like horses.

VB: [laughs]

TW: Most of them do anyway, you know Julie Andrews type, that's the English type. Eh, but she, apparently she took elocution lessons... good on her! And, but she became the quintessence of the upper English middle class and she spoke with this fancy, fancy accent which was utterly, utterly! phoney. If you see a Jessie Matthews [sic] you'd be a... I can, I can envisage myself being in a cinema in Glasgow and listening to this super rich fruity accent and the people... the Bronx cheers [sound of derision], the audience they, they gave her the Bronx cheer, they, they... In other words, Glaswegians could see through this phoney, eh, upper-class accent, you see. So that's mainly why I wrote to your friend Annette about it.

VB: Right.

TW: But before I forget, this is a wee anecdote I must tell you about. This is one of the funniest things I've ever...

MW: There you are. [MW brings in tea/coffee. Sound of clinking cups, saucers]

VB: Thanks very much.

TW: This, this is my funniest anecdote about the cinema that's perfectly true. There was a wee fleapit in Dalmarnock called the 'Dalmarnock Cinema' [referring to Dalmarnock Picture House], it was a wee fleapit...

MW: There you are. [passes TW cup of tea]

TW: Ah, thanks. And...[laughs] Maggie [inaudible] this tea because we're on recording and my golden voice is being recorded. I hope you don't mind.

VB: [laughs]

TW: Anyway I must tell you about this wee anecdote. I'm going back to about 1936, '37, I'd only be a young lad, I'd be about fourteen or fifteen then, but I... we used to go, we used to get in for tuppence into the, we used to sit at the front, juveniles sat at the front. Now the film they were showing was Errol Flynn's, you know Errol Flynn the great lover. It was his first film, it was called *Captain Blood*. Don't know whether you've ever seen it. It's a historical drama, allegedly it's based on a Rafael Sabatini story, an Italian author. It's about, it's about a dispossessed squire who gets ill done by and is forced to take to, to, unlawful methods to get his own back on the English, eh, upper classes if you like for want of a better word. Anyway, eh, he becomes a pirate and in the course of a... [chuckles] this is the funny bit, in the course of this pirating he comes across an English ship bound for America containing a Secretary of State, or a high heid yin [high-ranking figure] in the English establishment and his beautiful daughter who is Olivia de Havilland, she's the heroine, you see. So he captures the ship and of course being very gracious, a typical Errol Flynn type, he invites him on board his ship for dinner, you see, he doesn't ill-treat him. And he says, then he explains who he is, he says I am, whoever he is, he's a doctor apparently and he says, "Eh, and how's dear old England now", he says "I, I miss it". And he says "Is that rascal James the Second still on the throne?" And the old man, always played, I forget who the guy who played it...

MW: Oh, I didn't see it.

TW: Well, the old man says "No!" This is the line, here this is the line. Little did the Hollywood producers ever think that they would provoke this controversy. He said [pause 3 seconds] "King

James has been dethroned. Good King William is now on the throne!" Now do you know anything about the East End of Glasgow?

VB: Mhm.

TW: Well, [sounds amused] eh, Good King William is King Billy.

VB and MW: [laugh]

TW: We're back to the Northern Ireland thing.

VB: [laughs]

TW: And eh, as soon as that was shouted out all the Orangemen in the hall all... "Ohhhh! King Billy!" and all, all the Catholics in the audience they started, in no time at all there was a riot, the lights were out, the police were sent for and we were all thrown out so we never got seeing *Captain Blood*.
[laughs heartily]

VB: [laughs]

TW: There you are.

VB: That's amazing.

TW: Aye.

MW: Are you doing this at university?

VB: Erm, yes, eh in the Theatre Studies at Glasgow.

MW: Uh huh, very good.

TW: [coughs]

MW: It's changed days from doing your MA, eh.

VB: Aye.

TW: Margaret's a graduate, an MA graduate from Glasgow University.

VB: I'm actually working. I'm not a student, erm,

MW: [inaudible]

VB: I'm working with the Theatre [and Film?] Studies Department.

MW: Yes, that's great.

TW: She tells me she's of Russian extraction.

MW: Ohh, is that where the name comes from?

VB: That's where it comes from, yeah, yeah.

MW: Most unusual. And your parents came to Glasgow. Was it long back?

VB: No, my family actually lives in Fife, erm, so my dad's pure Scottish and mum is European.

MW: Did you come to Glasgow University, then?

VB: No, I studied at Edinburgh, actually.

MW: Studied in Edinburgh.

VB: But I've been in Glasgow for a while now and I did an honours degree in Glasgow.

MW: How do you like Glasgow?

VB: Very much, very much.

MW: Have you got a preference?

VB: Yes, I mean, without a doubt [laughs]. There's no question of that. Apart from if you're showing a film like [inaudible]...

[more laughter]

TW: Right, well anything else you want to--

VB: Yes, well.

TW: Discuss.

VB: I mean you've raised a number of things I'd like to talk about further. Actually, before we start I was wondering if I could ask you to fill in a... a sort of questionnaire form just so that, erm, we've got a couple of sort of facts about yourself like, your age, that sort of thing.

TW: Right.

VB: If you don't mind.

TW: No.

VB: Erm... [looks for forms] I was interested when you were saying that about ...I mean was Errol Flynn someone that you particularly liked or ...?

TW: Ah, erm, not. No, well he was a he-man, No. [laughs] I, I went for the musicals, I mean everybody seemed to, musicals were my thing the Fred Astaires, the Ginger Rogers, the Alice Faye, the Dick Powell.

MW: Dick Powell.

VB: Right.

TW: The Warner musicals. Those were my favourites.

VB: Of course, you, erm, you loved singers like erm ...

TW: Gigli.

VB: As you were saying.

TW: Ah, yes.

VB: Was it the music that attracted you, or, the dance or...?

TW: Well, the music and the dance, I mean, there's been nothing ... Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers dancing, there's been nothing as graceful appeared in Hollywood since. I mean to me these days ... they brought their art to a very high standard, you know.

VB: Mhm.

TW: And the Busby Berkeley musicals. These were, I used to sit as a wee boy and puzzle for hours after the film was over. You see a theatre, you see an audience, the conductor and the orchestra starts up and then Dick Powell comes out and sings, but he doesn't sing himself, he sings to about three hundred beautiful girls. And then the stage ranges all over, it goes all over the place. I used to think "How can they get all that onto a stage?" The answer is, they didn't [laughs]. The Hollywood studio was the size of a football pitch. But you were meant to think this, that you were sitting in the theatre and this was on the stage, you know, you couldn't get...

VB: I see what you mean, yes.

MW: Of course in those days there was no television and it really was magic going to the...

TW: Ah, it was magic. It was escape, purely escape, aye, we, we're much more hard-boiled [unsentimental], and we get things a lot easier now but we, we weren't eh... I lived in Bridgeton and

we, eh, you left the grim, grim reality, you got into this marvellous, well it wasn't Technicolor, it was mostly black and white, but it was, it was a dream world, you know. And here's another interesting thing, point about the cinema, the cinema was warm. I must emphasise that. We lived in the age of no central heating and winters were cold, and it was lovely to go to the pictures and just get heat, just to sit and you were warm, and then the thought of having to come out and go back to a freezing cold house. Right on you go.

VB: So was it Bridgeton you were brought up in then?

TW: I was, yes. Margaret wasn't.

VB: Yeah, yeah, erm, when were you born?

TW: '22.

VB: 1922. Right. And was it Bridgeton you were born in then?

TW: Well, Dalmarnock.

VB: Dalmarnock, right.

VB: And you were saying that your father was a part-time...

TW: Doorkeeper at the local Riddrie cinema, aye. That's how, I was telling her [speaking to Margaret] how I got to know the manager and quota system. You know he was able to tell me they had to take English pictures...

MW: Yeah.

TW: As part of their quota system. Although he personally didn't like it because they lost money on it.

MW: But they had to take. These were the second features, weren't they?

TW: No, they were first features but nobody liked them in Glasgow.

VB: Can you think of any examples of ones that were, that you particularly [laughs]...eh.

TW: *The Good Companions*, that was one of the better ones, that was a J.B. Priestley one. That was Jessie Matthews, that wasn't bad. Oh, there was others. There was eh, what do you call that pair Cicely Courtneidge and Sonny? Somebody or other, [referring to Jack Hulbert] they never seemed to be off the screen.

VB: Mhm.

TW: And, the, the music they played was rotten. The numbers they had. You know, now I know it's an unfair comparison, Britain was a poor place compared with the United States but eh, Irving Berlin was employed for Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, erm, Noel, eh not Noel Coward, eh Cole Porter, Warren and Dubin, they were, those were the famous eh, eh, eh musicians, songwriters of the day. Now they wrote some marvellous, they wrote beautiful stuff eh, I don't know who the English people engaged because the songs they sang were always absolute [inaudible]. There was one, they played, I listen to a thing on a Monday night called Alan Dell on the wireless and it's called 'The Dance Band Days' and they play the British dance bands who have incidentally, if you think I'm anti-British, I'm not, the British dance bands of the thirties that played from the Savoy and the big hotels in London were absolutely marvellous, they were the quintessence of all the musicians in the land, you know because they were the best, [top servers?] could employ them. Now these bands played marvellous stuff, you see. Eh, what I was going to tell you I forgot, I was going to say something about Alan Dell, the dance band... Oh aye! I heard this, he played one the other night, the, 'The sun has got his hat off, his hat off, his hat off ' [referring to 'The Sun Has Got His Hat On'] [singing]. Could you think of anything more...?

MW: That's one that we used to teach the infants in school [laughing]!

TW: That's right. 'The sun has got his hat off ' [sic]. That, that's the kind of thing that Jessie Matthews sang.

VB: Right.

TW: Whereas Dick Powell would sing eh, 'You made me love you, I didn't wanna do it ...' [singing].

VB: Right.

TW: Better stuff altogether.

VB: So the music was one of the strong attractions then obviously for you.

TW: Yes, yes, yes. Although I prefer classical music but this, this is an interesting wee branch and it evokes the, the... nostalgia is a very powerful, erm, emotive thing as you know, and when I hear all these numbers I think of when I was a young chap, you know, away back in the dim and distant past. Right?

VB: Aye. I mean I was interested when you were saying that when I just came, about going to the cinema for the great big speakers, the horn.

TW: Aye, aye. I was telling her [to Margaret] that I used to play the Gigli records in the Riddrie cinema and that if you go behind the screen, you know how I've always been interested, I did wireless during the war in the RAF and I learned quite a bit about it but I've always been fascinated by good music, good quality sound. Hi-fi in other words. Well, we were so hi-fi in those days I mean a radiogram had one ten-inch loudspeaker and you thought you were well off. But when you go behind a cinema you see these big horns, big wooden horns, maybe about eight or nine of them and the sound to me was absolutely wonderful. Go on, on you go.

VB: Oh, right . Well actually, just asking about that... just asking what the Riddrie cinema was like inside, I mean.

TW: Very nice, very nice. Eh art deco was the, was the feature in those days. They all seemed to be on this art deco thing. The Odeon... the Odeon, the Odeon's still there. It's now a complex. But the Odeon in Renfield Street was the number one but, any cinema you went to in Glasgow...

MW: Aw, aye, in our end we had the what d'you call it, the Aldwych, the Westway [inaudible].

TW: Aye, aye. I thought it was all beautiful--

MW: And they're now all bingo halls, every one of them.

TW: Tiling, eh, gilt. Aye, they're all... Sad.

VB: I mean I've seen pictures of the sort of grandeur and the erm, you were saying [heat?] but it must have been quite something.

TW: Oh, they were palaces, they really were palaces, aye. I remember when the Odeon in Rutherglen, when it opened first and we were absolutely knocked over, that would be about 1935. At the sheer opulence of the place, you know. Some of them, some of them were designed [inaudible] ... they looked like eh, the inside of eh, where Granada is, you know the, what's--?

VB: The Alhambra [referring to the Theatre]?

TW: The Alhambra, aye, they even took the names after the Alhambra. They, they, they attempted to... this was this art deco thing, it spread like wildfire and the cinemas was a, the cinema was a place where you went to escape and since the cinemas were making money hand over fist then they complied by making the place a real, a real escape.

MW: They changed their programme every, what was it?

TW: Twice a week, sometimes three times a week, that's right, aye.

VB: Did you go to the cinema a lot? Well you must have if your father...

TW: Not a terrible lot. As often as I could afford, we'll put it that way.

VB: How much was it?

TW: Well, that Dalmarnock cinema, I got in for tuppence up until about up until I was too, maybe too big. Fourpence--

MW: I went with my dad and it was fourpence for an adult.

TW: That's four old pennies.

MW: Eightpence, so that was like a shilling.

VB: Yes. Whereabouts was that?

MW: That was at Cardonald.

VB: Right, right. So is it Cardonald that you come from yourself?

MW: That's where I come from, aye. But eh, it was a cheap night out. You went twice a week.

TW: Aye, it was a cheap night out and you could retain ... I can remember Charlie (walking round?), and I am going back to 1938, one of the most memorable films was Dick Powell and Alice Faye in *On the Avenue*, music by Irving Berlin. Six smashing numbers. Eh [pause 3 seconds], it cost us sixpence to get in and we walked back down Stonelaw Road, and tuppence for a fish supper on the road home. So for eightpence you had a superb night out.

MW: [laughs]

TW: That's the equivalent of about five pence today! Five new pence. [laughs]

VB: That's amazing, it really is.

TW: Aye, aye. On ye go.

VB: Right. Did your mother work at all?

TW: Yes, unfortunately she had to work. I came from a very poor home. My father was a labourer, eh, my mother used to, as the current habit, eh, her current notion then was ... she 'took in' stairs to wash.

VB: Uhuh.

TW: She was a cleaner, in other words.

MW: Uhuh. She was a super worker, super worker.

TW: She, she was a far bigger cinema fan than I was.

VB: Really?

TW: And again it was escape... It was to escape the drudgery of bringing up children with not enough money. And a husband that was inclined to go for drink, you know. So things weren't, weren't too good.

MW: Mind you, I think, my [inaudible], now she was at the cinema twice a week. Every time, you know every time it changed, she went. It was escapism from the house, the chores. You know.

TW: Aye, aye. That's right, it was.

VB: Was that the same with your mother?

TW: Yes.

VB: Did she go a couple of times a week?

TW: Oh, or more if she could afford it, aye.

VB: What was her taste in movies? Did she have any particular movies that she liked or...?

TW: No, she was more catholic in her taste than I was. No she just went, she just went to go to the pictures. My mother would watch anything... anything! I wouldn't, but she would.

VB: Did she go certain times of day, like, or just...?

TW: Only in the evening because she worked during the day and brought up four children.

VB: Yes, yes. So was that, you say, there were four of you, was that...?

TW: Uhuh.

VB: And what about your education?

TW: I had a good education in the sense that I, I went to St Mungo's Academy which was a very good Catholic secondary school in Glasgow. I got a very good education. I didn't stay on to my Highers. I went to fourth year but eh, it was sufficient to get me into the RAF as a trainee wireless mechanic, and that just coincided roughly with the beginning of the war.

VB: Right. So, did you stay in after the war or...?

TW: Stay in the RAF?

VB: Yeah.

TW: Oh, no, no. Came out at the end of the war.

VB: Right. And can I ask what you did?

TW: I was a wireless mechanic.

VB: Right. [pause 15 seconds] Erm... can I ask if you've got any strong political opinions... of a member of a party or anything like that?

TW: No, not particularly, no, not really. I, I, when I was younger I was much more left-wing. I think that's the kind of evolutionary thing. I was much more left-wing when, I was at Jordanhill College training to be a teacher and I was conscious I was very left-wing in those days.

MW: [inaudible]

TW: But as you get older you become a bit more conservative.

VB: Right.

TW: Although I don't like Maggie Thatcher if that's what you're hinting at.

VB: [laughs]

TW: Although I did like her at one time, I don't like her now.

VB: It's just that we're interested you know, to find out if people's political views influence how they think about pictures, which is--

TW: Aye, aye, yes, yes.

VB: Why I'm asking that. I mean it's not ... I'm not just being nosy [laughs] in that sense.

TW: Aye.

VB: I mean, did you teach then at all?

TW: For 35 years!

VB: Right [laughs]. [pause 13 seconds] Erm, and I'm interested in the places that you've lived in as well. You were brought up in Bridgeton.

TW: Yes.

VB: Erm, and then did you come straight here or...?

TW: No. Our house got blitzed in 1941 in the Blitz.

VB: Right.

TW: The ceilings all fell down and eh, we evacuated ourselves to East Kilbride which was only a wee village in those days, it wasn't the big town it is today. And then we got a new house up in Riddrie, that's how...

VB: Yes, of course, yes. And then yourself and, after you were married, did you...

TW: We lived in Uddingston, we went to Uddingston.

MW: Aye, our first house was in Uddingston.

VB: Right. How long were you there?

TW: A couple of years.

VB: And then here?

TW: No, we came into Glasgow and then...

MW: No, we moved to Garrowhill first.

TW: Oh, right, sorry. We went to Garrowhill first, then we moved back into Glasgow, and then I got a job in the local school down here and I decided to move here. We've been here for what... 30-odd years?

MW: 34 years.

TW: That's how, that's how we landed in Cambuslang. Because I got a job in the local school.

VB: Right, right. I see. And, erm, you were a teacher as well then?

MW: Yeah.

VB: When were you married?

MW: '51.

VB: And do you have a family?

TW: No, no family.

VB: Right. That's great. Very kind of you to bear with me with that actually, because it's quite time-consuming. The other thing that I should ask actually just now before we go any further is, erm, as you know I'm taping this just now. Would you mind if this tape and possibly a transcript of it was kept in the University, erm, and would be looked at by other researchers in the future.

MW: No.

TW: No, not at all. That's our opinion. We've [not?] divulged any state secrets.

VB: No, well, if, you know, after I've gone you think, oh, I'm not so sure about that, that wouldn't be a problem to change it.

TW: No, not at all.

VB: Can I ask you to sign this form then just to that effect? This is the sort of legal protection [laughs].

MW: In case you get sued.

TW: Aye.

VB: You know, as I say if you feel uncomfortable about it afterwards then... change it, no problem about that.

TW: Today's the 25th? OK, uhuh.

VB: Oh, that's great, thanks very much. I'll just sign it as well. So did you go to the cinemas in Bridgeton as well then?

TW: Oh, yes there was the Strathclyde, eh. [laughs] One historic occasion I can remember. One Easter Sunday, now I'd be about maybe fifteen or sixteen, I was still at school, eh, we walked all the way to Eaglesham which, do you know where Eaglesham is? A way out.

VB: It's quite far isn't it?

TW: Good walk, good walk, aye. And eh, as you know the Spring of the year's very treacherous and it's snowing on the way in and we got soaked to the skin but we, I remember trying to light a fire out on the moors to try and get some tea going but however! To make a long story short, we come back on the bus and eh, we devised a plan... *Top Hat*, Fred Astaire in *Top Hat* was performing in the Strathclyde cinema. And we devised a, we hadn't enough money to get in but we put together, and one guy got in and he went up to the, he went to the balcony and then he come down and he opened the push bar to open the emergency exit. And we all got in, six of us [laughs] got in for the price of one!

VB: [laughs]

TW: And we enjoyed *Top Hat* all the more, and it was lovely and warm after the snowstorm. There you are. And there was the Strathclyde, there was the Dalmarnock, there was eh, the Kings, my god, and there was four Rutherglen cinemas, there was four cinemas in Rutherglen... two fleapits and two excellent. Eh, there was the Olympia which is still there to this day, but it's no longer... I think it's a bingo hall at Bridgeton Cross... Plenty of cinemas, aye.

VB: When you say some of them were fleapits what, what, how..?

TW: Dirty, grubby wee places...

VB: [laughs]

TW: Eh, poorly kept. Eh...

MW: Were they not privately owned?

TW: They were all privately owned, Margaret... the distribution...

MW: I thought it was the Mecca that owned--

TW: Aye, they owned some of them but the privately owned ones, that wee place in Uddingston was a wee fleapit.

MW: Aye, our Mosspark was a wee fleapit.

TW: Aye.

MW: The other two were Mecca-owned and they were much nicer.

TW: Aye.

TW: [chuckles] I still recall the famous Dalmarnock cinema with, with amusement. To get in for tuppence, the first four seats opposite the screen, now you were literally, your nose was almost touching the screen! I mean it was almost impossible to see the thing, if you're too near something you can't, you can't see anything. The first four seats were reserved for juveniles and the seats weren't tip-up seats, it was a big long bench and the attendant's job was to push, one pushed at one end and one pushed at the other so [laughter] you could get as many kids in for tuppence as possible, you see. [laughs]. And you sat like this for two and a half hours! [laughs again]

MW: D'you remember the serials on a Saturday afternoon?

TW: Aw, yes, aw yes. Ah the serials: they're still trotting about on the telly, I notice, aye.

MW: *Hopalong Cassidy*.

TW: Ah, they always ended, the serial always ended in a dramatic bit to whet your appetite for next week, you know the, the heroine was about to be murdered or something and then... "Come back next week and you'll see what happens". *Trader Horn* and god knows what, I can still remember them.

MW: It was a way of life, wasn't it?

TW: Aye.

VB: I was going to ask, I mean, how the children behaved at these erm...

TW: They thoroughly enjoyed it. Audience participation. They cheered and clapped and roared. Eh, that was a feature of Glasgow cinemas. I found Glasgow, especially Bridgeton anyway, Bridgeton audiences were anxious to participate, you know they shouted things like "Watch your back!" was a favourite one in a horror film when the, the heroine was about to be pounced on by the villain. Everybody shouted: "Watch your back!" [laughter]

VB: Was that in the adult films as well?

TW: Yes! Oh, yes, yes.

VB: That's interesting.

TW: And singalong, that was another feature of the Dalmarnock. When Al Jolson was singing, they all sang 'Mammy' along with Al Jolson, he was... They weren't to be outdone, you know, they knew the numbers as well as he did.

VB: Really?

TW: Aye!

VB: Did they ever have erm, turns in any of the cinemas or competitions or...?

TW: That quickly closed down. I saw a couple of turns in the Olympia, the Olympia had been a music hall, apparently before it became a cinema and they used to have wee turns, they had a violinist and a pianist.

MW: [inaudible]

TM: Aye. That's going back, I would be a wee boy about eight or nine then, but once the talkies really, I think when the silent films were on you had that kind of variety, but once the talkies took over that was the end of the...

MW: Star turns.

TW: Aye, aye. The variety. See for the silents, you needed a pianist to play the eh, William Tell music for the exciting bits, ye see. Well, they often doubled up and a violinist came on to play a wee tune... Now I've just got vague memories of seeing a couple of these turns at the Olympia but I never saw them in any of the more modern cinemas. It was strictly the pictures... aye.

VB: Did they have organs in any of the ones you've just spoken about?

TW: Yeah, well, the Odeon in Renfield Street had a beautiful organ, they had one in eh, what was the one in Sauchiehall Street, Margaret?

MW: The Regal, no?

TW: The Regal. Aye there was a quite a good one, aye organists. The, the provincial cinemas didn't have organs because those big Wurlitzers cost fortunes, they were gigantic things, aye, eh. Aye the organs seemed to be very popular... you know playing selections from the cinema. If you went to see *Top Hat* it would be nice to hear the organist play the number before you actually saw the film, you know.

VB: I see.

TW: Aye, the most famous organist of course, he, he broadcast from Blackpool was—

MW: Reginald Dixon.

TW: Reginald Dixon. Now I always thought he was a lousy organist and sure enough, when I went to Blackpool to do my training in the RAF, I went to the Tower Ballroom and I confirmed what I always thought. He was a lousy organist! [laughter]

VB: 'Cause I mean, some of these erm, I heard that some of the organists in Glasgow were very good, I mean.

TW: There was one, the one in the Odeon, but I forget his name, I can't remember his name. He was a very good [inaudible]. Eh, to play, I play the piano a little myself so I know enough about a big organ to know that it's quite a brute to play, you need to be pretty eh... you play with not only two hands but you play with two feet as well!

VB: Yeah.

TW: And all these [battery?...] that's why I admire organists, a good organist. We've a young chap round in our local Catholic church round here and eh...

MW: Aw, he gives organ recitals.

TW: Aye, he's terrific, absolutely marvellous! I admire him. Four lungs going, you know, hands and feet.

MW: Aye, well out of our six organists there's only one good...

TW: Aye, aye.

VB: Right. So obviously it is something that's difficult.

TW: Aye, it's a very difficult instrument to play properly, yes.

VB: I mean, you were saying that you liked, erm, you know, musicals. I mean did you ever buy the songs from the music, sheet music or records?

TW: Oh I had them all!

VB: Really?

TW: Oh, yes, yes.

VB: Do you still have these or...?

TW: Eh, I doubt it, I doubt it. I usually get them out the library if I want something. For example I was running a wee choir, a wee old age pensioners' choir there and we were doing eh... when *42nd Street* came back, you know it came back to Glasgow in an amateur... We saw the original version. But *42nd Street*... [tape cuts out]

[End of Side A]

[Start of Side B]

TW: Eh, the numbers of the three Hollywood films, they've made it into *42nd Street*. Well, eh, I'd to go to the library to get eh, I used to go to the Mitchell, I used to go a lot to the Mitchell and copy out the numbers for the choir. We did the numbers out of eh, out of *42nd Street*. "We're in the money, we're in the money" [singing]. Etcetera.

VB: Brilliant, good numbers.

TW: Smashing numbers, warm and [jubilant?].

MW: Ah, it was a terrific show.

TW: Aye, they're good composers.

VB: Yeah. And was that something that you did, you know when you were younger as well in the erm...

TW: Oh, I used to play in a wee busking band.

VB: Really!

TW: Aye, I used to play the piano.

VB: Yeah.

TW: And I had the accordion. I used to play in wee fleapits around Bridgeton, you know.

VB: Right.

TW: Aye.

VB: I was going ask you if you liked going to musicals. Obviously you were an entertainer yourself.

TW: Well, I'd much rather go to the opera.

VB: Right.

MW: You played in the RAF, didn't you?

TW: Pardon?

MW: You played in the RAF.

TW: I played in the reserve band in the RAF, I played at the finish up. Aye. We had two bands in West Freugh towards the end of my career in the RAF. The A band contained six of Billy Cotton's, the A band... they were absolutely superb. Ah, six of Billy Cotton's band straight into the RAF. I was the B band so we, we were, we played in less exalted places, you know.

VB: Well, next to that, I'm sure the B Band was pretty good.

TW: Yes, yes.

VB: That's interesting. So, was your father musical then?

TW: Not particularly, no. My father was a better singer, a fine singer.

MW: Aye, your mother wasn't bad at singing.

TW: Aye, aye.

VB: Did you sing a lot in the house then, when you were growing up?

TW: Eh, my father did. I didn't so much but he did, aye.

MW: Your two sisters were great singers.

TW: Aye, that's right [laughs]. I'm thinking of my Uncle Mattie, the black sheep of my father's family. There was four brothers... was my Uncle Mattie. He was the only bachelor and his one failing was drink. And he would come up half stewed to our house and he only had one number. I used to play the accordion in those days, we couldn't afford a piano and eh, I used to play the waltz from 'The Merry Widow', ye know .. "Da da dee, da da ..." [singing]. And Mattie loved this and the fact that he was an Irishman made no difference, he loved Irish melodies, he had to play this 'Merry Widow' and he would drive me crazy! There was one good point: I always got a half a crown off him if I played 'The Merry Widow' [laughter]. "Give us 'The Merry Widow' tonight!" [shouting]. He would belt you with his elbows, he would stick your ribs, your ribs would be caved in, and I developed a hatred for that 'Merry...'. It's a nice number, but I used to hate it because I always had to play it for Mattie! [laughs] 'The Merry Widow'.

VB: Just moving on from that, I mean, did you like going dancing?

TW: Oh, yes! Very much so, yes.

VB: Whereabouts did you go?

TW: Everywhere. The Dennistoun Palais, the Locarno, the Green's Playhouse [ballroom], the Plaza on occasion. The Green's Playhouse [ballroom] was good because the, the... especially during the war... eh Joe Loss and the Big Band used to come to Glasgow and eh, it was nice to hear things you had only heard on the wireless, to hear them in the flesh, you know. It was very good.

VB: Yes. Yes 'cause that was a cinema as well, wasn't it?

TW: There was a cinema below and six storeys up above it was the ballroom.

VB: Yes.

TW: That's right. You had to go up in a lift to get to the ballroom. That's right. It's now the Apollo or something.

VB: Is it, is it?

TW: I don't know what it is now but, it's no longer the Green's Playhouse, aye. The Green's Playhouse boasted it was the biggest cinema in Europe, whether that boast was true I don't know but that was one of their boasts, eh. Mind you, it was a big dark cavernous kind of place, I didn't fancy it very much as a cinema. But for the dancing it was great!

VB: Aye! 'Cause I heard that, someone was telling me that you had these erm, double seats, I don't know what you ...

TW: Aye! There was a name for them, aye.

VB: I've heard them called either divans or chummy seats.

TW: Aye, aye. I think they were divans. That's what they were called. Aye, that's right. Aye, it was to encourage you to sit with your girlfriend, and mind you, I don't ever recall, I never went to it but I didn't like the cinema.

VB: [laughs]

TW: Aye, you could sit with your girlfriend, arm round your girlfriend, you hadn't some...

MW: Aye, no barriers [laughs].

TW: No barriers, uhuh.

VB: Was it mainly, you know when you went to the cinema, did you go on your own or with friends or erm...

TW: No. I mainly went on my own.

VB: On your own?

TW: I went on my own, yes.

MW: We used to go to the Cosmo.

TW: Aye, the Cosmo, that was an interesting, now that was really post-war.

VB: Right.

TW: We discovered that the Cosmo had these French films and we found that French... both Margaret and I... we found French films to be different class from Hollywood films. Now this was a post-war discovery.

VB: Right.

TW: We discovered the Jean Gabin and eh, all these other great French stars. The French cinema's so realistic, so down to earth.

MW: Aye, you can believe that you're actually there.

TW: Aye, aye. No Hollywood gloss, you know.

VB: Yes.

TW: The streets have got, eh, puddles in them and newspapers lying about.

MW: Ah, the situations are natural.

TW: Natural, aye, aye. I still like the French films, you get them on the telly, you know.

VB: Yeah. I do too.

TW: Yes, aw yes.

VB: I mean d'you think erm, I mean you say that French films are realistic, I mean what about the Hollywood films, eh, you talk about the British films of the thirties which...

TW: Well, they had, yes they had but there were so many aspects of Hollywood films. I mean, I more or less grew up on the music 'cause I liked those, but there were some really good Hollywood films, realistic films, aye. If you want me to talk about the present-day Hollywood films. Now we're on Sky so we get this movie channel and we're thinking of packing it up. They're absolute rubbish! Sex, violence, dark scenes, eh...

MW: D'you go to the cinema yourself?

VB: I do, yes.

TW: Let me ask you a question then. You're the very one I should ask. What do you think of the present-day Hollywood films?

VB: Erm, I think I would agree with you that most of them aren't really up to very much but, erm, I think some, some movies I do like. Eh...

MW: We saw one recently which we really liked. *Scent of a Woman* with Al Pacino. Now that was an excellent...

VB: Yeah. I like him very much.

TW: He's a good actor, aye, yes.

MW: That was really good.

TW: That was a good film. That more or less to me, I think I said to Margaret at the time, that harked back to... that was something like the old-fashioned films. You know, it had a storyline and it was well done, very well photographed.

VB: Is it, I mean do you like sort of suspense, drama that sort of thing?

TW: Provided it's good!

VB: Right.

TW: I think some of these Hitchcock films were overrated, you know. While he made his mark in the, the thriller category, I think some of the things he did were kind of overrated. Eh, I was never over.. terribly impressed, you know.

VB: That's interesting, actually. Erm, I mean were there other directors that you preferred or, in that sort of line, or..?

TW: Off-hand I can't think of any.

VB: Films, or..?

TW: Aye, eh, d'you know who I thought was a great actor in the dramatic... Edward G. Robinson. Now Edward G. Robinson to me, no matter how trashy the film's he's in.. and he's only a wee guy!

VB: Yes.

TW: He stands out as somebody who knows how to act. You know, everything he does is so polished, so, if he's playing a gangster scene or a sad scene or a sorrowful scene, he does it so well. They don't have actors like Edward G. any more, you know. Sad, but there it goes.

VB: Aye he's wonderful, yeah.

TW: Great actor.

VB: What about people like Cagney, did you like him?

TW: Oh! I loved Cagney! James Cagney.. oh, yes! We just saw his, we just saw for the fortieth time a rerun of his eh, *Yankee Doodle Dandy*.

VB: Oh, yeah.

TW: Great actor.

MW: That was a super one, that.

VB: Yeah, absolutely if you like musicals.

TW: Aye, that's right, aye! He's a great wee actor. For such a wee bloke [laughs].

VB: Yeah. I like, erm, the sort of gangster movies as well.

TW: Oh, yes! Very much so. Eh, I thought some of the Humphrey Bogart films were highly rated. I notice that eh, there's one he did with Lauren Bacall and to me it's boring.

VB: Are you not a fan of Bogart?

TW: He's a good actor. But I thought some of the films he was in weren't...

MW: 'Course he was acting like eh, what d'you call her... Katharine Hepburn.

TW: No, that was, that was Spencer Tracy.

MW: No, it wasn't! It was... Bogart was with Katharine Hepburn.

TW: Was he?

MW: In *The African Queen*.

TW: Oh, that. Aye you're right that was Bogart, aye. Oh, I couldn't stand her!

MW: You just don't like her.

TW: That imperious [inaudible].

MW: And yet I think she's a good actress.

TW: I suppose she is. But she ain't no Marilyn Monroe, is she?

MW: No-o! But we can't all be Marilyn Monroe.

TW: Aye, that true.

VB: What about Hollywood female stars of the thirties? Any--

TW: Oh, Alice Faye, Ginger Rogers eh, who else? Well, see we're back to the musical bit. They were singers and dancers, aye.

VB: If you had to pick out your favourite film with Alice Faye in it, what would it be?

TW: *Alexander's Ragtime Band.*

VB: Right.

TW: Because it's got thirty Irving Berlin numbers in it. It's just one... it was an excuse, an excuse just to put one number... To me, to me, eh, eh, Irving Berlin... Who was the other famous composer? One American composer was asked, "What d'you think of Irving Berlin?" And he says "'Irving Berlin is American music". Now who would that've been? Forget his name now. But to me that was an accurate summing up.

VB: Yes.

TW: Terrific, aye. I, I like Irving Berlin. I've read his life story from such... eh, he's from your territory, from Russia! That's right. What was his real name? [pause, 6 seconds] Israel Beilin, Israel Beilin.

VB: Is that right?

TW: Aye. [The family at eh?]

MW: It was the hundredth anniversary was it not?

TW: Eh, last year, last year, aye. From such eh, humble beginnings, the wee chap had absolutely nothing to commend him. He had no education, he was in New York, he was an immigrant from, from eh, Russia. Eh, he ended up, he was a...

MW: He was a waiter, wasn't he?

TW: Aye, he used to sweep the floors in the bar-rooms and the brothels of New York.

VB: Right.

TW: And he picked up the music. And he couldn't play a note! He had his famous, his famous piano. He called it his, his eh... after that famous eh, eh photograph... I forget, anyway. He called... he could only play...a peculiarity... I used to notice this in the RAF when I was there, some folks would only play on the black keys, you know they'd only learned to play in [laughing] F sharp, the black keys... they couldn't play the white!

VB: [laughs]

TW: So they played all their... everything that they'd to play on one key which was usually F sharp that's got six sharps to it, you see. He could only play the F sharp! I mean, and out of this mind, this untutored mind, came these wonderful... If you study Irving Berlin's eh, tunes, his music, how... I've explained this to Margaret... how he jumps from a normal key, say the tonic, and he goes away into from C to A flat and E flat and then comes back. That's, that's genius! You know that's untutored genius. That's why I like Irving Berlin.

VB: Yes, I mean I agree. You know if you're doing these things without thinking about... It's really complex.

TW: He had no, he didn't know one note of music from another. But what I'm trying to think of... the other... who wrote *Show Boat*? Jerome Kern.

VB: Right.

TW: Jerome Kern was the bloke who said that, or made a quote... Jerome Kern offered to teach Irving Berlin the rudiments of music and Irving Berlin rather reluctantly agreed. But after two days he chucked it and he says "I'm too old, I can't do that stuff," to which Kern replied, "You don't really need it" [laughs], "You can turn out this stuff without it, why bother?"

VB: I mean just... jumping from that erm, I remember when you wrote to Annette you mentioned George Formby.

MW: [laughs]

TW: Yes. That was, that was one of the jokes. Now [pause 5 seconds], Glasgow audiences are broadminded in the sense that they, they don't mind an odd blue joke or vulgarity. But anybody I knew about George Formby said he was vulgar, and for a Glaswegian to say that really meant something. They didn't like him, he was just plain vulgar! Plain... I mean some of the things... That seems to appeal to English audiences, I don't know why, it doesn't up here. And there was a funny... just last week in the 'Glasgow Herald' there was a letter in, and I was thinking of you because I'd just made contact with you. And somebody was pointing out that, eh, there was an English myth that the famous 'Glasgow Empire', you don't remember the music hall of yesteryear. The Glasgow Empire was supposed to be the graveyard for English comedians, you know, there's jokes go that English comedians come up here and dying a death. And this, this... the writer, whoever it was, was...this was a riposte to somebody who'd written in about this, and the writer was pointing out that eh ...American, the American stars didn't die a death. And he quoted Frank Sinatra, Judy Garland, Sophie Tucker, to mention three. They all came up here and they didn't die any deaths, they were most enthusiastically received. So you see, it's not all true. The Glasgow Empire was only unkind to those who deserved to be unkind.

VB: Yeah. I mean, was it the humour that you disliked about Formby. What about his music? Did you...?

TW: Ach. "I'm leaning on a lamppost at the corner of the street". It was tenth-rate stuff, aye, aye.

VB: Erm, did you think that the, what about British comedy as a whole?

TW: Eh, post-war quite good. Stanley Holloway, eh, what d'you call that marvellous actor? Jack, eh, Guinness... Alec.

MW: Alec Guinness, yes.

TW: Now, you see they were good actors. They, they were a different kettle of fish. Eh, that was good stuff. Because it was more, eh, real, it was more down-to-earth, more working class, if you like.

MW: What about Arthur Askey?

TW: Well he was never... Was he in the cinema?

MW: Oh, yeah!

TW: Aye! Wee Askey was quite good. Eh, but this pre-war British cinema. Uh... I doubt if you'll get anybody in Glasgow who'll support the English, eh, English cinema before the war. Eh, occasionally... Anna Neagle, Anna Neagle and who was the other guy... her husband.

MW: Rex Harrison. [referring to Herbert Wilcox]

TW: He wasn't bad! No, but he's a wee bit later. But Anna Neagle was in a series of films, eh... rotten.

MW: She's too English for you.

TW: Oh, aye! You know when they speak with that jawries [marbles] in their mouth accent, that accent... [imitates accent]. It drove me daft. When I went into the RAF when we went down to

England at eh, I quickly discovered in my youthful innocence, that the North of England folk are like us, they're really fine, the Lancashire and Yorkshire. But it's when you go down south, not so much Cockneys, they're OK! But you get this kind of middle-class, this kind of one, eh, superior people who think they know it all. They're not my cup of tea.

VB: I mean, when you mention Anna Neagle I was thinking of that film that she made about Queen Victoria [referring to *Victoria the Great*].

TW: Aye!

VB: Did you see that?

TW: Aye, I did see that. Aye.

VB: What did you think of that?

TW: No, no. Not my cup of tea, no. No. I think the British cinema eh, shook itself out of its lethargy, of its eh, class-ridden lethargy eh, after the war.

VB: Right.

TW: I mean, Sir Laurence Olivier and these people. The, the... some of the post-war British films were, in my opinion, superior to some of the Yankee films.

VB: Right.

TW: But not, not the pre-war ones. The pre-war ones, that's, that's what provoked me into writing against your Annette, you know. She, she seemed to laud these people, you know. They were a joke in Glasgow.

MW: How many of you are involved in it?

VB: Erm, well it's the two of us... me and Annette [laughs].

TW: You're the field officer. You're the one that goes out in the field, are you?

VB: I guess, yes, yes. Which is nice, it's the interesting part--

MW: How long has it been going?

VB: Erm, well actually, we've only been running for about erm, a month, but as I say it's going to be over two years, eh.

MW: Yes.

TW: And are you going to write a book or something at the end of it?

VB: Yes, yes, I think so.

TW: Very good.

VB: I'll be going to be talking to people down south as well, eh, in London and Manchester.

TW: Yes.

VB: And maybe in a rural area of England, it'll be interesting--

TW: Aye. Well, no doubt they'll vary with mine. We can't all have my opinion...

VB: Aye.

TW: There'll be variations. But I'm, I could say. You might think I'm very, being very opinionated, no doubt you think I am very opinionated but, that, those are my honest opinions and I think most people in Glasgow were of the same opinion as I was, mainly... they hated English films because of their class-ridden structure. They liked American films because they were escapist, and eh, they were well made, let's face it. Eh...

VB: Yeah. I mean were you in any fan clubs or did you ever write to any of the stars?

TW: No, no, no. No, I never went that far, no.

VB: Right. Did you read magazines or...?

TW: No. In my old age now, I've since read... I just read the autobiography of Ginger Rogers just the other day. I've since read about them in my old age, but no, I wasn't, I wasn't that much of a fan, no.

VB: Yeah. Did your mother? 'Cause I mean you're saying that she was a, you know, she loved going to the pictures.

TW: Oh, she was, aye!

VB: Did she read about stars or..?

TW: I don't think so.

MW: She'd hardly have time [laughs].

TW: Aye. a) she wouldn't have time and b) she wouldn't have the money to buy these--

VB: Yes, true, of course.

TW: Fan magazines which eh. There were fan magazines in those days but, no we never got round to that far, we just watched them.

VB: Did you usually go to the cinema round about where you were or did you ever go a distance to see a film ... or? Well, you were saying that you walked, of course.

TW: Aye, well where I was, I was, I was equidistant from Bridgeton and Rutherglen, so I, I had about eight different cinemas to go to, and that more or less satisfied my demand.

MW: I used to [wait till it came to?] [inaudible].

TW: Aye, aye, it came to the Odeon in Renfield Street first, then you waited maybe three weeks or a month it came to the lesser type of cinemas, you know.

VB: Right.

TW: Like *Top Hat* had been showing in the, in the eh, Odeon in Renfield Street.

VB: Right.

TW: Maybe a month before we saw it, you see.

VB: Did you go, did you go to the cinema, you know, was there any sort of particular age that you didn't go to the cinema as much, or, did you go to the cinema more or less all through your life?

TW: Oh. Eh, no. After the war we more or less... when we got married we more or less stopped going to the cinema.

MW: No, we used to go into town.

TW: Aye. We did but...

MW: We went to the Cosmo more or less.

TW: Aye, the Cosmo, that's right. Aye, the advent of the telly, really put the kibosh on the cinema, there's no doubt about it. You know the, on a cold freezing night it's much...

MW: It'd need to be an awful good picture.

TW: Aye, to drag you out. It's much easier to sit at the fire and watch it, that's right, aye. Eh, [pause 5 seconds] one of my most memorable films, I saw it, I was watching it the other day, eh, I don't know if it's any interest to you. I was in the RAF at the time and I was on jankers, jankers means eh, eh... I refused to get my hair cut and I fell foul of a rather nasty, middle-class English sergeant who didn't like me. Presumably because of my accent and my views! And he got his revenge by putting me on... he got me seven days confined to barracks. And I knew... I was in Norwich at the time I was in a

[bomber?] base, and in the local cinema in Norwich, eh, was the famous Glenn Miller film, *Orchestra Wives*... not a bad film at all! Just saw it, we saw it the other day. Well I was determined to go and see that picture because it, it wasn't so much [laughs] the content of the film, it was the object of escaping from this... I was literally a prisoner there confined to the camp. So in order, in order to get out, if I'd been caught I'd have been sent to the glasshouse for a hundred and twelve days, I'd to climb over, I'd to climb over barbed wire and into an anti-tank ditch which I got mucked up, erm, and cross about four fields and then take the bus into Norwich to see *Orchestra Wives*. And I enjoyed it all the more because here was a throwback to the gay life I'd lived as a civilian, you know.

MW: [inaudible]

VB: And you got back in OK at the end of that?

MW: [inaudible]

TW: I managed to get back in, I managed to get back. I'd to be back for half past ten, sorry, eleven o'clock, sorry, I'd to be back before midnight, that's right, you'd to report with your full kit, that was part of the, the punishment in the guard house. Well, I managed to get back by a quarter to eleven. There was Yanks on the base at the time and I managed, they gave me a run back and I managed to get through the gatehouse and got my gear on and get out [laughs] and report for duty before midnight!

VB: That's amazing.

TW: That was *Orchestra Wives*, aye, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. There you are.

VB: Did you go to the cinema a lot when you were in the forces then?

TW: No. For the very good reason that there's, there's... It was difficult to get to the cinema, eh, there was usually a cinema on the [prom?]. Used to show movies in the NAAFI, you know the NAAFI?

VB: Right.

TW: The NAAFI building doubled up as a cinema-cum-dance hall-cum...

MW: And many of the film stars came.

TW: Oh, aye! That's right, aye, aye. I was a great, aye... I was waiting to go on a wireless course, and because I was waiting to go on a wireless course I was classed in general duties, which means I was a labourer and I pulled up sugar beet, pulled up potatoes, did my general navvy, it was murder! And I hated this place, and then suddenly, as if by magic, one night the Yanks arrived, 1942, the American Air Force arrived, nobody told us! They just arrived...and we thought it was the Germans invading. Eh, and eh, it so happened that that night eh, we used to have a NAAFI show every Thursday night, in the NAAFI. Now, the further you were from London the worse the turns became, you know, the shows became. If you were lucky enough to be within the proximity of London, you got the big stars so-called, but if you went further out into the [sticks], eh, you got the amateur turns, and they were, they were really terrible. But eh, I used to hate them but I'd nothing else to do so we used to go and watch them. Then this class-ridden business. The first twelve seats, because that was part of my job, was to erect the seats. The first twelve seats were taken up for officers and their wives, so-called, but their wives were the local hoors [prostitutes] down in Norwich. We used to resent this, you know. And then sergeants, the next six seats were taken for sergeants, the next six seats were taken for corporals; so if you were an LAC or an AC2, which I was, you were away at the back, it was like being at the back at Hampden Park trying to watch a game, you know. But when the Yanks came all that changed, it was first come, first served. Well, this, this, the Yankee show was put on... They had a new audience, Yanks. And it was disastrous. There was an old man...I say an old man, he was probably [laughs] younger than me... eh, singing 'We'll Gather Lilacs' with a big horse-faced woman, a duet. And the Yanks threw their plimsolls, they took off their sannies! [trainers, plimsolls] and threw them at them. And the American General, see the Yankee Air Force was part of the American army, the General had to get up and apologise to our host, the Air Force for this bad manners. He says, but, next week, he said, we'll have a USO concert--that was a Yankee thing. D'you know what the [inaudible] was next week? Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Kay Francis, Martha Ray, I cannae [can't] remember, dancing girls and a big band. A big sixteen-piece band. And because I was working in the cookhouse I'd my seat booked for the front seat so I was as near to Bob Hope as you are to me.

VB: That's amazing [laughs].

TW: Unfortunately, I was taken off on a course to Edinburgh just after that so that was the only big show I saw. But it was great!

VB: That's amazing.

TW: Aye.

VB: Do you like Bing Crosby?

TW: Eh, I used to like him more than I do now. Aye, he's OK, nice voice, aye, aye.

VB: Seeing someone on stage, of course, is different.

TW: Aye, and his personality, a terrific personality, Bing, he's got this natural easy, easy manner, you know, as if he's talking to you personally, aye. Great showman.

MW: What kind of pictures do you go to yourself?

VB: Actually, I'm not that fussy [laughs], I go to more or less anything. No not quite... but I like the GFT [Glasgow Film Theatre], eh.

TW: That's the Cosmo?

VB: That's the Cosmo, yeah. I like foreign films as well.

TW: So they're still churning out the odd good French film?

VB: Very much, yeah.

TW: Do you think the French film's still held in as high regard as it was when... in the forties and fifties?

VB: I think so, yes, yes, very much so.

TW: Aye. They were good at making films.

VB: Yes, as you say it's a completely different, erm, type of film from the Hollywood ones.

TW: It's real! It's real.

VB: Yeah. More imaginative.

TW: Aye, aye. That's true. I don't know about other eh, it was mostly French films they showed in the Cosmo then.

MW: I saw *Whisky Galore* in the Cosmo.

TW: Aye, well that was good. That was an example of a good British picture, eh, or really a Scottish picture if you like, aye.

VB: Yes.

TW: Aye, aye.

VB: I mean did you like the newsreels and...?

TW: Yeah .. oh well! Yes, very much so. The... except the announcer's voice, the, the... who was the bloke who played the... was it Leslie Mitchell? He became a BBC announcer. He'd a real twangy Oxford accent and when he was describing slums and things it hid a distinct eh...

MW: Looking down on you.

TW: Aye, patronising kind of attitude, you know. Eh, I'm watching *The World at War*, the rerun of *The World at War*, a series, it's a marvellous series on the telly. But they were doing the bombing of Germany last Monday and I was telling Margaret eh, there was one--this epitomises my hatred for things English--there was a, it was obviously a setup and eh it was after one of the big Berlin thousand bomber raids, and eh, the officer says to the sergeant, he says "How did you get on in Berlin?" he says. "Oh!" he says (he talks with an Oxford accent), "absolutely lovely ... a wizard prank!" Now I've never heard anybody in their arse say that expression in my life and yet they keep... in films

and books, they keep, they keep eh, forcing this out as if this was normal RAF patter, you know, I never heard anybody say it. But wizard prank... means it was a good show.

VB: Right.

TW: Aye. Artificial.

[End of Side B]

[End of Tape One]

[Start of Tape Two]

[Start of Side A]

TW: Actually, he had a very good clear voice but eh, he had this unfailing Oxford accent which, eh, always sounded a wee bit phoney to me.

VB: Yeah. An can I ask as well did they have erm, adverts and things, or new promotions or anything in the cinemas you were at?

TW: No. No. No. That curse of advertising only seemed to come in sometime after the war.

VB: Right.

TW: I don't remember ever seeing adverts.

MW: Ah, they would tell you what was coming, that was all.

TW: Aye, aye.

MW: The pictures that were coming.

TW: Aye, they would advertise the films that were coming, you'd see wee excerpts of films for next week or the week afterwards. That's the only promotion they ever did but...

VB: Right.

TW: For Persil and Oxo cubes and things, no, never.

VB: Yeah. 'Cause I did see one thing that someone was showing me, a picture, a woman, she'd been an usherette actually, she had a photo of someone dressed up for Ovaltine, I don't know if it was in connection with a film. Did you ever see anything like that actually in the cinema?

TW: No, no.

VB: Right.

TW: In fact, now that you come to mention, I've never thought about it before, but when they first started, you know when you go to the pictures today the first quarter of an hour or something is taken up with these bloody adverts. It's just like the telly, it's like, it's like eh, Scottish Television, only longer.

VB: Yes.

TW: I remember just shortly after the war when they introduced this thing, I mean, being very resentful of it and saying I didn't pay money to watch this sort of muck you get on the telly, you know? Aye, but the answer to your question is no, I don't remember any adverts. No, you went to the movies, and that's what you saw.

VB: Right.

TW: You saw a newsreel to start with if you were early enough to see the whole show. Then they showed you a short or something or *The Three Stooges* or something, and then they showed you the main film. I forgot by the way to mention [pause 4 seconds], you asked for favourite film stars. The Marx Brothers.

VB: Right [laughs].

TW: Maggie hates them, I love them! I still love to watch them! Corny stuff but good.

VB: What was it you liked about them?

TW: Sheer chaos. To reduce something to absolute chaos in no time, you know. Ridiculous.

MW: And repeat it, and repeat it and repeat it!

TW: Even Groucho's moustache painted it on, I mean it wasn't even a [laughs] real moustache, it was painted!

VB: Any favourite Marx Brothers films?

TW: Eh. I've got a tape of their best one. And I've read, Groucho agreed with me, *A Night at the Opera* is considered their best. Aye, great show.

VB: If a film like that, ye know, that you obviously really liked, would you go it more than once or...?

TW: No, I've got a tape so I can see it more than once. No, I don't go to the pictures at all now.

VB: Right. No, I wondered if in the thirties if you ever went to a film several times or...

TW: Aye. Yes, that's an interesting thing I'll need to think about.

MW: My Aunt Nellie went to see *The Sound of Music* eight times.

TW: That's interesting. No, the answer is no. I never went back to see it. There was too much other things to see, why go back and see something? Aye.

VB: Did you go, were you one of these people that always has to go to a film at the beginning or did you ever go in at the middle of the film?

TW: I hated going in at the middle of a film.

VB: Right.

TW: And very often ye couldn't. That was another thing, cinema queues, that's something you know that's worth discussing.

VB: Yeah.

TW: So great was the demand, especially if it was a good film, that you had, you, you had to queue up, often in the rain, you'd to stand outside.

MW: I've seen pictures of people standing regularly.

TW: Aye. I've got a picture somewhere of people outside, queueing up outside...

MW: Aye. Umbrellas up.

TW: Umbrellas on a rainy night. You'd never do that now but they had to do that then. No, I hated coming in in the middle of a picture 'cause it ruined it for you, you didn't know who the hell, who was this guy, who was that guy, ye didn't know what it was all about. Aye.

VB: But you were saying that the queues could be very long.

TW: That's right, aye. Aye, the, the commissionaire would come down and he'd say, "Two upstairs only", you know.

MW: That's right.

TW: And two lucky people would get out the rain, they'd be away up.

VB: Did they have different queues for the different parts of the cinema?

TW: Aye, aye.

VB: Right.

TW: In some places. If it was a very, very eh, what's the word, popular film, big queues, aye. They'd have a queue that side for the stalls and a queue that side for the balcony.

VB: Right. And I mean, what about the people that worked there? You were saying the commissionaire, were they quite, sort of self-important?

TW: Oh, yes! Very, very, important.

SW: They had [smart?] uniforms.

TW: Aye, you see my father was a commissionaire down at the local so he got a chance to show off his eh, his military training.

VB: Right!

TW: He'd been a sergeant in the First World War.

VB: Was he quite strict with them, then?

TW: Aye, aye, aye. That was another, that was another... I could dodge the queues, I could go in, and go up the stairs.

VB: Right. But did he have a uniform?

TW: Oh, oh, a beautiful_uniform! He looked like a South American General, aye.

VB: What sort of colour was it?

TW: Pardon?

VB: What, what colour was it?

TW: Brown and gold and all kinds of eh, eh, gold braid and epaulettes.

MW: Very fancy.

VB: Really!

TW: Aye, aye. It was the makings of my old man because previous to that he used to go out drinking and that's why we were so poor. But when he got this job he changed, he no longer became a drinker, so at the end of the week he'd actually earned money rather than spent it and eh, peace prevailed in our house. Eh, in other words, our house, after the war, our house was a much quieter

and more peaceful place than it had been before the war. Because if you spend money on drink, you, you're denying the family it, you know.

VB: Of course. I mean, d'you think that gave him a sort of sense of..?

TW: Aye! It seemed to, it seemed to. He seemed to turn over a new leaf, it was the best thing that happened to him.

VB: Yeah. That's interesting. 'Cause I'm interested in, you know, what it was like to work in the cinemas. Was there quite a big staff at the Riddrie or...?

TW: No. There wasn't a big, there was... the owner was called Welsh. My name's Walsh but he was called Welsh and then the manager was called Brown, John Brown, he was a very nice chap and he had a girl who sold, who doubled up as usherette and she sold ice-cream at the interval, you know the wee...

MW: And then they had the ticket collector.

TW: There were no more than a half a dozen, half a dozen at the most.

VB: Right.

TW: But that half a dozen could get in, you know, hundreds and hundreds. If it was a popular film like *Gone with the Wind* or something.

VB: Yeah. Some of the big cinemas [must have needed a?] huge--

TW: They needed them because they were huge places. I mean, come to think of it, eh, the, the old Odeon, I don't know how many it held, the old Odeon of Renfield Street--

VB: Right.

TW: Must have held, I would say, at a guess, a couple of thousands.

VB: Really?

TW: Oh, aye! I, I [pause 4 seconds]. The new Edinburgh Opera House which, which was an old cinema, I read somewhere it used to hold, it holds three thousand.

VB: Yeah.

TW: Well that's, that's a lot of people.

VB: It is. I know what that was like inside before they changed it. So was that the same sort of size as...?

TW: Aye, aye.

VB: I mean I've heard it was quite grand, the Odeon. What was it like inside?

TW: Beautiful! You mean the Odeon in Renfield Street. Oh, palatial!

VB: Yeah.

TW: Absolutely palatial. Beautiful, lovely.

VB: Is it right they had fountains and things in it?

TW: Pardon?

VB: Did they have, was it the Odeon that they had like fountains and things away or was that...?

TW: Eh, I don't know if they had fountains in the Odeon then.

MW: There was fountains in the Plaza.

VB: Was it the Plaza?

TW: Aw, no. That was the dance hall in the Plaza.

MW: Uhuh.

TW: Aye, aye. There was a place called the Toledo in eh, Battlefield, I think, had fountains, although I was never in it. You know, it's still there.

MW: Aye.

TW: Near where your father used to live.

MW: Uhuh.

TW: Eh, it was done up in the Alhambra [Theatre] style, the Moorish style.

VB: Yeah.

MW: Another world, that wasn't it?

TW: Aye, it was! Well it was somewhere to go at night, somewhere you could look forward to, too. And then, eh [pause 5 seconds] there was a lot of things in its favour which made night travelling more desirable than today. In the first place we lived in town, we didn't have long distances to travel and in the second place there wasn't the vandalism and there wasn't the, the sinister aspects. For example [pause 3 seconds] I, you were asleep, I went to bed, I was going to my bed last night at about a quarter to eleven and I happened to look out the, that road gets very quiet at night and I saw a lone girl walking up the road. This was about a quarter to eleven, and yet my thoughts were for her, I said, "That lassie, I hope nothing happens to her", you know this is me being protective towards her, and that wouldn't have occurred to me in 1938 and '39. You know, you walked the dark streets.

MW: Or even when we came up I used to go up and down that road, I mean that was thirty years ago.

TW: Aye.

MW: I thought nothing of it.

TW: That's right.

MW: But now you wouldn't.

TW: Then of course there was no television. Eh, life for me anyway as a, as a youngster was when I lived in a eh, I wouldn't call it, a slum, but it was, certainly wasn't a very salubrious eh, part of the city. And eh, because of my very poor circumstances eh, the house was, you know, the house was barely comfortable, I'd put it that way, and it was overcrowded, and eh, eh, it wasn't a place to dwell in, it was a place you would want to get out of, you know. And eh, we escaped to the cinema and, when I got, when I was able to get a bike, I became a cyclist, I cycled all over Scotland. That was another means of escape, it was just to get away from the drab surroundings of eh, Bridgeton, ye know.

MW: Where are you living in Glasgow yourself?

VB: Erm I live just off Queen Margaret Drive.

MW: Nice area.

VB: Mhm.

TW: Aye, we've got a niece lives up near you.

MW: Where does she live?

TW: Behind Queen Margaret Drive. Grandtully. You know Grandtully.

VB: I mean I know roughly where you are, I don't know that street though...

TW: Aye, aye.

VB: That's interesting. So I mean going to the pictures then for you was obviously more than the actual film, in a sense.

MW: Aye, there was escapism.

TW: To get out the house.

VB: Yes.

MW: Mhm.

TW: Aye.

VB: How did you feel when you were at the pictures?

TW: Marvellous! There was one year, I was talking about the heat, I can remember seeing a film, a rather, it wasn't a very distinguished film. It was a film about a treasure island, it wasn't *Treasure Island* but it was something, the hero was a, was a castaway on an island or something. But it was the Odeon and it was a right freezing cold night, and I think I had a touch of the 'flu and I was shivering. And I'd been cold going into the cinema, and as I sat, and it's Technicolor, and this beautiful eh, desert island, and this bronzed Adonis, and the lovely Hawaiian guitars playing. But the whole, the whole panorama was such that it was so desirable and so pleasant and so warm, I think I stayed in and saw it twice [laughs]. Just because it was nice and warm. I was terrified of that... I'd to walk maybe a mile down the road, a freezing cold road, you know, to go home and I didn't feel like it so I just stayed and watched another helping of i... can't remember what the film was but there you are. Oh it was great!

VB: I mean that, the coming of colour must've been quite...

TW: And yet, eh, black-and-white pictures are, are excellent. Eh, there's something black-and-white pictures, they're clear and, I, I like black-and-white pictures.

VB: Yeah.

TW: I think most people do. Aye.

MW: Aye, the colour at the start was terribly kind of... [gaudy?]

TW: Aye, aye, they got the aye [laughs] which reminds me of another funny incident. Now I'm quoting Benny Green, the famous, eh, BBC bloke on, on music. Benny Green described it a couple of year now ago, it's true. In one of the Fred Astaire films, Irving Berlin was commissioned, it wasn't *Top Hat*, it was one of the other ones, eh, they were doing, they were doing some scenes like it was explained to the composer. I think, I think he didn't fancy Ginger and then he fancied her, you see. So this abrupt change of demeanour had to be, had to be illustrated by a number. So Irving Berlin

very obediently sat down and wrote the number [singing]. "I used to be colour blind, dadadada, and now I find, lalalala, [more loudly], the blue of your eyes, the gold in your hair, the red in your cheeks", or something. Nice number. But, but the director decided, oh, what they were going to do is they were going to change the film from black and white to colour for this scene where he sang and dances this with Ginger. But they decided they wouldn't bother with it so [laughs] the song was in black and white.

MW: [laughs]

VB: [laughs]

TW: After Irving Berlin going to the trouble of writing a new... [laughs warmly].

MW: Find the colours.

TW: Aye. [laughs]. So there you are.

VB: I mean, I mean these sort of colour films as you say, I don't know, something like *Snow White* or something, d'you remember seeing that?

TW: I saw it. I cycled with Dennis Potter to Blackpool in 1938. Aye, and saw it in the Tower Ballroom. It cost me all of, I think it was four bob and that was a ruinously expensive, it was the dearest cinema seat I'd ever purchased, aye. So *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, aye.

VB: Was it worth it?

TW: Naah, naah.

MW: I thought *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was magic.

TW: Aye, it's all right for children but I'd be about seventeen then, I'd got beyond *Snow White*.

VB: Right. I mean d'you think there were certain films that appealed more to children than to adults?

TW: Well, the *Snow White* film certainly appealed to children more than adults.

VB: Right.

TW: Shirley Temple.

MW: *The Wizard of Oz.*

TW: I never liked, I never liked Judy Garland.

MW: That was Judy Garland.

VB: I mean you're saying Shirley Temple. D'you like her?

TW: No, I was a wee bit too old for Shirley Temple. By the time she came on the scene I, I, I'd...

MW: You'd be a teenager.

TW: I'd be twelve, thirteen and she was, she was a wee, she was too smarmy for my liking but she was a marvellous wee actress, there was no doubt about it.

MW: She was.

TW: Aye, I mean you still see wee bits of her erm, performing and she's eh, and how a wee girl could sing and dance in that way she did, great. That's another thing I find, it's maybe a different era we live in but, those great eh, cinema gods and goddesses, not all of them but enough, they were right good actors. I mentioned Edward G. [Robinson], as a, the paragon of it, but there was other very good, there were great actors, they knew their stuff, you know.

MW: Aye, didn't Shirley Temple end up as a mayoress of some town?

TW: Aye. An ambassadress somewhere.

MW: An ambassadress.

TW: Aye, that's right. Aye.

VB: So do you think that the children preferred films about, you know, with child stars and things?

What sort of...

TW: There was Tom Mix, Tom Mix 'n' cement. [laughs]. That's a Glasgow one, Tom Mix 'n' cement. Tom Mix was a cowboy, aye. Eh, eh I was too old for Gene Autry, Gene Autry came on the scene. Aye, as wee boys we used to enjoy the cowboys but I, I can't be bothered with cowboys. John Wayne, have you ever seen a John Wayne film? He starts there and he walks up to there and he turns and he says something and he walks by there and he turns and says something... that's John Wayne. And then he gets on his horse and how the horse can hold him, you know he's an enormous guy. I'm not a, I'm not a...

MW: You're not what you call tolerant, are you?

TW: Ah, I couldn't be bothered with, they say cowboys are morality plays and that it's life portrayed in its simple black and white, but eh...

VB: How about, were there films that appealed more to women than men or...?

TW: Oh, undoubtedly. Well, my mother went to see all the weepies, Joan Crawford and all that crowd which I couldn't stand.

VB: Yes.

MW: How about eh, what d'you call her, Deanna Durbin?

TW: I like Deanna Durbin, she's a lovely singer, a grand singer.

MW: She gets the [inaudible] of films, *Three Smart Girls*.

TW: Aye.

MW: *Three Smart Girls Grow Up*, and *Three Smart Girls* [do this?].

TW: Aye. Aye, they were well produced.

MW: Oh, they were!

TW: I mean they had, they had eh, Leopold Stokowski and a big hundred piece orchestra playing with her, these were good [referring to *One Hundred Men and a Girl*]. There was one schmaltzy film that took Glasgow by storm I should tell you about. It was about 1937, *The Great Waltz*, Johann Strauss. Now I've since seen it, it's the most, it's terrible! And I'm a, I'm a Johann Strauss fan, I love Johann Strauss. In fact I've got all his, all his numbers. Eh, this was *The Great Waltz* and it was portrayed as the life of Johann Strauss and he... I don't know whether you've ever seen it.

VB: I haven't seen that, no.

TW: It's the most schmaltzy thing you ever saw. But one ridiculous scene, I still laugh at it. He's going through the Vienna woods, supposed to be, right, he's in a carriage with his girlfriend and he hears a wee bird in the trees going [whistles] and gets the idea for the Blue Danube "Da ra ra ra ra" [singing and whistling], you know. This is way too [inaudible], you know.

VB: Well, did you enjoy it then, though?

TW: No, I was disappointed and I had to stand for hours at 'The', in Glasgow...

MW: 'The' La Scala.

TW: They never say La Scala, they say 'The' La Scala, you see. I'd to wait for hours to see it and I was disappointed in it.

VB: Right.

TW: Aye.

VB: And was that one of the...?

TW: That took Glasgow by storm, aye, the La Scala, aye. Aye, people queued for months to see that eh, it was [I always thought it was a very poor film?].

VB: Right.

TW: Hollywood have got a, Hollywood are good at their own stuff. *42nd Street*. But when they try the Europeans, when they try Johann Strauss and Franz Lehar. I saw a recent version of Lana Turner

doing *The Merry Widow*, and it was terrible, absolutely lousy, you know. So it's a wee Vienna to the Viennese, you know?

VB: Yeah.

TW: Incidentally, here's another piece of useless information I only learned through reading. Fred Astaire's father was Viennese. Fred Austerlitz is his right name.

VB: Oh?

TW: Frederick Austerlitz, aye. You see Fred was a Viennese at heart.

VB: That's interesting.

TW: Aye. [pause 5 seconds] And Edward G. [Robinson] was a Rumanian Jew whose right name was Emanuel Goldenberg, that's right. He took his Edward G., funny, typical eh, humour. He saw some advert for some English gentleman advertising soap powder or something, and that's how he got the Robinson.

VB: Really! [laughs]

TW: The G's for his real name, Goldenberg. Aye. Aye they were great days.

TW: Actually, I've enjoyed, you know, just reminiscing, I haven't talked about the films for years and years and years. Anything else?

VB: Erm. Not really, I mean I think we've covered an awful lot actually. I've thoroughly enjoyed myself.

TW: Is that tape still on, by the way?

VB: Yes it is, yes. [laughs] I've thoroughly enjoyed myself too. Erm, I can't really think of anything just now but what usually happens is that I'll think of things on the way back. [laughs]

TW: Well if you think of something either give me a ring on the phone or come back and see us.

VB: That would be really good actually if you wouldn't mind.

TW: Not at all.

VB: I mean, maybe in a few weeks time if...

TW: Well if you can think of anything.

VB: That would be great, yes.

TW: Right.

VB: I mean there were things when we were talking that I thought I would like to ask a bit more about but then we would get on to something else.

TW: Aye.

VB: That would be really useful if you didn't mind.

TW: Not at all.

MW: How did you manage to get here?

VB: Erm, by bus.

TW: Public transport.

MW: Did you get the 29?

VB: Yes, I did, yeah.

MW: And he dropped you at the corner then?

VB: Erm, no he didn't because he didn't know where the street was so erm, he ended up driving me back round 'cause he knew that you could get in from the bottom and I came up, what is it, erm, I came in from this direction anyway.

TW: [inaudible] Road?

VB: Yes.

TW: Aye.

MW: Whereas you could have got it right to the corner, well.

TW: Now, when you're going out if you just turn, go there for a hundred yards.

VB: Right.

TW: And take the first, the second on the left. Go out, take the second on the left.

VB: Right.

TW: It's not the first, the second, that's right.

VB: Second on the left, yeah.

TW: There's a small street thirty yards and just go to the end of it here, just round the corner from the end of it you'll see the bus stop. You can get a 29 there.

VB: Right.

TW: Or a 3.

MW: The 29 would take you right back into town.

VB: Aye.

TW: Aye, that's right it would. The 29 would take you all the way back into town.

VB: If only the bus driver had known that [laughs].

TW: Aye.

VB: 'Cause that's why I was a few minutes late 'cause I had to come right round.

MW: What time did you leave home?

VB: Erm, I got the bus from Union Street. It was supposed to be ten to one but it was a bit late 'cause the traffic in town was quite busy.

MW: Yeah.

VB: Eh, so that was a bit [ropey?] as well. I thought I would be better to leave a bit of time as well, I wasn't sure, you know, if that was where you were, so--

MW: Well you did very well to find it.

TW: I assumed you were coming by car, that's why I never bothered to tell you anything, you know.

VB: Yeah.

TW: Why I assumed because you'd a car you knew where to go.

VB: It probably would be easier if I had 'cause I brought an A to Z with me and I mean that's how I got off the bus, I could find it but...

TW: You could've taken the train out here. There's two different trains. There's one goes to Kirkhill which is through the park there.

VB: Right.

TW: And there's another one, Cambuslang Station, it's rather a long walk.

VB: Right.

TW: But the Kirkhill one takes you into Central Station every half hour.

VB: Right, right.

TW: It takes 22 minutes.

MW: You don't know the time.

TW: Ah, a quarter to and a quarter past.

MW: But mind you, I don't think you'd want to walk through the park.

TW: No, you don't need to walk through the park. Walk down to Cairns Road. Personally you'd be better taking the 29, it's handier. You've no, eh, no long walk.

VB: Yes. Och well, I'll just do that.

TW: Right! D'you think your journey has not been in vain?

VB: Far from it! And as I say I've learnt a lot, you know. It's been really great.

TW: Good!

VB: It's been really good.

TW: Well as I say, if you eh, if you can think of anything else.

VB: That's very kind.

MW: You've enjoyed it thoroughly, have you not?

TW: Aye! I don't often get a chance to talk to somebody about days gone by, you know.

MW: Yes, I don't listen.

TW: Aye, you see Margaret cuts me off, aye. For example I used to tell Margaret times when I'd be working up on a roof and we'd be singing. I'd say one of the reasons why these Alan Dell, he'll play Carl Gibbons playing eh, there's one he played the other night. Remember me, "Law, la, la, la, la, la" [singing]. And I says I can remember being up on a roof with Jimmy MacLean, a fellow worker. And when you're up on the top of a roof you tend to be in another world, you're not aware there's

people down the street so you shout and sing as if you were on a desert island. We were singing this at the top of our voice, you know. "Remember me" [singing].

VB: [laughs]

MW: [laughs]

TW: There you are. So as I say, Maggie's heard all these stories and she tells me to shut up, shut up as soon as I start so it's nice to get a new victim, you know [laughs].

VB: [laughs] **Not at all. I'm far from a victim, I'm really listening. It's interesting as well, you know, to get, you know, your insights from your father and everything, so.**

TW: Aye. Well it was all part of the social scene, you know, your, your behaviour is dictated by your circumstances.

MW: That is very true, yeah.

TW: Aye. If we lived in Buckingham Palace I suppose we'd have another story to tell, you know.

VB: **Yes. I mean do you go to the cinema much now?**

TW: No. The last one we saw was *JFK*.

MW: That was up in East Kilbride.

TW: Aye. It wasn't bad. Again it was.

MW: I think now that going to the cinema to sit still for so long [pause 3 seconds] you don't like--

TW: Aye.

MW: At least you can get up and make a cup of tea [laughs].

TW: Our circumstances at home are very much more comfortable. I mean I never had chairs like this when I lived in Bridgeton. And eh, that's another thing. I mean the comfort of the cinema, the cinema seat. But now to sit for... we tell a lie, it was *Schindler's List* we saw last time.

MW: Yeah, that's right.

TW: And I found it too long. Three hours, three and a half hours to sit, too long.

MW: I found it a very [concerning?] story.

TW: Very good picture. Very well done. But it was just too long. Aye, and they didn't have an interval in the middle of it which made it...

MW: Yeah, they could've maybe had a wee break, however.

VB: 'Cause I mean if they were showing a long film, I mean, did they not have an interval in, like *Gone with The Wind*?

TW: They didn't have in interval in East Kilbride, for some reason or other. They should've at three and a half hours, I mean it seems ridiculous, doesn't it?

MW: Yeah. They did have an interval in *Gone with the Wind* 'cause I remember my dad took me to see it.

TW: Aye.

VB: Yeah.

MW: And we got ice cream at the interval [laughs].

VB: Yeah. No I agree, I found *Schindler's List* quite, quite long as well.

TW: Aye, it's too long.

VB: Although it's a good film.

TW: It was well done, aye, very well done. 'Scuse me a second.

MW: Now do you want me to tell you the times of those buses?

VB: Aye.

MW: Quarter to and quarter past, so you've missed the quarter to 'cause it'll take you what, five minutes. Say if you leave here, say, what, five past.

VB: That would be fine, yes.

MW: Is that OK?

VB: Yes.

MW: It's been a pleasure to have you here.

VB: Och not at all, it's been my pleasure entirely.

MW: That's great. How long have you been in Glasgow?

VB: Erm, about, almost five years now.

MW: What as long as that?

VB: Yes.

MW: I can detect your accent there. My friend's, eh, daughters, they went to Edinburgh University and got married and are over in Dundee now.

VB: Right.

MW: Or Tayport and the accent's just [inaudible].

VB: Right.

MW: You know they lived in Lanark but instead of going to Glasgow University they all went to Edinburgh at first and eh, they all settled on the east coast and the mum went over.

MW: Just talking about Marion's daughters they all went, well the two of them went and stayed and went to Edinburgh University.

TW: Oh, aye.

MW: And she moved over to the east coast now.

TW: Aye, to Dundee, aye.

MW: I can detect the accent. It's very like eh, Brenda.

TW: Aye.

MW: What's your name? Valen...

VB: It's Bold.

MW: Uhuh. And do ye give yourself the full Valentine?

VB: Erm, sometimes. I mean some people call me Val, some use the whole thing [laughs] but eh I don't mind either way, really.

MW: Uhuh.

TW: Yes. Aye, the girl I spoke to in your headquarters called you Val.

VB: Yes, yes.

TW: That's right, aye.

VB: I mean it was good of you to come up, I just wish...

TW: Well it so happened I like to walk on a good day.

VB: Yes.

TW: I was up that way yesterday as a matter of fact but, I just happened to be passing and I remember I said, I'll just call in and see her. It was just really an excuse to walk round the University, you know. I like that part of the city. Eh, I usually, I like to walk. I had a very historical walk yesterday. I had just finished a book on Oscar Slater, have you ever heard of Oscar Slater? Well I won't go into details. He was a man that was unjustly convicted of murder and spent nineteen years in jail, and he was framed. The Yankee remark that the frame is, this is a classic... Oscar Slater was a German Jew, a foreigner in 1908 and he was a kind of shady character, he moved a wee bit in the underworld. But there was nothing, there was nothing very much eh, wrong with him. He was like a small time crook, shall we say. And there was a murder in West Princes Street which is eh, d'you know where West Princes Street is?

VB: Aye, aye.

TW: There was a very respectable old lady was battered to death and I won't go through the details. He was, he was framed for it. And he had nothing to do with it. And eh, eh [pause 3 seconds] he lived, I don't know whether, are you familiar with eh, Charing Cross?

VB: Yeah.

TW: Well, d'you know how you walk round. You know that beautiful building at Charing Cross, the, the, Charing Cross Mansions, aye.

VB: Yes, yes.

TW: Sweep round. And then you're going towards, if you're going towards the University, the corner of Woodlands Road and St Georges Road, there's a rather beautiful red brick building called eh, St Georges Mansions.

VB: Oh, yes!

TW: It's a beautiful building. I actually painted it. I've got a painting of it. However, Oscar Slater lived there, and the woman he's alleged to have murdered lived just round the corner in West Princes Street, it's about four hundred yards of a walk. I walked that way yesterday eh, having read this

book, you know. I was able to look at the actual, the actual eh, murder room, the room in which they say she was murdered.

MW: [inaudible]

TW: It was her nephew, it was her nephew that did it eh, and because his family had a cousin who was a member, who was a member of the Scottish Law Faculty and whose pal was the Procurator Fiscal for Glasgow and he'd another, another brother who was a doctor. They were eh, as Jack House pointed out in his story which I'll read tonight eh... Respectability has always been a great thing in Scotland, particularly in those pre-First World War days, 1908. And the murderer was allowed to go free, so they had to... [tape cuts out]

[End of Interview]