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P. 21 Missing handwritten transcript done by RA when checking.

Interview with Barbara Emary, in her home, 5th July 1988

Interviewer Bob Allen

SIDE 1, TAPE 1

BA: Perhaps you could tell us when you first came into the film industry, how you got interested in filmmaking, what lead you into it.

BE: The most interesting thing is that as a teenager I was all against films, I never went to see a film when I was a teenager, they were far beneath me, and I don't mean that, you'll have to cut that , I mean it was a stupid snobbery I suppose. I would go to a Shakespeare play but I wouldn't go to see a film because they were silent in those days of course and didn't really go to any films at all.

But when I left school I wanted to go into welfare work really, my mother had done an awful lot of school CARE committees and so on and so I answered an advertisement in the Times, a Commander Menges, who wanted a secretary to help with two charity organisations, two Irish organisations, one was the Benevolent Society of St Patrick and the other was the Irish Peasantry Society, and we was in Chelsea in Oakley Gardens and I got the job, I went with my mother, in those days mother took you, and I went and got the job. I'm sorry this is all rather tedious but it leads but to something because unfortunately after two or three years he died but his wife who lived in the same house, of course, happened to be a journalist and she wanted me to stay on and help her with typing, secretarial work which I did but of course I'd never had any training at all.

I did take a crash course at Pitmans, the very quickest I could in a few weeks to learn shorthand and typing because my mother said if you've once got that you can get any job you want, you can start in almost anything with that and then decide what you want to do, because there weren't so many things open to girls when I left school, so that is what I did. Then when I was helping the journalist it came to the point that really she hadn't enough work for me, after many years, by that time I was 21 and she hadn't enough work for me and I went into education at the Borough Polytechnic and I went in on the administrative staff.

I only went into that because how valuable it was in starting a career where you had to be so absolutely perfect in everything you did because you were doing examination papers and all that kind of thing and they had to be accurate, so I was trained in a good school, I was trained with people, only with people in the same department, I was trained really to do a lot of careful stenciling and all sorts of things. Now I shouldn't have known

any of that if I had done that.

What happened, the journalist I'd been working with wanted me, she knew somebody who was down at Sound City, Shepperton Studios, they wanted an experience typist and she wrote to me and said wouldn't I go for an interview. So I said I don't think so. However I used to do all sorts of hours at this Polytechnic, it was all shift work, so I went to THE inteview and got it and when I think now going to the interview, all prim, terribly prim, this man and his name was **Victor Crear** and he was in the publicity department which is the sort of department I would hate, publicity is just the bit I wouldn't like, but I was in it and it introduced me to films, and I thought it's quite good and a bit of a change and I lived at Wimbledon and it was at Shepperton and it wasn't too bad, I could get there, I had a little Austin 7 car.

Shepperton Studios was a ~~little~~ THEN country house, and nearly all the people there as far as I could gather when I think back now were ~~all~~ A BIT Eton and Oxford, all the people that wanted to get into films, put money into films and make films and it was ~~11~~ A LOT private money I think at that time, a man called Norman Loudon ran it and I was there for quite some time. But I graduated from publicity to helping on production which I thoroughly enjoyed.

BA: Can I interrupt, what year would that be

BE: It wasn't until 1933, 32 or 33.

BA: So it was well into the sound era.

BE: Yes, because I'd been five years at the Polytechnic and I'd never looked back on that thinking it was a waste of time, it wasn't, it was a wonderful experience to learn the business of typing and doing that sort of thing which was the one thing which made it possible to get to where I got in the end which came from the production side and on scripts until I worked through and got to production in the end.

BA: That was going through from the publicity side.

BE: Yes. Mr Baxter who was producing a film down there wanted some one to work on his scripts and I was loaned out and never let go.

BA: That was somewhere round 1933.

BE: Yes it was, it might have been a bit more, I can't remember about years, you get a funny idea when you think back on years, you think you were there an awful long time and it really isn't a long time, just as in the war years, the very first part the war broke out I was in the ambulance service, I had to go and report to the London Ambulance Service, and when I look back on it now I

was only there for three months full time, I feel I was in for the whole war, of course I was in the ambulance service through the whole war but I was part-time after the first 3 months, because it was the phony war then and we went back to our jobs in the films actually.

BA: So you went over to Mr John Baxter, what sort of help on the script was that.

BE: It was only a question of typing things out, getting things done, it was awfully important in those days somehow, it was with him, to get things done quickly perhaps over night for tomorrow's shooting, you'd go on working all night if necessary.

BA: Rewrites.

BE: Yes rewrites and that sort of thing, because he usually wrote his own script. Then he rehashed them a bit the night before after he'd done some shooting during the day, he probably thought better of some of the scenes he was going to do tomorrow.

BA: Were they feature films.

BE: They were all small feature films, what would be called now low budget pictures, they were all low budget then, though we used to think they were high budget some of them, but what would have been high budget then, would be very small now, after recent years, we used to think a £60,000 production was a real smash, really very big production. I've forgotten where I've got to.

BA: You've got to meeting up with

BE: Yes, he had an office up in Regent St, 91 Regent St and I used to work up in his office up there, in fact we did, all the script work that I did for them was up there and only occasionally went down to the studios at that stage.

Then I can't think what happened, oh then he worked at Twickenham Studios, that's where he made "Say it With Flowers" with Mary Clare, now that was all about the Covent Garden market, he'd got a fascination with markets and he used to love doing anything with markets. Then he also did a film called "Lest we Forget" which was a war subject, he used to like doing those subjects and they all had a slightly moral thought behind them, not laboured in any way, they were very funny some of them, they weren't laboured in any way but it somehow fitted in with my original thoughts about welfare work, in a very slight way, it wasn't entirely the opposite as you might think, it did fit in, we were doing something which was helpful I think and people used to come out of the pictures feeling better, that sort of thing. They were only small ones.

BA: On the list I've got, and it's a very small list, of John Baxter's pictures, is one called Doss House.

BE: That's right, it was one of the very earliest.

BA: That sounds again as if it was getting onto a social theme.

BE: Yes, that was about the economic depression of course, and it went into the Empire, Leicester Sq which is no longer with us, but it was MGM, it went as a second feature, very much a second feature, and it made quite a hit in really being a filler. I don't know if it would be interesting just to read what was said, "The British short film Doss House is to my mind the best cinema entertainment in London this week, I suggest if you're still distrustful of British films you'll leave the Empire hopeful", that was the Daily Express; the Observer said "Doss House is based on an idea and it sticks to its idea and that is the one virtue that that this country needs most in filmmaking", so he had good notices over things like that.

BA: You were with him when that picture was made.

BE: I don't seem to remember whether I was with him when that one was made because he did ones of a similar kind, I certainly did the publicity for it afterwards, it was done while I was still down at Shepperton, that is probably why I remember more about that I should think, because I did the publicity, I was on the publicity side.

Then he made, following up that he made a film called "Song of the Plough" which was about the countryside, that also went into the Empire, as I remember, it was a picture about farming and horses and so on, "Somebody said all the charm of the English countryside has been mirrored in this picture", that was the News Chronicle, "he, John Baxter, earns our gratitude with his lovely rural compositions. In the Sketch, "John Baxter's subject Song of the Plough is now at the Empire and I have no hesitation in saying it is one of the finest and most magnificent films of its sort every made in Britain, it is short, it is simple and it is great, with magic artistry it captures the spirit of rural England". I must say when I've seen some of these films afterwards they do seem extremely strange and slow and all in long shot, they seem to be all in long shot, none of the close ups we're used to.

BA: And that had professional actors.

BE: Oh yes. The Song of the Plough had Stewart Rome I think in it. I might be able to tell you who was in it, no I don't think so.

BA: Not to worry, we're more interested in your activities, cast lists can always be referred to back by titles. It's only interesting if there was someone in it who developed later on.

BE: No, those were rather, there were some of the smaller fry.

He had a team of old film actors and actresses which he used to use in almost every film if he possibly could. They were all character actors and they used to play the character parts that he loved, he loved to do those character parts, and it made it very interesting from everybody's point of view I think. They were always interesting characters themselves, the actors and actresses, I've kept in touch with one or two of them even now. Most of them are gone now but I keep in touch with their relatives still, some real old characters, Cockney characters, that were in things like Say it With Flowers. But Say it with Flowers didn't come next, I think he did one called Men of Yesterday which was, it was before the Second World War, it was in 1937, it was about the First World War - "great theme, inspiring interpretation, excellent teamwork and direction, showmanship and cast-iron angles and mass appeal terrific". Why it was interesting, these press notices, was that these were such very small films, they were very small films which most people would have ignored.

BA: Because this was the heyday of the quota quickie when they were often only being shown at matinees.

BE: That's it, they were always the second feature, very much the second feature

BA: So it was high praise that they should even take any notice of them, particularly the press.

BE: Oh yes. And this Men of Yesterday, the Irish Press - "the film carried a very fine theme and we ~~can~~ see all that is best in the British character, the best anti war film since Cavalcade". That was saying rather a lot I think. That was certainly Stewart Rome, but Men of Yesterday had people like George Robey, music hall artists as well, in it. Because he was very fond of music hall so he always liked to have a music hall sequence in because he knew a lot of music hall people, Nina Mae McKinney and those sort of people.

BA: That's sort of interesting because again it comes in later on with 'Let the People Sing" type movie and "Theatre Royal."

BE: Yes. Because these films were all films he wrote himself. He certainly wrote the first short resume of what he wanted to say and now and again he would give it to writers he knew, not well known at all but somebody he knew to write up, and then we had to transfer their idea into a film script which as you know was quite a buisness. He used to produce the films and he used to put every shot in and how each scene was covered and often when it came to it he didn't shoot like that at all, perhaps where he'd got a close up, he wouldn't use a close up but we knew exactly what he was trying to get at there, everybody knew what it was, the fact that by the time he came to shoot it he thought it would be better if that would be taken further away and he covered those two lines, perhaps one of the artists was

very good in saying the lines, and he wanted to accentuate some lines because they were well spoken and they got something behind them. But he did write nearly all his scripts himself except Let the People Sing and When We're Married. When he came onto those he was onto something quite different, onto somebody else's play, and trying to portray that without interfering with it too much of course.

BA: Having recently seen Let the People Sing on television just a couple of weeks back your name was on the credits as scriptwriter. That was a very good credit along with J. B. Priestley, just before we come onto that can we go back a little bit further in your progression how you came to get to that position of writing scripts.

BE: I wish I could remember. It was only that I was working so much with Mr Baxter with the physical getting it down on paper of the scripts and very often it would come up, when my name was on the credits I'm sure it should never have been, it was only that I did part of it, a small section of it, or perhaps we put a scene in which wasn't written in the original, as in Love on the Dole and those things, and a little linking scene to get from one place to another, it wasn't much more than that. Only that I did then sort of collate all the script and all the sections which were written by various people, very few people, only one or two at the most I ~~can~~ think.

BA: You've just mentioned Love on the Dole which I should think was John Baxter's most well-known and most famous film.

BE: I think so.

BA: Had you had this script collaboration ~~in~~ writing and writing in scenes before then.

BE: I think I must have done, I don't know, I'm not sure because we made so many films.

BA: You did with Love on the Dole.

BE: I did with Love on the Dole certainly, I can remember scenes which are in.

BA: I hadn't realised that. Again Love on the Dole was on unemployment and getting almost back to contemporary times. I understand that the movie was censored and banned because of the unemployment theme until unemployment started to get less because the war was on.

BE: Was it, I don't remember that. What I thought, I remembered was that the censor was dubious about the end section because if I remember Deborah Kerr, one of the very early pictures she did, the first one she starred in at all, and of course for her it

wasn't a huge staring part at all because it was only a small picture, but she, I've forgotten what I was going to say but I will continue in a minute, about the censor at the end, yes, she was playing Sally Hardcastle and in order to get, if I remember rightly, the story goes in order to get money to help her parents to live when he was out of work and everybody was out of work, she rather hitched up with some dubious character who was played by Frank Cellier and it looked as if she was getting money for the sort of job the censors thought was not good to end the picture on. But Mr Baxter actually saw the censor and talked him into it. But that was nothing to do with unemployment, I didn't know that bit.

BA: My comment I suppose comes from Paul Rotha in his Film Till Now. It was just that there was some comment he made about censorship due to unemployment. It came out later because unemployment was decreasing. But censorship might have been held back

BE: No I think he means what I said really, the censor did think the ending was not really as it should be, in those days that was the sort of thing which was censored. But it was true, so many women had to earn money in most devious ways and the way he did end it seemed to satisfy everybody because it left it making everybody feel it's terrible she's got to do this but something's got to be done to stop things like this having to happen and you could see that was the only way things could happen. That is what I thought I remembered of the censor, of the bit that was censored. But Mr Baxter went to see the censor and talked him round, and I suppose Walter Greenwood did too. But it was a question of the way it was shot. It was rather important the way it was shot to make it seem that it wasn't quite so, that it was very moving, he made it a very moving end but not at all provocative or unpleasant. I think I'm right in saying that. And of course the notices for that were absolutely phenomenal. "A film to shake Britain, this film is flawless and will win world fame, I rate it 10 points out of 10". Pat Mannock in the Daily Herald said "Banned film now a triumph, one of the finest British pictures ever made, Britain's most moving film, the most moving screen drama which has come from the British studios". News Chronicle: "the film is one of the most moving and most significant ever made in Britain". Ernest Betts, Sunday Express: "about the best, most moving, most sincere film it has ever been my pleasure to encounter during years of contact with British production". News of the World: "this film is one of Britain's best, one of the best films made in this country". Evening Standard: "Love on the Dole is a fine wise picture". C. A. Lejeune, The Observer: "one of Britain's finest films, no great starts but plenty of great performances". Ninety Degrees: "A great British film, perhaps the greatest."

And of course it was a comparatively cheap film, that was wonderful, we went up to Rochdale of course and shot a lot of it

up there, but of course it was all rebuilt in the studios, we came back.

BA: What sort of ~~things~~ SCENES were shot in Rochdale, just wide angled shots of the town and the streets.

BE: I suppose it was, of people walking in the streets, establishing shots as we used to call them really.

BA: There was no attempt made to film any of the acted sequences.

BE: Not at all. They would be able to do that sort of thing now, but it never was done then, certainly not in those films. We always had to come back and rebuilt the smallest bit that you could get away with.

BA: What studio was that in.

BE: It must have been British National Studio at Elstree I think. Yes.

BA: Do you remember how long the production schedule was.

BE: It was about 3 weeks.

BA: 3 weeks.

BE: No, I expect it was a bit more than that but we used to think in terms of 3 or 4 weeks, that was a lot.

BA: Do you know who the cameraman was.

BE: It was Jimmy Wilson who did a lot of Mr Baxter's films. I don't know if you knew him but he was a very quiet, unlike a filmmaker really, a very quiet, subdued cameraman. VERY VERY GOOD.

BA: He did more than just Love on the Dole then.

BE: He did quite a lot before that anyway, I can't remember after that, I think the war was on and he might not have been available, I don't think he did so many, or we were rather attached to British National and you had to have who was ready and available at the time. He wasn't under contract to us, he wasn't before but there wasn't so much work going around and there were fewer people available to do it. Sound recording was Harold King and he went on to great things.

BA: He became head of sound at ABPC Studios.

BE: And the art director was Holmes Paul. He was an older sort of art director, very very nice man. One of the few then who had a beard and so he was rather distinguished looking. THEN

BA: He too had been part of John Baxter's team.

BE: Yes. When we always used to say his unit, but of course it wasn't really his unit, it was only he selected it at the time, we got as near to same people every time but you couldn't always do it as you know.

BA: And the editor.

BE: The editor was Michael Chorton and he was a very, as a matter of fact he always reminded me, I don't know if you knew him at all, but he always reminded me of somebody like Jonathan Miller, he was that type of person, extremely clever, I don't know if he was a brilliant editor or not, I think he was, but he was a very clever man and unfortunately he was killed in a motorcycle accident, a good many years after this but he was still very young, only a young man.

BA: And is your name there on that credit list.

BE: Mine is under screen adaptation by Walter Greenwood in association with myself Rollo Gamble. He was a friend of Walter Greenwood's I think, I never heard very much more about him.

BA: Rollo Gamble I met up with very briefly when commercial television first started, I think he was working for Rediffusion as a director doing documentaries for Redifussion.

BE: Of course the associate director was Lance Comfort, who was on a great many films. I worked with him for many films.

BA: Love on the Dole was written as a stage play.

BE: Yes it was written by Ronald Gow but from the book, it was based on Walter Greenwood's novel.

BA: Was the theatrical presentation before the film.

BE: Yes

BA: It doesn't seem that they had any problems with the Lord Chamberlain's office then.

BE: I don't know, probably they skated over it, I don't know how the play ended.

BA: Probably John Baxter with his social leanings was probably was holding more to the book than the theatrical version.

BE: But by that time I think John Baxter might have been recognised as somebody who was handling the thing seriously, these subjects seriously, they were serious subjects of interest to many people, and of value I think too, some of the films were

of value.

BA: It certainly became very well know because I remember it being shown in New Zealand and that must have been during the war or just after the war.

BE: I think it ran in Ireland for about 4 years or something which was unheard of at that time, things running at that time, yes, it was because they had the chorus with Maire O'Neill, who was Sara Allgood's sister, Iris Vandeleur, Margery, I can't remember her name, very well known they were all four of them almost like a Greek chorus of Irish women, Irish people. That's at the pawnbrokers, reluctantly giving in their things

BA: At the moment we're just looking at the little publicity presentation. That's a good piece of ~~archival~~ FILM history, the little booklet.

BE: I passed a lot of these things that I had to John Montgomery who lived at Brighton but he died last year but he was a journalist and he was the boy I first met in the publicity department at Shepperton.

BA: Was he the one who was trying to establish a collection of film memorabilia in Brighton.

BE: I should think he was.

BA; I've a hazy idea. How old would he be when he died.

BE: About 72 when he died the year before last.

BA: I'm thinking of someone different.

BE: He was just the sort of person who would want to do that. He was very, very keen on films but he just had a journalist, he did journalism during the later days of his life. He went to the war, you don't want to really hear about John Montgomery, he was a wonderful person. When we first went to Sound City in the publicity department he was the boy, 17 years old and he used to go into town and run all the stuff into town to the various papers, newspapers, to see if he could get places in for publicity and he was himself a pacifist. He was a very outspoken pacifist in those days and when the war came he joined up immediately. He said I can't, how can I be a pacifist and let everybody else bring all the things in, do all the hard work, go out and fetch the food in and me sit back and wait for them to do it, I can't do it, and he joined up and he survived a great many things including El Alamein. I had a letter from him at El Alamein where he's saying we're having an awful night tonight. I don't expect we shall come through but I do hope everybody thinks we've done pretty well for them at home. It was terribly moving really getting that right from El Alamein, particularly since he

was a pacifist and a sincere pacifist really. He didn't feel he could possibly let other people do it all. And he ended up, he was a captain in I can't remember what regiment, but he did very well indeed.

BA: Did he come back to the publicity film department.

BE: He came back and I hate to say it, there wasn't really room for him anywhere, it was awful. We tried to start him off in jobs, but he did have an awful job to get started again, he was out of it a long time. And he was unattached, he hadn't a wife, he wasn't married or anything, so he stayed in longer for occupation, he was in the army of occupation because he hadn't got somebody to come back to and that kept him out of the films too long. But he did get back but not properly, he did straight journalism really. But that's a by the way.

BA: It's interesting what happened to a film publicist.

BE: He was extremely well thought of too, wonderful worker.

BA: On that track of the war, you'd mentioned earlier that you'd had for a short time that you'd been in the ambulance service.

BE: We had to stop as you know, when the sirens went the first day, I beg your pardon, we had a black out before the war started, the war started on the Sunday didn't it, I was coming back from Elstree by the train to Marylebone Station and it really was blacked out, it really was a black out, they were trying out the black out and I can't tell you what it was like, you couldn't believe anything could be so black, because everything was blacked out so suddenly, this was before the war started and the minute the war started everybody had to report for anything which they'd been rehearsing for or training for such as ambulance driving and so on and so we all had to report. And I was telling you I was only in the ambulance service for about 3 months full time before I was able to get back into the film business as we were making films then more by good luck than anything and I was able to do part time on ambulance which I did ALL throughout the war.

BA: But films were essential then.

BE: They hadn't decided how essential they were and I think we were making a film at Rock Studios, Elstree, do you know Rock Studios, they used to be just by Borehamwood Station, it was only, it was like a corrugated iron shed rather, that was what we were doing then, making a film called "Laugh it Off", as if you could, with Tommy Trinder, we were trying to cash in on the fact that the war had come I think. But it was pretty hectic, going and froing all through the war years, down from Elstree, every night of the Blitz going back on ambulance duty at Kensington, each night, not as soon as that, because it wasn't until 1941,

was it the Blitz started, and it wasn't very funny going back into the town. I remember driving back from Elstree. I had a little Morris Minor with a soft top, you put the hood back, and I felt absolutely alright driving as long as I had the hood up and it was only canvas, and there was shrapnel and all sorts of bombs falling but you felt quite different if you had the hood up, it was all right so long as you didn't break down. I did once and had to stop in the middle of all this chaos in Hendon Central and try and change a wheel in the black out, we couldn't have any torches or anything much to see what you were doing, it all passed off, just a bit of experience.

BA: Along with John Baxter you continued making pictures right through the war years.

BE: We did, we were very lucky, we were at British National by then. I don't know quite when we started at British National but it was pretty soon. And we used to have to finish one film on one day and start shooting on the next day, somebody had to start shooting otherwise they were going to ~~start~~ Take taking over the area, take over the studio, for making aircraft I expect, and if we didn't keep on, if we left it empty for more than a couple of days, so when we came to Love on the Dole, after we'd done Love on the Dole, the next film we made after that was Old Mother Riley, I don't expect you know about Old Mother Riley but Old Mother Riley was just about as opposite as it could possibly be from Love on the Dole, but you had to finish on Love on the Dole and start the next day on Old Mother Riley. And the sets and everything had to be all waiting, ready for the sets of Love on the Dole to be whisked away and Old Mother Riley to come in. And that was all a bit hairy. And we had to be ready the moment that was over with another one to come in. We were all working, it was all really very exciting but we did work very very hard, of course, and if we had another unit it would have been easier. I suppose we did have, there were two or three units because we must have had somebody doing the editing and cutting, somebody must have been supervising the editing, not while they were shooting another picture at the same time, it was a different director each time. It wasn't with Mr Baxter, Mr Baxter directed Love on the Dole and directed Old Mother Riley as well. They were the funniest act ever, not funny, but it was strange with the Riley pictures, they used to make all the money to make the others,

BA: They were popular.

BE: They were so popular, although they were music hall, I won't say at it's worse, but at it's most broad. It really was

BA: Who played Mother Riley.

BE: Arthur Lucan, somebody called Arthur Lucan, and his wife. WAS KITTY SHAMA (MISSING FROM TAPE)

SIDE 2, TAPE 1

BA: You were fairly well implanted during the war at British National Studios.

BE: We were.

BA: What other titles

BE: In Love on the Dole there was a young boy called Geoffrey Hibbert who played the young boy in that and gave a very good performance, I think it was the first film he'd ever done and Mr Baxter said we must make something around this boy and he made a film called The Common Touch which also make a lot of money, did MADE extremely well, it was about, I've forgotten really the story, but some of it was down among the down and outs, Mr Baxter was keen on doing things among the down and outs, just the same as he did with all the working people in Salford, and so we made the film with this boy and he was very good in it, I don't know if I've got any information, no. Then we did Theatre Royal after that which was Flanagan and Allen.

BA: That's interesting, Flanagan and Allen were more well known, apart from the Crazy Gang machinations, as far as cinema goes, OK COMBINATIONS for Sound, Alf's Button Afloat, it was interesting that again has just been on Channel 4 afternoon's programmes quite recently,

BE: What has been on

BA: Theatre Royal.

BE: Was it.

BA: It was interesting to see that Flanagan and Allen were on their own and not with the Crazy Gang.

BE: That's right

BA: And they were playing, Allen was the boss and Flanagan the prop man. Once or twice they worked in the Flanagan and Allen act.

BE: Yes, because they had established acts that they used to, they'd say shall we put the racehorse act in here, yes, oh they were wonderful to work with, they were marvellous, Flanagan and Allen.

BA: So Theatre Royal was that period.

BE: Yes, that came after Common Touch. Then we had Let the People Sing.

BA: Did you actually collaborate with Priestley on that, on your part of the scripting.

BE: No, we hardly saw him at all. He was very busy doing, he was very busy during the war time and doing all sorts of things, BEGINNINGS AND and we had absolutely free hand with Let the People Sing, but it's quite a long story, a big novel and an awful lot had to be cut out, and it was really a question of pruning most of the time, not getting much written in, of course you wouldn't compete with Priestley.

Peter Ustinov was an assistant director at that time, an assistant, assistant assistant, the third, fourth or fifth assistant director, he was lovely to work with because he was always composing something in his mind, he was there if you wanted him but he was never made to be a third assistant, he was a creative person all the time, absolutely creative. And we were doing Let the People Sing and this scene came in at the end, I've forgotten really what it was, an old professor arrives on the scene, I can't remember the story at all but I know it was someone who had to look very ancient, so somebody said get Peter Ustinov to do it and we did and of course he played the old man, who was about 80 and he was 20, and that's not happened often in films, you haven't done that and been able to get away with it, and I think he got away with it because he was lovely, he was marvellous. He used to come in the morning sometimes ready on the set at half past eight with a great French cream sandwich or something and eating a French cream sandwich for his breakfast and he was amusing all the time. He is still, I admire him tremendously for what he's done and what he's achieved, We at that time thought he must achieve something and I think he was seconded, he was in the army and loaned off to do a bit on the stage and then went into doing something for the army theatre and this was supposed to be the training which he was having, and he was great fun, and he achieved so much since then.

BA: Are there any other people that became quite well up and famous in the business. THAT YOU MET UP WITH & WORKED WITH

BE: We made a film later called Judgement Deferred and I think that was nearly the last film Mr Baxter made and it was sort of as if in the crypt of St Martin in the Fields where the down and outs came, and they had down there, it was called Judgement Deferred because they had a problem down there which they wanted a judgement on and they did a cod judgement scene with a down and out judge, somebody who had been a judge acting as if he were a judge still, and a lawyer who was a down and out doing his part. And there was a girl who came into it, a girl off the streets and guess who it was, it was Joan Collins and I think that was probably her first ever, and she was just a slip of a girl then. We never thought she was going to get where she's got.

BA: I've got that down on the list as being about 1951.

BE: That's right, that was a jump ahead to tell you that.

Because inbetween that we made a film called The Shipbuilders towards the end of the war, giving a boost to the Harl and Woolf, Glasgow. We did the, went up there but of course everything was shot, we did take one or two shots up there if I remember in the Harl and Woolf office, but only establishing shots, everything was built down at, that must have been British National too, I think that one was the last one we did at British National and then there was a little fracas which upset the apple cart a bit, there was some difficulty between the management, I think Mr Baxter disagreed with something they wanted to do, the management was then Lady Yule and somebody called Lew Jackson who had taken over management and it was running as Mr Baxter thought right and so he opted out.

And that was when he went to Ealing and made two films called Dreaming and Here Comes the Sun, with Flanagan and Allen again, although I may be wrong, because I can see Flanagan and Allen and I thought it was at British National, I'm sure it was, it must have been Theatre Royal, there was a very nice studio manager called Jerry Blattner, do you remember him, he was a very nice man and he was getting married and Flanagan and Allen said we must give him a real good send off and they had a meeting on the set where Flanagan and Allen were going to present him with the most wonderful teaset and it was all staged and everybody came on the set and Flanagan came out with the teaset and just as he handed it to Gerry Blattner, he dropped it just a second before, he dropped the whole thing and in war time of course China was, so it was really a very big thing they did, they bought that teaset between them and dropped it on the floor, purposely of course.

BA: It was a gag.

BE: Of course.

BA: What was Mr Blattner's reaction

BE: He was shattered, you see, he'd like the teaset but everybody laughed in the end, because it was just there idea of a joke, a wonderful joke. They would spare no expense to make a joke, because China really was at a premium, you couldn't buy it.

The other two, Dreaming and Here Comes the Sun, they were the two which have been shown quite recently and the ones I've just sold the rights to EMI because it was, they were only making very little and they all had to be distributed, as executor of Mr Baxter's will, and Flanagan and Allen had rights to those as well, so we had to get their permission and Ches's permission and then sadly they all died, Mr Baxter died, Flanagan died and then Ches died, and then Mrs Ches died, we were trying to get this all finished off with EMI so there would be no worry to anyone in the future, they would buy us out, afterall they were 40 years old those films and they had had their life really, so the only thing seemed to be to me to sell them out and it's only during this

last month that it's been actually finalised, a lot of it I'm afraid through solicitor's hold up, but there again not their fault entirely, because there again everybody died, the solicitor died, it's sad.

BA: The legacy is left as far as these things because there's financed generated by those.

BE: Even more now with videos, and all that sort of thing, it can be made out of anything which is really good enough to do that or of interest.

BA: I've got on this list, When We Are Married,

BE: I don't know where we made that, that was more like a stage play, it was a stage play, we hardly converted it at all, we just put it onto film, and again Mr Priestley he let us have a free hand with it.

BA: I handed realised that was yet again Priestley. Another title is Second Mate.

BE: The Second Mate was a children's film. Oh I've missed out all the children's films which we made, for the Children's Film Foundation. We made a lot which won one or two awards, Venice and for children's films. Do you remember Mary Field, she was the head of the Children's Film Foundation and she was a wonderful person, we used to have fun with her, we really used to do the film from start to finish and dub it at the end and I was concerned with all of it, the dubbing and everything and we did one film called The Dragon of Pendragon Castle which won a top award at Venice in the children's festival. And there was a dragon in it which had to act and we had a wonderful kit for them to act in, a wonderful costume, but the sound effects afterwards were very difficult, we were having crunching muscle shells, in the end I think we did it with sugar I think, then we had to think how was he going to walk, we got to the final shots of him having to walk out into the sea at Crantock, Cornwall, he had to walk like this and his tail coming up behind, walk down the sand and he goes into the sunset, into the sea, with all across the sand the marks of his feet, it was a very moving end to a picture, rather like Charlie Chaplin walking into the sunset, and Mary Field, we would get into the theatre, see the rushes in the theatre, and Mary Field said you've got to do the end of it yet?, about the dragon, how do you think of doing it, down on the floor she gets and she waddles about, and I get down on the floor on the other side and say no we better do it like this because how about the tail, we were being dragons, and the projectionists in the back were looking down thinking what are those two women, they must have gone crackers those two women, they didn't know we were actually being dragons. But she was full of fun.

The children's films we enjoyed doing, but with children's films the great education is going to a the first showing and you get

the truth. You really get the truth whether the thing is any good or not, no ~~holes~~ HOLDS barred.

BA: We had a nice experience once, we went to see SEE, it wasn't one of the children's films I'd worked on but it had been shot in Kenya about a white rhino and these children on their uncles's farms and the black people had been hunting the rhino for its horn and one had been injured and the vet was out there and they were carefully going up to this rhino which had a dart sticking ~~inside~~ IN THE SIDE OF it and there was a big worry it was going to charge and anyhow they got up to it and a bit of soothing talk and the rhino had let them take the dart out. And we were sitting in the circle and there were children all around of course and it was hush through the theatre as this very tense moment and we heard a little girl behind heave a sigh of relief as they got to the rhino and a little voice behind said oh he's friendly, all the reactions and jokes are so much appreciated.

BE: You also get the other side, if they're bored they start throwing things about, you think that will have to come out for the next showing, because that sequence is, it's true, it's very good, you get the truth about

BA: What they like and what they don't like.

BE: And everybody hits everybody over the head if they get bored.

BA: The Children's Film Foundation films are doing well now, they've been sold to Russia and lots of places.

BE: I'm sure there are a lot of very good ones.

BA: And the BBC have been showing a lot. But they of course stick mainly to the colour ones,

BE: Ours weren't colour at all.

BA: Were any of the pictures Mr Baxter made in colour.

BE: No they weren't. It was after that, of course. Second Mate was made on the river, we went up and down the river on a barge, and I got seasick on the Thames, because I was down underneath making notes and doing things, underneath in the hold and it was awful, the way it was swaying around underneath I nearly got seasick but it was a beautiful film because it took us all the way down the river from Shepperton, the story took us to Tower Bridge and underneath it and showed London off as well, and in the middle of it was a dream sequence in which the child was dreaming he was in the navy and he goes through all the sequences when he starts as a very junior and then gets up and up until he's the captain and we shot him as the captain and he was about SIZE this (side) on HMS Vanguard which was the top of the Queen's navy, it was a huge great warship, it was, I don't know what you'd call

it, not the king of the fleet but it was really a huge great, I've got a picture of it, I'll show you afterwards, they said afterwards that that dream sequence was a very good recruiting section of film for children going into the navy because they showed him imagining it all. And the funny thing was that he was such a little terror, he was a little, oh he boy who played the part, his name was Hannaford, I've never seen what he did since, he was brilliant but a little terror. But he played the part, when he was in the dream sequence and he played the captain of the Vanguard you would have thought he was the captain of the Vanguard, he behaved immaculately, he was in the uniform and he really thought he was captain and he couldn't have behaved better at all, it was an eye opener because he was a bit of a rough diamond but he behaved so beautifully when he came to the, so clothes make the man a little bit, do they or do they not.

BA: He was feeling his position.

BE: He played so beautifully and he looked so handsome too.

BA: I've got another one listed with a date of 1956, Ramsbottom Rides Again.

BE: Yes, that was Arthur Askey. We made two with Arthur Askey, one was Ramsbottom rides Again which was quite a success, was a sort of funny western, burlesque of a western, Sidney James was in it, it was good, I think it made money. The one we did afterwards was Make Mine a Million, that was very mediocre, it didn't seem to come off. But in all the films which John Baxter made they were very modest budgets all of them, and I don't think he ever went overbudget. On the whole, they must have made quite a bit of money. Some didn't make much, one or two didn't hit really the top line at all, you were very if you got your film shown and it just got it's own money back, it was something. But of course with Love on the Dole and The Common Touch and Let the People Sing and the Flanagans and Allens they all made a lot of money, and the Old Mother Rileys, Of course the money was nothing to do with Mr Baxter, they were British National, they were made for British National

BA: He worked at producer director under contract.

BE: It was only the last ones that was his own money, Dreaming and Here Comes the Sun and Second Mate and there may have been something else, but only the last ones he made were his own money.

BA: With Let the People Sing there's a (bit) BIG song number at the end with the song Let the People Sing, was that written for the picture.

BE: Why does that make me think of Gracie Fields.

BA: Did she sing it afterwards or had it been a popular song

before that.

BE: I suppose let the people sing, I can only sing that Mr Priestley had used the first line of a song by Gracie Fields, that's what I think, although you'd think let the people sing is a biblical quotations, it isn't, I don't think, I'm sure it isn't. I can see Gracie Fields walking on singing it.

BA: The other one was Sing as We Go.

BE: We're not thinking of that are we.

BA: Anyway that's something that we can find out about. It's just that these days a lot of popular songs come from films.

BE: But I don't think that did somehow.

BA: Your opening remarks were you not being interested in films, in fact quite disliking films, so how did you end up your association with John Baxter, you must have got to like ~~them.~~

BE: It was the work, the actual physical work of starting a film from nothing, Mr Baxter has an idea, I think we'll make a film about so and so and so and so, working from there and going right through, thinking what the budget would have to be, thinking what the script would have to be, who was going to write the script, going right through till you get to the dialogue sheets at the end, I don't suppose you have to do dialogue sheets now do you.

BA: I think so.

BE: At any rate you don't have to lay tracks, 10 different sound tracks for the dubbing session.

BA: Oh yes, even more.

BE: But you don't have to lay tracks, lay film tracks do you.

BA: Oh yes, those processes are much the same.

BE: I would have thought you'd have done things like that electronically somehow. Because it's wonderful the things they do.

BA: It's only just emerging, the sort of more electronic methods of doing sound editing, but still the main way is having all the componants recorded on sprocketed, what used to be optical soundtrack when you were working on it, and your last productions would have been magnetic, no it's still the sprocketted picture tracks, and music tracks and dialogue tracks

BE: We always used to have to lay a piece of buzz, I don't know if you have to do it any more.

BA: No, Atmos track.

BE: We used to call it buzz track, so much so that when I meet a friend of mine who was in the cutting room and we were approaching anywhere we know she says to me buzz and then the line she's going to say comes out, always in preparation she says that because we always used to have to think put a bit of buzz in before we come to this because it takes off the, it gives you an atmosphere, a bit of background noise instead of being dead, oh yes it used to be quite a line.

BA: I think the main changes you might see, when was your last visit to a studio.

BE: A long long time ago, 1960

BA: Not all that long time ago in the changes that you would have seen. Over the period you worked from when you started at Shepperton to when you did your last picture had you seen many changes in the style of production. 25 years.

BE: Of course they were all small pictures. With the big productions there must have been terrific changes but with the sort that we used to do.

BA: You didn't notice big differences on the technical side.

BE: You don't as you're going along do you.

BA: In the size of the equipment or the numbers of people.

BE: I suppose we had more people on the units and location unit, I don't know if we had more sound people, I think it got less in a way.

BA: It's got less as the years ~~went~~ go by.

BE: Because it's more compact, the equipment is more compact.

BA: There have been big changes in equipment. I suppose over there years, partly because of the war, there weren't so many technical innovations happening, because all research was going into the war, necessary defence and attack, armaments and so forth. it came to mind because you were mentioned laying tracks and thought that technology may have changed. But since then the big change has been instead of being on optical sound it's on magnetic which has improved the quality.

BE: Up to a point. But in the old days you used to be able to look at a piece of film and say that's where she's laughing, when it was optical sound, you could almost look at it, you could almost read the modulations, if you knew you were waiting for a high spot of noise and you wanted to sychronise that with something, it helped to look at it.

BE OH THESE CHEAP PRODUCTIONS AND OH CHILDRENS PICTURES TOO WHEN WE WERE DOING LOCATION SCENES WE USED TO TAKE THEM SILENT AND THEN WHEN WE CAME TO DUBBING WE ALWAYS HAD TO PUT MUSIC OVER BECAUSE THERE WAS NO SOUND AT ALL. PEOPLE USED TO SAY I WISH THEY WOULDN'T PUT SO MUCH MUSIC ON THE FILMS. SOME OF THE CHEAPER FILMS ~~HAD~~ USED TO HAVE TO JOLLY WELL HAVE A LOT OF MUSIC BECAUSE OTHERWISE IT WAS DEAD AS ANYTHING. YOU COULD GET AWAY WITH IT WALKING DOWN A COUNTRY LANE. IN FACT THAT ONE WE DID SONG OF THE ROAD WE HAD ELGAR'S ENIGMA AND VARIATIONS ALL THE WAY THROUGH. THAT WAS THE ONE WITH ~~BRAMS~~ BARNSBY WILLIAMS AND THE HORSE. WITH THE HORSE GOING OUT OF FASHION AND NO GOOD TO ANYBODY, HIS HORSE WAS GOING TO BE PUT DOWN. HE COULDN'T BARE IT SO HE SAID HE WOULD TAKE IT WITH HIM AND GO AND SEE WHAT JOBS HE COULD GET WITH A HORSE. THAT WAS THE STORY WHICH WAS RATHER GOOD. IT WAS A LOVELY STORY. WE TOOK HIM ALL OVER THE DYKE AT BRIGHTON AND ON THE SOUTH DOWNS AND EVERYWHERE. THE LOVELY OLD SHIRE HORSE THAT WAS THE SKETCH HE'S DONE (PICTURE OF HORSE HEAD SKETCH)

B.A. WAS THAT THE ONLY PICTURE YOU MADE WITH BRAMSBY WILLIAMS?

BE. BRAMSBY WILLIAMS WAS OFTEN IN OUR PICTURES. WHENEVER WE DID ANY DOWN AND OUTS HE NEARLY ALWAYS HAD A PART. WE DID ABOUT 3 PICTURES WITH A CRYPT COMING IN AND DOWN AND OUTS AND HE WAS ALWAYS IN DOING ONE OF HIS CHARACTER SKETCHES, WITHOUT HIS TEETH ONE TIME. HE USED TO ENJOY THAT. HE USED TO ADMIRE MR BAXTER I THINK.

BA. THE TWO PICTURES YOU SHOWED US THE ONE OF THE HORSES HEAD AND THE POPPIES POINT TO HIM (B.W.) BEING QUITE A GOOD ARTIST AS WELL AS ACTOR.

BE: He was, that was very good I think. And there was another one, his black and white sketches, he always used to send his Christmas cards with a sketch. Bransby Williams was one of my father's great, he always took us as children to see Bransby Williams in things so when I saw him when I was grown up I thought how wonderful it was to be doing a picture with Bransby Williams. Of course, he was so famous for his Dickens sketches and quick change artists. He would come in as Peggarty on moment on one side of the scene and go out the other side and come in as Macawber.

BA: We mentioned just a little bit before we started about ACTT and you said that you could see why in the early days why it was a necessity.

BE: It didn't affect me much, because I came up through working with a producer from the start and gradually, gradually got into more technical jobs. I did belong to the ACT at one time, I can't remember one, but when I got onto scrips I was in the screenwriters association, but I didn't, not being politically minded I wasn't very well up in what the ACT did but I did realise why they had to have a union because in the very old days when we didn't have any unions the actors, and perhaps the directors, would want to work all hours of the days and night, and perhaps not in the day, only in the night, the other staff and the technicians had to fall with it and wait at the studio all day while they were perhaps waiting for one of the stars or directors who wouldn't turn up till about 6 o'clock in the evening. Something had to be done to save the electricians from having a really a very very difficult time and working extremely long hours.

SIDE 3, TAPE 2

BE: I suppose Judgement Deferred was made for Group 3 which was the one Joan Collins was in.

BA: What was John Baxter's position with Group 3.

BE: I think he was managing director, I don't remember,

BA: Perhaps we can go on a little bit more with Group 3 activities.

BE: Judgement Deferred, in that we had a young girl doing one of her first pictures, she was a very good actress and quite a young thing and her name was Joan Collins. WE DIDN'T QUITE EXPECT SHE WAS GOING TO TURN OUT AS SHE HAS DONE - IT MUST HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE FIRST FILMS SHE EVER MADE I remember her going home in the bus one day and she'd somehow got locked out of the studio and all she'd got on was a mackintosh, and she'd had to go home because all her clothes were locked in the studio and she had to go home by bus from Edgeware in a mackintosh, buttoned up mackintosh, trying to disguise herself, I can't see her doing that now.

BA: Only for a publicity stunt.

BE: That might have been a publicity stunt. Now that was Judgement Deferred, there were some lovely people in that.

BA: During the time at Group 3 John Baxter was connected with the Everest film.

BE: That was towards the end, he was connected with the Everest film and apparently there was some doubt whether the Everest film was going to be sponsored by Group 3 and there was a good deal of argument I think between Michael Balcon and John Baxter and the NFFC who were backing it financially, who would have been backing it financially, it was really only Mr Baxter's effort's which allowed them or that they decided to sponsor the film, and of course the terrific excitement when the news came through that they'd climbed Everest, because they thought it would have been a miracle if they had climbed it and of course the lovely part of it was that all the film came back to Beaconsfield STUDIOS after it had been to the labs, I think it was Denham Labs, I'm not sure, when it had been to the labs and Commander Hunt

BA: He later became Sir John Hunt.

BE: And Sir Edmund Hilary and Tensin, sherpar TENSING and his wife, all came and watched the first rushes and I was privileged to be in the back row and it really was a very privileged moment seeing all that film coming through, miles and miles of film, and the first showing of the film to the Queen, that was also a very thrilling end to the whole matter and very, what shall I say, it

was a very satisfactory end after the struggles of getting the sponsorship.

BA: You were mentioning while we were having our tea, the problems that there had been with the financing of films, Mr Baxter had been very successful throughout the war years and before in doing ~~in~~ financing but after the war it became a problem, what are your comments. HIS

BE: It all became very difficult after the war, I suppose television was creeping in, wasn't it. I suppose television was already creeping in, because BBC Television must have been going then, and it became more and more difficult to get finance for the smaller sort of picture, everything had to be a leading star coming over from America, because they had to get sales in America in order to make a film worth while, to make any money at all, you could hardly make money in our country alone, if it was going to only have English distribution, the same must hold good now doesn't it.

BA: To a large extent. The costs are such that you have to take a lot of money before you start going into profit. But you don't think it was because of the style of film he was connected with, social awareness.

BE: Yes, I think it was, it getting completely out of date to do that type of film, they were all beginning to be sexy films and much more spectacular and exciting, yes action packed.

BA: I suppose it was a slight reaction to the war time that people now didn't want to worry or be bothered with other people's problems quite the same way, they wanted a more glamorous outlook on life.

BE: Yes it must have been that of course, but that was a good many years after, but these things do come round a little bit in circles. Certainly the beginning of filmmaking as I was THAT concerned with, even then you were always trying to bring in something American in the hope that it would catch the American market, even it's silly little way, someone remotely connected with America, oh they'll want to see this film because such and such is in it, it might only be a dog that had got some connection with American, so long as you got something in, even in the cheaper films, if you got American distribution you were absolutely made, the same happens now, I'm sure. SO SO

BA: I've always had the opinion that the best British films are the ones which are truly British and have made no bowing to the international markets in anyway at all and I suppose in some ways why Love on the Dole was so successful and still remains a very successful film because it couldn't be anything but about a British subject, a British problem.

BE: And all the other pictures that Mr Baxter made were all

typically English, or British or whatever.

BA: I feel it's a pity that not more films like that are being made today. There are a certain amount of topics like that being made in some of the tv films.

BE: There are some very good programmes on tv, almost documentaries, you're not sure if they're documentaries or not. And that was really like Mr Baxter, his style was a sort of documentary thing about it. Of course John Grierson was attached to Group 3 when we got as far as Group 3.

BA: Great leanings OF to people from the old Crown Unit.

BE: It was the Crown Film Unit and also the people who got a start directing were people from, a lot of them were connected with the Crown Film Unit, Cyril Frankel was one, John Eldredge came from Ealing, but there have been one or two that had there start there and eventually made it including cameramen, if only I could remember their names but I can't at the moment.

BA: Peter Hennessy was one I know was associated with Group 3, and Jonah Jones was a well known cameraman during the war. A lot of people did get experience which helped them transfer from documentary to feature film work.

BE: Film editors did too. Who was it at Beaconsfield, I think it was George Burgess who was in charge of the sound department.

BA: It could well have been

BE: I always found him rather difficult, when it came to dubbing sessions. Some people are easy to work with, I suppose they had good reasons to be irritable over mistakes. Sometimes when you got your dubbing tracks all ready and your picture all ready, and the first time you see it is when its shown to the dubbing mixer and you found you had something slightly wrong with it, he used to fly off the handle and it can so easily happen, not through carelessness, but it's very difficult thing to do to assemble everything so that everything is on absolutely the right moment, if something was a couple of frames out of sync he used to throw a fit.

BA: He used to show his irritation.

BE: The person I wasn't working with, I was giving her a hand as an associate producer really, Vi Burdon, who was a very well known editor in those days, and she was very competent, awfully hard working, wouldn't leave any stone unturned, but you're bound to, that's the first time you've seen the picture through so you never get a chance to know it's all in sync and I know he used to get a little bit edgy, I don't know whether it was because it was women, but a lot of editors are women, in those days.

BA: Yes they have for a long time been allowed to exercise that craft.

BE: He was supposed to be a very good mixer.

BA: That was at

BE: That was at Beaconsfield.

BA: He JOHN BAXTER finished with Group 3 when that finished or earlier.

BE: He did a couple of films for Jack Hilton, one of which was Ramsbottom Rides Again and Jack Hilton was associated with the television company TWW which was Television Wales and the West of England, and they ran into difficulties, not on the news side and documentary side but on the other side, fiction and drama and so on and they asked John Baxter to join the company which he did and he took me with him.

Then in the end I ran the script department there which was unlike any script department to do with the film business, because it was dealing with all the scripts coming in from the outside world, who thought they'd make a good programme. And of course they all had to be replied to and that was a tedious job, nothing like I'd done before, it was a sitting down job and by that time I was quite glad to be sitting down instead of running round on my feet. Then John Baxter became managing director there. Then I retired on my 60th birthday from TWW and it came to an end on my 60th birthday, TWW was taken over by Harlech Television and it happened to be the very day we finished was the day on which I retired, it was a sad day in a way to retire, I wouldn't have retired normally, but I had my mother who was then getting on in years and I nursed her until she was 96. I wouldn't have really been able to go on working. But it was a wonderful career and how very very lucky I was to have the opportunity, a) to start and b) get the opportunities as they came along to move on from continuity onto the production side and I had a finger in all the pies, every pie, by finishing ~~off~~ up as associate producer.

BA: And John Baxter himself retired shortly after the finish of TWW.

BE: He was then 72, so he retired then. He hated being retired. But he had an elderly wife, older than himself and that was a bit of a responsibility. He felt he couldn't give all his time to films, he tried to get ideas and set them down on paper, and we'd meet up together and I'd type them out but he gradually stopped all that. Only because we both had private, personal things which had to be done, illnesses to be coped with and so on. And then of course the sad bit about John Baxter, he died before his wife, she was 93 and he was 78 and he went first, very suddenly, and she was left at 93 and I think she thought to herself that's

enough, she went to the funeral and carried it out most beautifully, the way that she would have done, and she came back and within 10 days of his dying, she died. They'd had a life time together, at 93 suddenly the one person who'd looked after you all your life wasn't there anymore and she was all on her own, but it was so beautifully done really, she just sat down and that was it.

BA: Did either you or he ever think you'd be seeing all his work come back on television.

BE: No, of course not.

BA: A whole new audience.

BE: Of course.

BA: Looking back on the productions that you worked on is there any one which you'd call your favourite.

BE: I don't know. I think perhaps Common Touch was one of the very good ones but I think they were all, they were all so different it is very difficult to assess them, compare them with each other really, they really were all different. Some were from stories by Priestley, others were ones which we'd started ourselves from a few phrases, and no it was extremely interesting variety of films. And the locations, when we did the locations up in Edinburgh, Scotland, the experiences that you had there which happened to come into the work, you get all sorts of wonderful experiences that you wouldn't have had in the normal way.

BA: Yes you learn about a lot of things which are going on which you'd never have known about because you happen to be there.

Perhaps we better finish it off there.

Thank you very much Barbara.