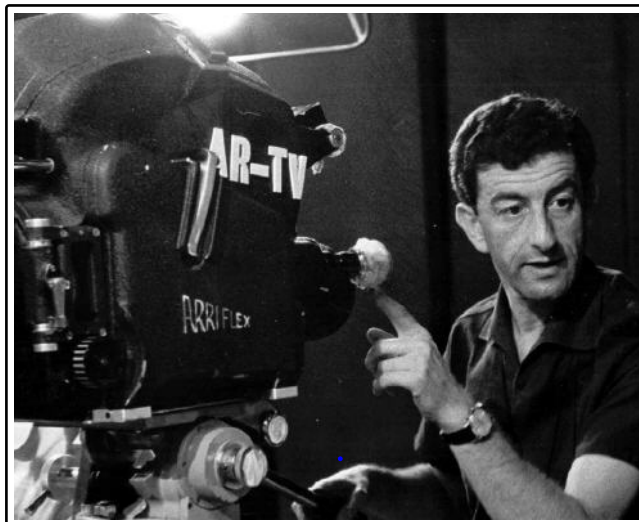


A Life Rewound

Peter Morley



Memoirs of a freelance
Producer and Director

A Life Rewound

Peter Morley

Published in Great Britain in November 2006
by the Royal Television Society
marking the first instance of an
electronically generated book
being made available
to the RTS on the
Internet

Copyright © 2006 Peter Morley

The Right of Peter Morley to be identified as the author of
this work has been asserted by the author in accordance
with the Copyright, Designs and Patents act of 1988

CONTENTS

Part One

Chapter		Page
	Contents	i, ii, iii
	Acknowledgements	iv
	Introduction	1
1	1924-33 Berlin. Family breaks up.	2
2	1933-39 Bunce Court School in Kent.	5
3	1939-41 War declared. School evacuated to Shropshire. School Certificate. First job in Wem, then Birmingham.	10
4	1941 London Blitz. Projectionist (Rewind-boy) at the Dominion Cinema, Tottenham Court Road. 1943 Army service. Name change.	14
5	1943-44 Royal Armoured Corps. Tank training.	20
6	1944-45 Active service with 8th Hussars in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. End of War in Europe. Victory Parade in Berlin. Seconded to guard Churchill at the Potsdam Conference.	23
7	1945-46 8th Hussars stationed in Lingen. Takes up Gliding.	34
8	1947-55 Demobilised. Projectionist. ACT Union ticket. Cutting-room tea-boy. Film editor, writer, director of documentaries.	39
9	1955-57 Launch of ITV. Signs freelance contract with Associated-Rediffusion. Production Assistant Jane Tillett. Joins Guild of Television Producers and Directors. <i>Directs first 'live' and filmed programmes: People are Talking Exploring fan worship - a new phenomenon in the UK: Fan Fever MP's constituency problems -13 episodes Members' Mail</i>	47
10	1956-58 'Captive Cinema' season at the BFI's National Film Theatre showing some of Associated-Rediffusion's early documentaries. <i>Magazine programmes on London's Theatres: On Stage ITV celebrates its 2nd birthday: Salute to Show Business Wolf Mankowitz in conversation - 13 episodes: Conflict</i>	58

Part Two

Chapter		Page
11	1959 <i>First one-hour documentaries for ITV:</i> <i>Tyranny - The Years of Adolf Hitler</i> <i>Israel Rises - Birth of a Nation</i>	65
12	1959 <i>Directs ITV's first opera. A live studio-based production of Benjamin Britten's 1954 original work: The Turn of the Screw</i>	76
13	1960 <i>Outside-Broadcast: Princes Margaret's Wedding</i> <i>One-hour documentary: The Two Faces of Japan</i> Appointed ITV network producer/director for major outside-broadcasts. Advance planning for Winston Churchill's State Funeral.	90
14	1960 Magazine interview with Editor of 'Film'. <i>One-hour documentary: The Heartbeat of France</i>	104
15	1961-63 <i>Producer of ITV's weekly flagship current affairs programme with over 200 editions: This Week</i> <i>ITV Network Production: Tribute to President Kennedy</i> Marries Jane Tillett in 1962.	111
16	1963 Member of the British Film Institute's Television Acquisitions Committee. 1964 <i>One-hour documentary: Black Marries White -The Last Barrier</i>	130

Part Three

17	1965 <i>Directs ITV's five-hour (45 cameras) outside-broadcast: The State Funeral of Sir Winston Churchill</i>	137
18	1965 <i>Documentary about the London Symphony Orchestra: LSO - The Music Men</i>	149
19	1965-69 Chairman of Society of Film and Television Arts. Associated-Rediffusion loses its franchise. <i>13-part series: The Life and Times of Lord Mountbatten</i>	156
20	1969 Appointed OBE. Continues freelancing with other ITV companies. <i>Outside-broadcast: Investiture of Prince Charles at Caernarvon</i> <i>Documentary: A Child of the Sixties</i>	180

Chapter		Page
21	1970 Articles on the 'Future of a 2nd ITV channel'. <i>Documentary on World War I anti-German hysteria: The First Casualty</i>	187
22	1971-74 <i>13- part history of Europe in the 20th Century for BBC-1:</i> <i>The Mighty Continent</i>	194
Part Four		
23	1975 Foundation Trustee of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts - BAFTA. Article: 'Producers - who do we think we are?' The Queen opens Princess Anne's BAFTA Theatre. Family moves to Highgate.	202
24	1976 <i>Feature film for EMI celebrating the Queen's Silver Jubilee:</i> <i>25 Years - Impressions</i>	208
25	1976-77 Videodisc consultant to RCA in New York. Member of the European Audio Visual Committee	214
26	1977 <i>12-part series with Harold Wilson:</i> <i>Prime Minister on Prime Ministers</i> Article: Videodiscs 'The New Grammar'. <i>First Videodisc production for EMI: Christmas Carols from Cambridge</i>	217
27	1978 <i>90-minute documentary for Yorkshire Television:</i> <i>Kitty - Return to Auschwitz</i>	224
28	1979-80 <i>Quartet of documentaries for Yorkshire Television:</i> <i>Women of Courage</i> <i>The German: It Mattered To Me</i> <i>The Norwegian: A Hard Press On The Bell</i> <i>The Pole: Twins Were Born In Paviac</i> <i>The Brit : My Number Wasn't Up</i>	237
29	1981-90 Controller of Programmes Thorn-EMI Videodisc. 1991-2003 Freelance videodisc production. Lectures, presentations and screenings of programme portfolio in the UK, USA and Canada.	255
30	Afterthoughts	260

Acknowledgements

David Osterley (of Archibuild Limited) has been the owner of the Associated-Rediffusion Television catalogue since 1991 and has kindly given me permission to reproduce 70 stills from that unique collection.

The Broadlands Archive has agreed to release 19 stills for use from my television series 'The Life and Times of Lord Mountbatten' with this acknowledgement: 'Photographs courtesy of the Broadlands Archive'.

BBC Television has granted permission for the use of 12 stills from 'The Mighty Continent' with this acknowledgement: 'Images courtesy of the BBC'.

The Imperial War Museum has given permission for the use of their stills taken at the IWM to mark the launch of the Mountbatten series in 1969 with this acknowledgement: 'Photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London'.

I thank EMI Films for the use of stills from the Queen's Silver Jubilee Film "25 Years - Impressions" and also from one of the first VHD videodisc productions in the UK "Christmas Carols from King's College" with this acknowledgement: 'Images courtesy EMI Films'.

The British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) made stills available taken during an Academy function with Princess Anne with this acknowledgement: 'Photographs courtesy of BAFTA'.

From a total of nearly 250 photographs reproduced in these Memoirs almost 90 are from my own archive.

I want to pay tribute to everyone who has assisted in the task of helping to identify these photographs and wish to stress that every effort has been made to establish the owners' rights. If there are any regrettable omissions or misattributions I will be pleased to rectify them.

My thanks go to Clare Colvin, Archivist of the Royal Television Society and to Murray Weston, Director of the British Universities Film & Video Council for their generous help in setting out the parameters for adapting these Memoirs to the electronic medium, and to Kate Simmons, the Royal Television Society's Webmaster, for her reformatting expertise - the first instance of a work of this scope to be published on the Internet by the RTS.

Introduction

When I first started on this project in 2003, with two overworked index fingers searching for letters on the keyboard, I had misgivings about it. Who was it aimed at? Would it turn out to be solely for the family, or for the world at large? Or was it merely an act of gross self-indulgence? I decided that the best way to proceed was simply to get things down on paper, or in this case, the hard disk, and then see what would happen.

Over the years, it has been my experience that the moment one starts on a new film or television programme, it takes on a soul of its own, making its own unexpected and often positive contributions to the final result. And, once again, as month-by-month the word-count grew, this new project also began to have a mind of its own – it began to tell me that the film and television archives would probably be the most logical targets and depositories for this narrative. I hope that media students, to-day and in years to come, may find these recollections by a free-lance director – dating back to a time before the birth of Independent Television in the UK – readable and maybe useful.

Sadly, I have never kept a diary – but I have an attic full of letters, scripts, press cuttings, brochures and tons of photographs. This motley collection, plus a fairly crisp memory of the years gone by, have made it possible for me to catalogue – I trust with not too many inaccuracies – the main incidents of, what might be called, a fairly eventful life. I must confess that some anecdotes which I have lunched out on over the years have, in the act of retelling them, suffered a degree of embellishment that have surprised me, and I have taken this opportunity to unembellish them. I have endeavoured, as an eightieth-plus birthday present to myself, to track down these misdemeanours and put matters right.

I have recalled my early formative years: family background, schooling, wartime service, etc. – the ingredients that eventually shaped me, and influenced my career – and occasionally I had to ask myself: ‘Who do I think I am?’ I must confess that I have some difficulty in providing a sensible answer. I must leave that to others.

Hopefully, my family – my wife, Jane, and sons, Jonathan and Benjamin – won’t think that they have drawn the short straw, because I have only included major family landmarks covering the past eighty years. I feel they will understand.

And if anyone should think that I have been journeying on an extended ego-trip – rewinding my life – they are probably right, and I have enjoyed every moment of it.

Chapter 1

During the night of 27th February 1933, the Reichstag went up in flames. Goering and Goebbels had allegedly caused the building to be torched, subsequently claiming it as a communist plot. I clearly recall the next day when my elder brother, Tommy, aged eleven, announced with great excitement that he had seen the whole building ablaze on the way home from school. Just a few days before, leaning over the parapet of the balcony of our 4th floor Berlin flat in the Kaiserallee, I was mesmerised, as only an eight year-old could be, at the sight and sound of an endless parade of 'brownshirts' strutting in step to their military music, with the standard bearers flaunting their swastika flags and banners.

There is very little else I remember about Berlin. Born in 1924, occasionally trivial happenings from my very early days appear from nowhere, ring their little bell, and then slip away again. But now, in 1933, incidents are firmly stamped on my memory – everything was about to change. The Reichstag fire had triggered events that were to spell the break-up of our family.

My father, Willy Meyer, ran a small company, wholesaling and exporting women's fashion (the rag trade). He spent a good part of every year in London where he had opened an office in the early twenties. He had developed a great affection for England. He loved London, which had become his second home.

On 30th January 1933, Hindenburg offered the Chancellorship of Germany to Hitler, signalling the birth of the Third Reich. My parents, both Jewish, had already decided that we should leave Germany as soon as arrangements could be made, and England became the obvious choice. My mother, Alice, had located a school in Ulm, in Germany, which was to relocate to Kent later that year, and Tommy and I, with our elder sister, Anne, had been accepted. In April, my father happened to be in London when the boycott of Jewish businesses was set in motion, and he learnt that his premises in Berlin had been burned down by a Nazi mob. He decided to remain in London, and in a panic, our mother arranged for us to leave Berlin immediately, without so much as closing up the flat or storing its contents. For Anne, Tommy and for me, it was to mean much more than saying goodbye to a family home.

Anne, five years senior to me, had sensed the coming crisis in our parents' relationship. Our mother was artistic, extrovert and fun loving, all the things that our father was not. She had collected a circle of friends around her, artists, actors and writers. Theatre going and parties were her passion. She was also conducting a long-standing and not very secret affair with Harry Kahn. Our father, to whom her life-style was alien, painfully accepted all this, and for the sake of keeping the family whole, he suffered this hopeless situation in silence.

'Uncle' Harry, as we knew him, had been a frequent visitor to our home. He was a journalist, author, playwright and scriptwriter. He had long stints in Hollywood, adapting scripts and overseeing foreign language version films. And it was on one of his trips back to Berlin that he presented me with a packet of pure magic – Wrigley's chewing gum. That persuaded me that I wanted to get into films – long before I ever saw one. Anyway, I like to think that that was the motivation.

In April 1933, just two months after Hitler became Chancellor, with our father in London, and our school not yet in place, our mother took us, via Frankfurt, to Switzerland. There was a scheduled stop for the train in Frankfurt, and I remember stepping down onto the platform to be greeted by my grandmother, uncles, aunts and cousins (my mother's family hailed from Frankfurt). They plied us with food and drink to sustain us for the rest of the journey. It was to be the last time I saw my grandmother, Bella Alzheimer, and my mother's sister, Resa, and husband, Oscar Klau. They were all to perish in Theresienstadt concentration camp.

When we arrived in Bern, we boarded with a Swiss family, arranged by our mother, who then set off for Paris to plan a new life with Harry Kahn. I remember having to endure a fearsome teacher at our new school who rapped me across the knuckles with a ruler every time my handwriting did not come up to his liking. In spite of that, I enjoyed the next six months. The novelty of a different country, with its magical mountain scenery, made the break from Berlin easy for me to accept. The three of us were now, for the first time, on our own.

The break-up of our home hardly affected me. I was too young to appreciate its significance. I cannot recall any pain at the separation from our parents. There was little closeness between my mother and me. She had different priorities, and concentrated on her own pursuits. She had handed over the normal motherly duties and functions to our nanny. My father spent a lot of time in London and I had become used to his absences. In any case, I was now preoccupied with the upheaval and the excitement of starting a new life in a new country, and as it turned out, I was to be with a lot of other children who had also said goodbye to their parents and their homes.

In the late summer of 1933, we travelled by train to Paris on the way to England. I remember my mother and Harry meeting us and taking us to a hotel near the Eiffel Tower. It was in the evening and I was much impressed by a glittering Citroen advertisement, which ran up and down each side of that huge tower. The next day our mother accompanied the three of us to England. She deposited us, temporarily, in a school for girls near Walmer in Kent, which took on holiday children during the long summer break. My memories of this short stay are vague, except that I can clearly recall my introduction to cornflakes. Kellogg's is a name that never fails to remind me of this interlude. And on 5th October, the three of us travelled down to Dover, each with one suitcase containing our modest possessions, to meet the arrival of the ferry that was carrying a strange cargo – our new school. The new life was about to start.



My parents Willy and Alice married in 1913



Brother Tommy (5) Sister Anne Marie (8)

1927



Me, aged 3

Chapter 2

Bunce Court School, in Kent, was unique. It was labelled ‘progressive’; a rarity in England at the time, as it was a non-denominational, co-educational boarding school. And its arrival, lock, stock and barrel from Germany, was entirely due to the prescience of one person.

In the early twenties, Anna Essinger returned to Germany from the United States. She had been there to finish her degree course and then joined the academic staff of the German Department of the University in Wisconsin. While she was in the States she was influenced by a new philosophy which some schools were developing; it became known as ‘progressive education’. She was also deeply influenced by her Quaker friends and adopted their beliefs. And it was with a Quaker mission that she returned to Germany to help bring relief to those who had suffered the ravages of World War I. In 1925, she founded and became head of a boarding school in Ulm. Based on her experiences in America, she put into practice her enthusiasm for the new progressive pedagogy. She created a family atmosphere within the school, promoting mutual respect for fellow pupils and staff, with a shared sense of responsibility towards each other and a pride in sharing the day-to-day running of the school.

Her boarding school in Ulm catered for all children, regardless of religious background, but with the rapid rise of anti-Semitism in Germany, she began to accept more and more children from Jewish homes. And when Hitler came to power in 1933, this farsighted and brave woman raised funds in England, mainly from Quaker sources, enabling her to purchase a large country property with ample grounds; it was to become the new home for her school in the heart of Kent, and she named it Bunce Court. She then shipped the staff and all the children from Ulm to Kent. A stupendous organisational feat.

My sister, brother and I were at the Dover ferry quay to meet the school and, together in a convoy of buses, we travelled to the school’s new location near the village of Otterden. It was to become my home for the next seven years.

The youngest in the party, and I was one of them, were accommodated in ‘The Cottage’. This was in a field, a quarter of a mile away from the main building. There were about twenty of us and it was pretty spartan, with no electricity at first, but we soon turned it into a comfortable new home for us. A month later, in November, our parents came down to check that the three of us had settled in and were well looked after. Our father had taken up residence in London, in the King’s Court Hotel, off Bayswater, and our mother had come over from Paris and stayed there for this brief period.

Months before, on leaving Berlin, she had made up her mind to abandon our father – and the three of us – and go her own way. She chose this moment to make the final break, and the morning after their return from the school to the King’s Court Hotel, he found a letter from her, stating that she was leaving him for good and was going to live permanently in Paris with Harry Kahn. She also took £200 in cash, the last of his money. From London, he begged her not to desert the family, but to join him back in England. He made desperate last-minute appeals to her by letter, telephone and telegram, but of no avail. They would never meet again and he would never forgive her.

Years before, our parents had acquired a Renoir and a Holder (I don't know how) which hung in the living and dining room of our Berlin home. Max, one of my father's two brothers, who was living in the States, had agreed that in the event of the family leaving Germany, he would undertake the task of closing down the Berlin flat, and then oversee the sale of the paintings to raise the funds to pay our school fees.

I recall my seven years at Bunce Court with great affection. It was a happy time. Teachers were known by their first names, or nicknames thought up by the pupils. The essence was teamwork. Formal lessons and study went hand-in-hand with the running of the school. All of us cheerfully shared the duties of bed-making, washing-up, cleaning and polishing, gardening, mending clothes, carrying out furniture repairs, tending to the orchard, looking after the chickens and the rest of it.

Music, art and sport occupied much of our spare time. For those who were self-motivated and keen to learn, the chances were there to grasp. The standard of teaching was exceptional. I must admit I was more interested in practical pursuits: carpentry, making electrical repairs, building radios, laying telephone lines connecting some of the school's outbuildings. I enjoyed art classes, especially when engaged in design work. Maths was anathema, although geometry, because of its tangible shapes, had some appeal. I had violin lessons, but abandoned these. I couldn't bear the sound of my playing. I was too fond of music.

My mother came over from Paris for a brief visit to London and to Bunce Court. It was my 10th birthday and she presented me with a tennis racquet and a punnet of strawberries. It would be eleven years before we were to meet again.

We were in the heart of the country, with few outside distractions. Contact with the outside world was sparse. In the summer, on weekends, the Wall's ice-cream man came up on his tricycle from Lenham, a small town a few miles away. On the front of his contraption was the slogan 'Stop me and buy one.' I did, if I could spare a penny from my monthly pocket money allowance of one shilling and six pence (7½p).

When school holidays came round, I went up to London to stay with my father in his small King's Court Hotel in Leinster Gardens, off the Bayswater Road. He could not afford to put me up for any length of time, so that I just spent the first few days with him. I then went off to Sussex to stay with a large family, the Corbett-Fishers, who 'had taken me on'. That was a true stroke of luck. They were liberal, public-spirited, generous, and, what we would now call, very laid-back. Cicely Corbett-Fisher had given financial support to the school, and offered an open house to a pupil for holidays. Although Bunce Court had become a substitute home, with a special bond between children and staff alike, it was the Corbett-Fishers who provided a true family home. I was now to spend all my holidays with them, and it was during these formative years that this happy-go-lucky and warm atmosphere must have had a great influence on me. It must have helped to shape my attitude to other people, the way I think and speak, my sense of humour, and all the other idiosyncrasies that I am both blessed with and burdened by.

One of their passions was motor racing. They owned a racing car, an MG K3 Magnette, previously owned by Tazio Nuvolari. The highlights of my holidays were

meetings at Brooklands and Crystal Palace. I used to help with the timekeeping in the pits. It was wildly exciting, and it gave me an appetite for the sport, which has never left me. However, I do miss the old style racing cars, with their distinctive designs and drivers with their leather helmets and goggles, sitting up so that you could see their expressions as they grappled with the steering wheel. The sport has sadly lost a lot of its character.

It was at the start of the summer holiday in 1935 that, together with my sister and brother, our father treated us to a visit to the Marble Arch Pavilion. I was very excited, as it was to be my first visit to a cinema. My first film. It was called *The Camels Are Coming* with Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge. And it was also my first exposure to a newsreel and a Disney cartoon. After that, down in Sussex, we used to go at least once every holiday to a cinema in East Grinstead. I recall having an embarrassing accident out of sheer fright when we saw the horror movie *The Old Dark House* with Boris Karloff. But rich musicals with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers made up for all that.

Anne left Bunce Court for London in 1936 to take up secretarial training, and two years later Tommy left the school and started as an apprentice chef at the Dorchester Hotel. They lived in rented rooms in Clarendon Road, near Holland Park, and saw a great deal of our father. By 1937, he had opened an office with a small showroom in Hanover Street, off Regents Street. Clients would come up to the fourth floor by lift to see his various lines of imported women's wear. As he could no longer afford to stay at the King's Court Hotel, he installed a bed in his small stock room, and (quite illegally) made his office his home.

During those few days in London at the start of each holiday, I stayed in his office in Hanover Street. I spent most of my time, hours, in fact, in the News Theatre in Oxford Street, just round the corner. It screened newsreels, cartoons, travelogues and general interest shorts. Quite often I stayed to see the whole programme a second time round. The magic of the movies, the silver screen, as it was called, got under my skin.

In 1937, I had a most distressing experience. For the first time in my life I found myself facing something, which I simply could not comprehend. As I record it now, sixty plus years later, I admit that I have always felt reluctant to share this episode with others. It concerns the Jewish ceremony of confirmation, the *bar mitzvah*.

Both my parents came from fairly prosperous families in Germany, observing the accepted religious rituals associated with well-ordered, middle-class Jewish homes. My mother, so she told me years later, reluctantly joined in, merely paying lip service to it all. I have no childhood memories of this, but I was told that our father had a strong sense of duty and took the lead to ensure that his children would perpetuate the Jewish tradition. And when the family home broke up and he came to live in London on his own, he must have found it very hard to adjust.

I had travelled up, as usual, from Bunce Court to spend a week with him, before going down to Sussex to stay with the Corbett-Fishers. I had now reached the age of thirteen, and he had made arrangements for my confirmation. He took me to see a Rabbi in a local synagogue off the Bayswater Road for tuition and preparation for the *bar mitzvah* ceremony. The date was set and I was to spend an hour a day for the next five days with the Rabbi for tuition. I felt very apprehensive. Although the great majority of children in Bunce Court were Jewish, we lived in a non-denominational

environment, so there was no personal Jewish experience to draw on. Looking back on it now, it is not surprising that going to see a Rabbi for tuition, and what's more, to learn enough Hebrew to be able to participate in the ritual of the confirmation ceremony was a daunting prospect. But as the whole experience was going to be over in one week, for my father's sake, I would do my best.

The Rabbi turned out to be a man with a very short fuse. During the second session, when he realised that I had failed to learn the Hebrew alphabet overnight, he went into a rage and slapped me. He then tried to get me to repeat after him, letter by letter, word by word, the passage I was due to read at the ceremony. Every time I hesitated or stumbled he brought a ruler down on my hands. I simply was at a loss to know what to make of this. My father always looked forward to my return from these sessions, but I was too frightened and too ashamed to let on.

On the last day of these painful visits, the Rabbi made me write down the passage phonetically. He had not only failed to beat Hebrew into me, but what is worse, he had not devoted any time to explain to me the solemnity, or the significance of the *bar mitzvah* service.

On the day, my father had asked a handful of his friends to the synagogue. I recall feeling scared, but I managed to utter the words on cue, and somehow got away with it. In short, a ceremony that had not been properly explained to me, with words that, for me, were just gibberish. It was a total farce.

Anne reminded me years later that there was a modest celebratory meal in a restaurant afterwards, but all I remember is that I felt so ashamed that I did not want to tell anyone about this humiliating experience. And I didn't. I just wanted to escape down to Sussex to the Corbett-Fishers and try and forget the past week. Fortunately, there was the August Bank Holiday Brooklands meeting, and I could concentrate on my passion for racing cars.

With hindsight, I don't think this traumatic episode, at the age of thirteen, unduly influenced my concept of being Jewish, or, as it turned out, of feeling totally non-Jewish. I believe it merely added to a sub-conscious process, which was, in any case, evolving. I had been brought up in a religious void, and I was naturally much influenced by, and identified with the Corbett-Fisher's liberal attitudes and agnosticism. I was made to feel part of that family, and spent three glorious holidays every year in this relaxed and freewheeling atmosphere. And being a close member of that family not only made me feel thoroughly 'English', but I also adapted to a way of life in which religion played no part. As a result, I have never thought of myself as a Jew. Of course, I have Jewish blood in my veins, but I don't know what it is like to 'feel Jewish'. I have always found Jewish beliefs and especially Jewish rituals intriguing, often baffling, sometimes exasperating, but as foreign to me as those of other religions. This has always proved to be a most difficult concept to explain to family members and Jewish friends. When I married Jane in 1962, it did not even occur to me that others might think that I was 'stepping out of my religion'. Both of us happily accepted the co-existence of her Church of England upbringing and my agnosticism. Our boys, Jonathan and Ben, have always accepted this situation and have been free to make up their own minds about their religious leanings.



Bunce Court School



Headmistress
Anna Essinger M.A.



1934

My Mother visits Tommy and me at Bunce Court
on my tenth birthday



Stringing telephone cables to the Bunce Court cottage



Newnham's Rough in Sussex
the Corbett-Fisher home



Ex-Nuvolari's K3 Magnette at Brooklands owned by
Cicely Corbett-Fisher with Stuart Wilton at the wheel

Chapter 3

September 3rd 1939 brings back memories, which to this day remain crystal clear in my mind. I was now 15 and, as usual, I spent the summer holidays down in Sussex with the Corbett-Fishers. We were crowded round the big radiogram in the living room and heard Chamberlain's declaration: *'This morning the British Ambassador in Berlin handed the German Government a final note stating that unless we heard from them by 11 o'clock that they were prepared at once to withdraw their troops from Poland, a state of war would exist between us. I have to tell you now that no such undertaking has been received and consequently this country is at war with Germany'*.

Immediately after the broadcast, we went outside and heard the wail of distant air-raid sirens drifting across the Downs from the direction of Brighton. Then, suddenly, a low-flying RAF Beaufighter roared over the treetops close to the house and disappeared. Apart from the shock, it dramatically punctuated the impact of Chamberlain's speech.

The Home Office had ruled that anyone born in Germany was classed an 'enemy alien'. And all German-born males over the age of sixteen were interned. Early in 1940, both my father and my brother, Tommy, first went to Huyton, near Liverpool, and then to an internment camp on the Isle of Man. I was lucky to escape this because of my age. And they were lucky too, in as much that they were spared the fate of a great number of internees who were shipped to Canada and Australia. Some did not make it. U-boats were claiming their early victims.

Back at Bunce Court the drama unfolded. Evacuation. In June 1940, Kent was deemed to be a protected area, too close to the potential action. Air attacks and invasion were the threat. So once again, Anna Essinger had to find a new location for her School. But this time she was given a mere seven days notice.

Using her organisational genius, she found a suitable new site. It was a mile outside a small town called Wem, in Shropshire. Being fifteen, I was one of the senior boys, right in the middle of swatting for the Cambridge School Certificate, the equivalent of today's GCSEs. We now became members of the advance party. There was little time to adapt a large country house. We had to use our carpentry skills to make dozens of bunk beds, build cupboards, and generally provide the basic necessities. It was both exciting and exhausting, albeit at the expense of getting one's head down for revision work.

One of my subjects was Art. Apart from painting and 'design & decorative composition', there was also a paper on the History of Art. Due to an oversight, the latter had not been taught. It was now May and we were three weeks away from sitting the exam. In a panic, our art teacher gripped the situation and gave us a crash course on the Parthenon. She was convinced that there was going to be a question on it. So we boned up on that. We quickly learnt how to draw up 'architectural' plans and memorise names like pediment, architrave, entablature, etc. And true enough, of the two questions set in the paper, one was on the Parthenon. As luck would have it, I was able to handle the second one as well. It read: 'Describe a modern building, draw a sketch, explain its use and why you have chosen it'.

It so happened, that in the holidays, when we drove down to Sussex from the Corbett-Fisher's London home, we passed over Chelsea bridge. Across the Thames on the left stood the majestic Battersea Power Station. It then boasted only three huge chimneys, which always impressed me. What's more, I was an avid collector of De Reske cigarette cards. And I had just started on their 'famous building' series. One of my first swaps with a fellow collector was a splendid picture, in colour, of the Power Station, with some brief text on the reverse side. Hardly detailed enough to help you gain a Ph.D., but adequate for my exam. To my surprise, I passed.

It was July 1940. I had just turned sixteen and, mercifully, the internment rules had been relaxed, so I escaped that fate. The question now was what should I do. The school had been my home for seven years, and I was ill-prepared to face the wartime reality of the outside world. My father had been released from his camp on the Isle of Man and returned to live in his showroom off Regent Street. He did his duty as an Air Raid Warden. London was now experiencing very heavy bombing, and he rented a basement flat in Earls Court, which he believed to be as safe as anywhere else. He did not relish the thought of spending nights in air-raid shelters, or on the Underground platforms of the Piccadilly Line.

There seemed to be little point in my joining him from the relative safety of the countryside, and he decided that I should remain where I was. I became a lodger in my old home, the school, and found a job in Wem. In reality, several jobs rolled into one, and all for the same boss. Mr. Huxley owned the local radio and bicycle shop, the coal yard down at the railway station and the local tennis club, with six grass courts. The two men who worked for him had been called up to the services, and he hired me to replace them. I was paid the princely sum of 12 shillings and 6 pence a week – the equivalent of 62.5p – of which 50p went to the school for my keep. The rest I spent on the odd Mars bar, some Woodbine cigarettes and postage stamps.

To get to work, I rode into Wem on a bicycle – about two miles. But that had to be negotiated. Officially classed as an enemy alien, special police permission had to be sought for riding a bike. Likewise, one had to have permits for travelling anywhere outside a five-mile radius of one's registered address. And then it was mandatory to report to the police on arrival at the new destination.

I started work at 8 a.m. My duties were manifold. As always, the first job was washing down the pavement outside the premises and cleaning the shop window. Then I had to see to the accumulators, which had been on charge overnight. Many domestic radios in those days were battery operated and used low voltage accumulators. I disconnected these from the charging panel and cleaned off the corrosion from the terminals. The ones left on the doorstep by customers the previous night had to be topped up with distilled water and put on charge.

Usually there were some bikes to repair. Punctures, new brake blocks (these were now getting scarce) and messy adjustments to chains and so on. Serving in the shop behind the counter was a novel experience. I had to teach myself how to handle money and give the correct change; not easy, as Mr. Huxley kept all the shop cash in small biscuit tins under the counter. He also contributed hugely to my education by explaining in a bizarrely convoluted way what condoms were used for. Apparently, the small chemist shop in Wem did not stock these items, and he was the High Street's sole supplier, satisfying the demands of the male population from Wem and the surrounding

countryside. His instructions to me were quite clear. “Only serve men,” he said, “when they ask for a special valve rubber for their bike.”

Mr. Huxley seemed rather odd. I had never met anyone like him before. He was unmarried, had plucked eyebrows, lacquered fingernails and introduced me to a small library of books at the back, which, today, would be described as the worst examples of hard-core pornographic literature. An eye-opener for a sixteen-year-old. Instinctively, I learnt to keep my distance from him.

One of his predilections was to invite the young publican’s wife over from the pub across the road (her husband was abroad in the army) to bring comfort to one of his soldier lodgers staying upstairs in the spare bedroom. He frequently provided accommodation for servicemen stationed in the vicinity, and thus was able to indulge in a most curious sport. He tied a long piece of string to the mattress of the spare bed upstairs and fed it through a small hole he had drilled in the ceiling of his living room below, and attached a small hand bell to it. It was the sort of bell that, in a slightly more refined home, would be used to summon people to lunch, tea or dinner. When the newly acquainted visitors retired upstairs – usually in the afternoon – he would be waiting downstairs for the bell to start its joyous ringing, and come into the shop, his face flushed, rub his hands and proclaim: “They’re at it!”

It was during one of these diversions that my History teacher stepped into the shop to congratulate me on passing my School Certificate exam. I was both surprised and delighted at this news, and quickly came to the conclusion that exams were a rather inadequate preparation for life beyond school.

Down at the Wem station coal yard, work took on a different meaning, especially through the severe winter of 1940, when we had a great deal of snow. I had to unload literally tons of coal from a railway wagon into a wheelbarrow, and take it to Mr. Huxley’s coal pen a few yards away. This would sometimes take two backbreaking days. One-hundred-weight sacks had to be filled (and weighed) and loaded onto a horse-drawn dray for delivery to customers’ homes and often to farms outside Wem. Carrying these sacks on my back, sometimes up steep steps, taught me at this early age to have great respect for those who earn their living by hard physical toil. It certainly did no favours to my back.

Looking after the tennis lawns was a great relief. How Mr. Huxley obtained petrol for his motor mowers remained a mystery, but he did, and I spent many late evenings of this summer of 1940, manicuring his six courts with a short cut and marking them up with white lines.

The school provided me with a pack of sandwiches for my lunch and with a hearty meal when I returned from Wem in the evening. It was a strange existence.

In 1941, I felt like moving on. I knew that I could not join the services until I reached the age of 17¼, and I was keener than ever to ‘get into films’. I had absolutely no idea on how to set about this. I did not know anybody in the film industry I could approach, and no friends to advise me. And my father, whom I had not seen for well over a year, still did not want me to join him in London because of the bombing, so I opted to go to Birmingham instead. The school had arranged for me to stay in a hostel for young people, so at least I had an address to go to.

My first job in Birmingham was with an engineering company making and repairing armatures and rotors for electric motors, some destined for use in submarines. I had to sweep the shop floor and clear the tons of swarf from the lathes. I lasted one

week because this was war-work – and I was refused the necessary permit. Back once more to the labour exchange, resulting in a job with a small building firm. Birmingham, by now, was on the Luftwaffe's target list, and bomb damage repairs kept builders in business. My job was with a small team that repaired chimneys – the work was precarious. I had to climb up very long ladders, which reached right up to the chimneys, carrying a heavy hod of bricks. Halfway up, my weight plus that of the bricks, made the ladder bow in and out. I don't think I have ever been so scared, and I was very thankful when this torture came to an abrupt end. It happened like this. One night there was a heavy raid, and a few yards away from my hostel, a similar building received a direct hit, leaving a huge gap in that line of houses. I now wrote to my father suggesting that, as we are both being bombed, it made no sense for me to be on my own in Birmingham. He wrote back to say that he would come up to have a look for himself, giving the train arrival time, and asking me to meet him. And that night we had another heavy raid, and New Street Station was so badly damaged that the trains had to stop about a mile outside it. I walked along the track to the train, and helped my father down from the carriage. We then walked past the wrecked station to my hostel. He just took one look at the gaping void three houses up, and I said that as both of us are being bombed, we might as well be bombed together, and he agreed that I should join him in London. After just one month, I was very glad to say goodbye to Birmingham.

Chapter 4

I was now installed in my father's basement flat opposite Earls Court Station – my new home. It seemed rather strange at first to live under the same roof with him; it was, after all, the first time since I was eight years old. But we got on well, and soon discovered how best to share and eke out our food rations.

My sister was living on her own in London, having joined the staff of the Warburg Institute in 1937. The Institute specialises in the History of the Classical Tradition, and in 1944 it was incorporated in the University of London. Anne, after the war, became the Secretary and Registrar of the Institute, and was recognised by her colleagues, as being the Institute's main pillar of strength, right up to, and even after her retirement in 1984. She was made an Honorary Fellow of the Institute, and appointed MBE. She died in 2004, aged 85.

Tommy, my brother, secured his early release from internment by volunteering for the army, and had left London to do his primary training – and I felt very frustrated. I was in a dilemma. So keen to have something to do with film, but I just did not know how to go about it.

Instead, I settled for a job with a fur-dressing company in Bermondsey – a pretty revolting experience. The furs, mostly rabbit, were pickled in large vats filled with a foul-smelling caustic brine. After this pickling process, my job was to pull the furs out of the vats, with bared arms, and throw them into a twelve-foot high wooden drum, which I had to half-fill with clean sawdust. An electric motor then slowly spun the drum, cleaning and drying the tumbling furs. After several hours I had to undo a small hatch cover and climb inside the drum, throw out the furs and bag-up the sawdust, which was now filthy and reeked of decayed flesh. The bags then had to be lifted out through the hatch. I soon developed rampant impetigo, which covered most of my body, and I welcomed a doctor's advice to change job.

Off again to a labour exchange, but the one I was registered with at the corner of Poland Street and Great Marlborough Street (near Carnaby Street) had been flattened. There was a notice tied to the stump of a lamp-post outside it that referred one to another branch in the City. The night before I was due to report there, the Luftwaffe carried out one of its most destructive raids over London, and the City bore the brunt of it. The next morning I made my way there. I had to walk most of the way, as London transport had ceased to operate in the City. Nearly all the buildings and churches around St. Paul's Cathedral were either still ablaze, or stood in ruins. One had to be careful walking in this wasteland because of all the debris, broken glass and fire hoses. For good reasons, I could not find my Labour Exchange – it too had been obliterated. But I did find another job.

Nurdin & Peacock was a large wholesale food distributor, with premises in Wells Street, just off Oxford Street, near Tottenham Court Road. Most of the produce arriving here for onward distribution was imported. It arrived in London's docks, was unloaded there and brought to Wells Street in lorries and drays. Little did we realise at the time the perilous voyages of the Atlantic convoys that kept us alive in Britain.

The public was kept ignorant of the huge cost in ships and men. It was only some time later that the newsreels showed the disastrous losses caused by U-boats hunting in packs. My job was to unload these cargoes coming from the docks. Once again I was humping heavy loads and not enjoying it. This was now July 1941 – a very hot summer, and a huge shipment of Chinese frozen eggs had arrived at the docks. The eggs were in liquid form and were stored in large tins the size of orange crates, and wrapped in sacking, acting as insulation. These had to be lifted off the lorries and carried on the shoulder into cavernous cold storage rooms in Wells Street. Stepping out of the hot sun into this arctic temperature simply took your breath away.

But there were compensations. On Fridays we were given a bonus in the shape of one tin of either pineapple slices or peaches. I used to bring this home in triumph. Sometimes Anne joined us in Earl's Court for lunch on the weekend to participate in these rare treats.

I decided to make up for my poor showing in maths at school, and signed up for a course with a Correspondence Learning Institute in Oxford Street. And that brought me my first bit of good luck. When their parcel of textbooks and other literature arrived, an invitation to come and discuss my career prospects was included. In fact, their offices above Lilly & Skinner opposite Bond Street Station turned out to be a very small but useful labour exchange. I went for an interview, and for the first time in my life, somebody actually asked me 'what do you want to do?' They were not really able to give me detailed advice on the film industry, but they suggested that a good start for me would be to take on a rare job vacancy they had on their books. It was for a trainee cinema projectionist, known in the industry as a rewind boy. I felt I had arrived!

The Dominion cinema in Tottenham Court Road was opened in 1929. It was part of the huge Gaumont-British chain. It was designed as a theatre and cinema, the largest in London's West End. It could seat about three thousand, had a deep stage with revolves and lifts, a full compliment of artistes' changing rooms and a giant Wurlitzer organ. Unfortunately, the architect failed to incorporate the projection box in his plans and, as an afterthought, it had to be constructed and stuck high up on to the outside vertical wall at the back of the auditorium. You can still see it today if you stand on the other side of Tottenham Court Road and look up through the big marquee ironwork.

I was interviewed by the manager, and after a quick once-over from the chief projectionist, was engaged at a salary of one pound and five shillings a week, (£1.25p). The 'Chief' took me up to the box. Many stairs later, a door led to a flat roof and then the real climb started. This was an exterior iron fire escape, which eventually reached up to the projection box. I was shown the box, the rewind room and the lime room. Outside, half-open to the elements, was a passage. There stood four upright, narrow steel cabinets for coats – except that the fourth one had a different purpose. I soon discovered its secret. I opened the door and there was a bucket, known as the 'Chief's piss bucket'. It was as disgusting as it was essential, because the nearest toilets – and there were many in the Dominion – were a steep climb down the fire escape, and then a long march away. It was explained to me that my duties would include the emptying of this bucket. This meant carrying it down the fire escape to the flat roof and emptying it down a rain gutter. This precarious journey, with the bucket full to its brim, and the wind blowing, was not much fun.

Nevertheless, it was this rewind boy's introduction to film. There were two 35mm projectors in the box, and a spool of film ran for about twenty minutes. Then there had to be a changeover to the other projector, and the old spool had to be rewound. This was done with great care, with the film passing between forefinger and thumb to feel for torn sprocket holes or damaged splices where reels had been joined together.

There were two programme changes every week, on Thursdays and Sundays. A programme consisted of two feature films, a newsreel, cartoon and often a 'short', like a travelogue. Also, there were brief Central Office of Information films, known as food flashes, including a series called "Potato Pete", imploring you to plant and to eat more potatoes; plus trailers for the next tranche of feature films. The live part of the programme consisted of the cinema organist letting fly with a popular medley of tunes. And occasionally, he treated the audience to a simulated air raid, using a special array of keys producing sound effects. He made up his own commentary and usually ended with a German bomber being hit, with an ear-splitting crescendo as it spiralled down to earth.

Sometimes on the weekend there would also be a stage show. Usually a big band with popular singers, like Ann Shelton. This kept us busy in the lime room, following performers with the limelights.

The films came in one-thousand-foot reels, each in its own can. They were stored in heavy steel transit boxes, holding ten cans each. We had to carry them all the way from the street up to the box. In any one week, we would be humping over sixty cans of film.

As each reel ran for about ten minutes, two had to be joined together to make up the twenty-minute spools for the projectors. And splicing film was quite an art in itself. At its head, each reel has a standard lead-in, called the Academy leader (instituted by the American Academy of Motion Pictures) and at the end of the reel there is the tail leader. When joining two reels together, you wound the first one onto the projector spool and then cut off its tail leader. Then you cut off the leader from the head of the second reel, and spliced the last picture frame of reel one to the first picture frame of reel two.

The Chief was a stickler for tradition. Although the rewind room was equipped with a mechanical splicer, he insisted on using the traditional hand-splicing method. That was really tricky. 35mm film consisted of a celluloid nitrate base – highly inflammable – with a layer of emulsion, carrying the photographic image. In order to join the two bits together, the emulsion had to be removed from one piece, exposing the nitrate base. You then ran your tongue along the cut you have made — just like licking a Rizla cigarette paper – and with a razor blade, gingerly remove the wet emulsion to expose the base, which was then coated with film cement. Then you matched up the sprocket holes with the other piece, and pressed the two together and held the splice in your hand for about ten seconds for it to 'take'. To this day, I can clearly smell the intoxicating vapour of the cement, which was made up of amyl acetate and acetone – reminding me of old-fashioned pear drops.

Twice a week, when the next programme change came, the spools were broken down into single reels again and the head and tail leaders had to be spliced back. And because the sprocket holes had to overlap, with every splice made you shortened the movie by two frames! Just imagine the state of these pristine West End prints by the time they ended their run in a host of cinemas across the country, smudged with the finger prints of the nation's rewind boys.

At the base of the Dominion's massive screen was an illuminated box which displayed one of two words: 'All Clear' or 'Alert'. We got our orders from the Manager who phoned through instructions for us to switch from one to the other. Regardless of the severity of the air raid, the tradition of 'the show must go on' was observed. When the noise of exploding bombs and the racket of the anti-aircraft guns sounded a bit close, we found ourselves marooned in the projection box screening films to an almost empty auditorium.

One of us had to stand in the passage outside the box and watch the flat roof in case incendiary bombs landed on it. On one occasion, we hurried down the fire escape and extinguished two of these with buckets of sand and the standard issue stirrup pump. Luckily, we had just changed over to the other projector and barely got back in time from this distraction for the next changeover.

Once a week we had to stay overnight on fire-watching duties. This was the time to enjoy ourselves. One of the dressing rooms had a small electric hob for my ritual fry-up. For my supper, I blew my weekly ration of one egg and two rashers of bacon, and added some fried bread. Sometimes we would switch on the giant Wurlitzer in the orchestra pit, ride it up and down, and experiment with the dozens of stops, keys and buttons.

But the real sport was shooting rats. One of the projectionists had a .22 rifle – highly illegal. Our hide was the lime room. We removed the big glass portholes, raised the Dominion's safety curtain, opened the screen tabs, struck the arcs on the limes, pulled open the dowsers and floodlit the stage. And there they were, as big as cats. Hitting them from that great distance was another matter, but this sport certainly gave a different meaning to fire-watching.

Call-up to the services was taking its toll on the cinema's staff and as a result it presented glittering career prospects – rapid promotion. To reach the dizzy heights of 2nd projectionist in the West End in peacetime would normally take about twenty years. But there was a war on, and I achieved that status in nine months.

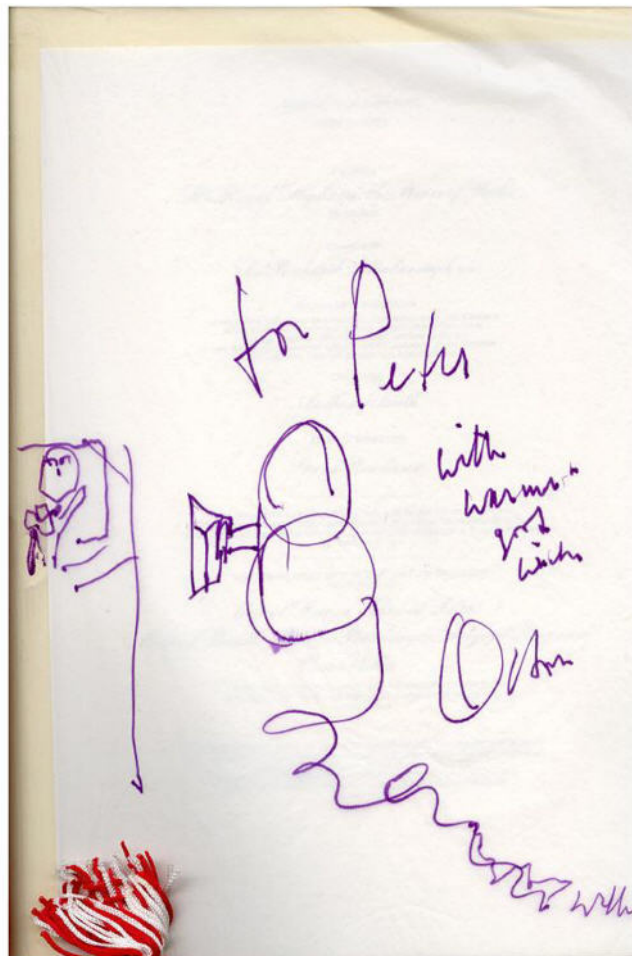
Sitting on a high stool next to the projector and 'being in charge' was both exciting and a bit frightening – with the knowledge that there could be about three thousand people watching the screen. The distance from the projector's lens to the screen, known as the throw, was 180 feet. The Dominion claimed to have the longest throw in the country, and for focusing, we had to look at the screen through the glass porthole, using binoculars to ensure a really sharp picture.

As the nitrate 35mm film was extremely inflammable, the threat of a serious blaze was always present. The arcs provided a high intensity, powerful light source, but at the cost of generating enormous heat. And if for some reason there was a tear in the film, usually caused by a broken sprocket hole, and a small piece of it got trapped in the 'gate' of the projector, it would instantly melt and catch alight. One had to react very quickly by dowsing the arc, thus shutting off the light beam. After removing the debris, one pulled down about six feet of film from the top spool box and quickly laced-up the projector again for the show to continue. I remember hearing the howls of the audience's derision through the thick glass of the porthole.

By studying films, albeit through a porthole, I was beginning to get ideas on how they are made and the many talents employed in the production process. When a film particularly intrigued me, I turned up on my weekly day-off and sat in the back of the balcony. One day, Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane* arrived. It instantly made a deep

impression on me; in fact it was a turning point, because it made me see quite clearly what I wanted to learn and what I wanted to be. I was stunned by Greg Toland's deep-focus photography, a craft that he pioneered and which had never been achieved before in such style. But it was the film editing, the cutting, which fired me most. Robert Wise was responsible for that and became my hero. I promised myself that one day I would find a way into a film cutting room.

Over forty years later I was to meet Orson Welles. The occasion was the British Film Institute's 50th anniversary, elaborately celebrated in the Guildhall, with Prince Charles presenting Welles with a BFI Fellowship. After the feast and the ceremonies, he was taken to a side room where he held court, his immense bulk having been lowered into a gigantic chair. His fans were able to pay their respects. I was introduced to him as the ex-projectionist whom he had inspired. I told him that seeing *Citizen Kane* at least twenty times through a small porthole paved the way to my career and that I was eternally grateful to him. He had already taken my posh BFI souvenir programme out of my hand, and without looking up at me, he drew a lightning cartoon. I am seen at the porthole next to a projector with the film coming off the take-up spool, curling all over the floor spelling out 'Welles', with the inscription: 'for Peter with warmest good wishes Orson'. A treasured memento.



There was not much of a social life to be enjoyed working at the Dominion; the working hours of a projectionist conspired against it. Usually one had one day off during the week. Otherwise, the day started at 10am. and the safety curtain did not come down till shortly before midnight. Travelling home to Earls Court was erratic. Often I had to walk because air raids were apt to bring the Underground to a halt. At sunset the station entrances swallowed up an endless procession of Londoners – whole families carrying their bedding, food and thermos flasks for the nightly escape from the bombs. By the time I set off for home, most of them were fast asleep on the platforms. Later, double bunks were provided, which meant that one was less likely to trip over sleeping bodies when getting on, or alighting from a tube train. The odour on the platforms was often overpowering.

In the autumn of 1941, aged 17¼ – minimum age for acceptance to the services – I went to Adastral House, the Air Ministry in Kingsway, (years later known as Television House, the home of ITV's Associated-Rediffusion), and they sent me off to the RAF recruiting office opposite Euston Station, where I volunteered to join up. I wanted to be a fighter pilot. I passed my aircrew medical and ability test, but I was told to call back in six months as there was a flood of applicants and the training facilities in Canada could not cope. Then a letter arrived to tell me that my status as an enemy alien barred me from joining the RAF. I refused to believe it.

I took this news to the Corbett-Fishers on one of my visits to their London home, and Cicely Corbett-Fisher's sister, Lady Marjorie Corbett-Ashby, happened to be there. She was a leading member of the Liberal party and knew the Air Minister, Sir Archibald Sinclair, very well. She offered to contact him to see whether he could smooth my way into the RAF. I got a reply six months later saying that my application was being 'looked into'. A few months after that, not having heard anything, I volunteered all over again. It was now early 1943. Again I passed all the tests, but was told that because I was not a member of the Air Training Corps, my name would go to the bottom of the applicants' list. I had very much wanted to join the ATC, because as part of the training programme, teenagers were taught to fly gliders. But it relied on evening and weekend commitments, which I could not manage because of my job. So off I went to the Army recruiting office, also opposite Euston Station, and volunteered my services. No problems there.

Chapter 5

Brother Tommy had chosen to join the Royal Armoured Corps, (he wanted to ride into battle and not walk!) and was stationed at Farnborough for his tank training. Because of our family background he was made to change his name – a wise precaution in case of capture by the Germans. He told the story of a fellow recruit blindfolding him, and how he then stuck a pin into an open telephone directory. He landed on Morley! Now it was my turn. And it just seemed too silly to think of yet another name for the family to remember. That is how, between us, we started a modest Morley dynasty, which consisted of two ‘stateless enemy aliens’ serving King and Country.

There was a rule in the army that an elder brother could claim a younger brother to join him in the same regiment. It seemed a good idea at the time, although we deeply regretted it later. I volunteered for the Royal Armoured Corps and started my primary training in Glasgow’s Maryhill Barracks. This was a pretty bleak place and had already been condemned after the First World War. At the first uniform inspection, the sergeant-major yelled at me, “You may be standing to attention, you scruffy shower, but your uniform is standing at ease – to the Regimental tailor, at the double. Dismiss.” It was two weeks before we were considered smart enough to qualify for a pass to explore Glasgow. After six weeks came the first posting. And having volunteered for the RAC, true to form, I was sent to the infantry – The Royal Fusiliers. The training was tough; assault courses, live ammunition and endless route marches. It took several weeks to extricate myself from all this and I was finally posted to the RAC training regiment at Farnborough. Tommy had already finished his training there and had joined his regiment: The 8th King’s Royal Irish Hussars. This was a senior cavalry regiment that had come home from its campaigns in North Africa and Italy to prepare for the invasion of mainland Europe. The regiment had been in the Middle East since the start of the war, having exchanged its horses for tanks and was part of the 7th Armoured Division – Montgomery’s Desert Rats.

I was told that I was going to be a gunner/wireless operator. The training was very concentrated, with little free time. Every member of a tank crew had to be able to drive, and so we had intensive instructions learning to handle a variety of tanks, including Cromwells, Shermans, Churchills and Grants. I soon realised that they were the most uncomfortable means of transport ever invented. They were smelly, oily and very noisy. They rattled and lurched and with little to hang on to, one was forever painfully knocking against bruising steel projections inside the turret.

We had to learn gunnery, navigation, operating wireless sets, mastering a fast Morse-code speed, the workings of the internal combustion engine and so on. Two memories come to mind from these intensive eight months. The camp’s tank park was next to the Royal Aircraft Establishment’s runway, and we witnessed the very early experimental flights of Frank Whittle’s jet-powered prototype fighter. The other was a rare ENSA concert for the troops, when the infant daughter of a Sergeant instructor performed on stage, impersonating Carmen Miranda. Her name was Petula Clark.

Halfway through this training regime, I was picked out to go to an officer-training unit. Although the thought of a commission in the army had some appeal, I turned this opportunity down when I was told that it would add another ten months to my training course. I wanted to get to the 8th Hussars as soon as possible, as we knew that the invasion and liberation of mainland Europe could not be far off, and I wanted to be part of it.

Looking back now, almost sixty years later, it is salutary to reflect on this decision and to try to recall one's feelings and motivations. There was, of course, a natural sense of duty to 'do your bit'. It would not have occurred to me to question that. After all, people of my age were being conscripted – I got a clear sense of that when I was at the Dominion – and, in any case, the air raids seemed to unite everyone in their resolve to win this war. But there was more to it – there was a tangible cause – something to believe in.

With my background, and with the tales from fellow Bunce Courtians about the parents they had left behind in Germany, the threat of Nazism had become plain to see. Also, I was much influenced by the Corbett-Fishers who were very active in supporting various refugee organisations. In addition, the media, limited as they were in those days, made one more or less aware of Hitler's ambitions. The annexation of the Rhineland and the Austrian Anschluss were quite well reported, and anyone with a radio was moderately well informed. But it took one particular edition of the "March of Time", which I clearly remember seeing in a newsreel cinema, which gave me a jolt. This dealt in the clearest and starkest way with the threat Hitler was imposing on the world. It was unequivocal about his anti-Semitism. Many years later, when I was making documentaries dealing with this period, one of my film researchers dug up this very same edition, and I realised that this hard-hitting American Time-Life piece of film journalism was, for its time, unique in its outspoken opinions and warnings. In comparison, our newsreels were as insipid as they were jingoistic.

For those who cared to look, the cause was there to see. To put it simply, we knew what we were fighting for and what we were fighting against, although I don't suppose that we were able to articulate it in such bald terms. To explain, and to justify this today to the post-war generations, who have enjoyed the longest peacetime period since the last world conflagration, is, to say the least, quite difficult.

Tommy had finished his training as a gunner/wireless operator and had joined the Recce Troop of the 8th Hussars. This was part of the Regimental H.Q. squadron, equipped with American light tanks, the Mk 5 Stuart, known in the British army as the Honey. Its job was to undertake the forward reconnoitring of enemy positions ahead of the other squadrons with their battle tanks.

While I was finishing my training at Farnborough, the 8th Hussars were going through their final tactical training in Norfolk. And then on June 8th 1944, D-Day+2, they went across to land on the Normandy beaches, the biggest amphibious operation ever. I was posted to a reinforcement unit in the Essex woods near Hatfield Peveral. We were under canvas. We eagerly waited for the latest invasion news, impatient to cross the Channel to join our allocated regiments. To keep us busy, they organised some hastily conceived manoeuvres. One I remember very clearly. I was driving a Cromwell, the lead tank in a troop of tanks making its way through Chelmsford. The sergeant who was acting as tank commander instructed me, through the intercom, to turn sharp right. I did, and as a Cromwell driver only had restricted forward vision, I did not see the rear of the tank uproot a pillar-box, right in front of a café. We stopped,

and dismounted to clear up the mess, having brought Chelmsford successfully to a standstill. The café proprietor appeared with a huge tray with mugs of tea. A minor example of the Dunkirk spirit.

Another occasion was an exercise in convoy-driving at night. I was driving a 15cwt truck, the second vehicle in a long convoy of 30 trucks. Because of the blackout, vehicles had to travel without lights, except for the convoy light. This was a small lamp, which illuminated the white differential box on the rear axle of the vehicle in front of you. So, if you could keep sight of that weak light source, you were, in fact, observing the correct convoy distance. It was a pitch-dark night, and after about 100 miles fatigue set in. I found it hard to keep up, and when the convoy leader in the truck in front of me took us onto minor roads with their twists and turns, I lost contact with him altogether. And that's when it happened. I could just make out a fork in the road in front of me – which one should I take? Panic set in, and knowing that there were twenty-eight trucks following me, I quickly made the choice, and to my huge relief, I saw the light in the distance and put my foot hard down to catch up. I felt a change in the road surface, the ride was getting bumpy, and then, as if in a bad dream, the faster I drove, the weaker and smaller the light got, until it rose above the horizon and disappeared. I had followed a Tiger Moth taking off. And that is how twenty-nine army trucks fetched up on the grass runway of an RAF training aerodrome, wrecking the night-flying exercises of a whole squadron of Tiger Moths.

I obtained a 48-hour leave pass and went home to Earls Court. It was going to be my last leave for two years. On my first night my father and I heard the distinctive sound of the rocket engine of a V1 flying bomb. The engine cut out and we held our breath waiting for the explosion. It found its random target – the nurses' home of St. Mary Abbott's Hospital, half a mile away on the other side of the Cromwell Road. There were many casualties.

It was an odd feeling being on leave, with all hell let loose in Normandy. We naturally worried about Tommy, and my father and Anne knew that I would be joining him very soon.

Chapter 6

It was some time before I finally stepped off an American Infantry Landing Craft onto the floating Mulberry harbour at Arromanche on the Normandy beaches. I was with a small group of reinforcements, and we had to make our own way to find and join our allocated regiments. The 7th Armoured Division (The Desert Rats) had broken out of the Normandy beachhead and catching up with it was not easy. I had to cadge a lift on all sorts of transport. Often one was held up because of anti-tank mines and blown up bridges. It was for me the first realisation of the real horror of war. Unburied German corpses, wrecked field guns and lorries, masses of dead cattle with their rigid limbs pointing skywards – and the sickening pervasive stench of decomposing flesh.

And then, in a ditch, I came across a burned-out tank. The regimental number '45' just visible on its blackened hull told me that the 8th Hussars had been here. Looking through the front port I could see a crewmember's charred remains. My first thought: was it Tommy I was looking at? Luckily I remembered that he was in a Honey tank and this was a Cromwell. This made me realise that being 'claimed' by an elder brother into his regiment was a thoroughly bad idea. There was quite enough going on without the constant preoccupation with your brother's safety.

By the time I had caught up with the 8th Hussars, the Division was fighting its way north, to Belgium and on to Holland. I found the Recce Troop tanks overnighing by a canal. When I first glimpsed Tommy – with great relief – he was roasting a 'liberated' chicken over an open fire. His crew was lucky to have an expert cook as gunner/wireless operator. The crew I joined had different methods. The driver pitched a hand grenade into the canal and shortly afterward a rich selection of fish popped up to the surface – my first supper with my new comrades-in-arms.

In September 1944, the great airborne operation was launched, which famously failed to capture the bridge across the Rhine at Arnhem. We were fighting our way up north from Eindhoven, halfway up the Nijmegen corridor, in an attempt to bring relief to the airborne army, which was surrounded by the Germans in the battle for the bridge. It was an unpleasant time. We were able to prevent the Germans from cutting through the corridor. This was bad 'tank country', crisscrossed with dykes and polders, making us very visible and vulnerable.

As winter approached, the 7th Armoured Division took up position in East Brabant in what was called 'The Watch on the Maas'. That really came as shock to us. It turned out to be a bitterly cold winter, with thick ice and snow, and we were told to assume the role of infantry, with our tanks remaining in the rear area. We had already adorned them with their winter camouflage – we had painted them white.

We had to go on forward night patrols into no-man's land, facing German SS troops and parachutists. Not a happy time. On one of my patrols, we found some abandoned German slit trenches and occupied them for the night to observe what their patrols were up to. Often they passed us not more than twenty yards away. We had taken a field telephone with us on the end of a long cable, so we could report back and keep in touch

with our tanks in case of trouble. We took it in turns to lie down in the trench to rest, and on one occasion the temperature was so low that I found myself frozen into the slush at the bottom of the trench and had to be hacked out of the ice.

The regiment was positioned in the small mining town of Geleen, in East Brabant, and we were billeted with miners' families and shared our rations with them. They were in a bad way. The Germans had stripped Holland, and there was a grave shortage of everything. These poor people showed their gratitude with their friendliness and their efforts to make us as comfortable as possible. I was particularly lucky, as the family, which sheltered my crew, had a delightful 17 year-old daughter who helped to ease the tensions of war.

We were to spend several weeks of that awful winter in Geleen, with many night patrols and sporadic fighting. But there was a hiatus on both sides, caused by the weather. Amazingly, short leave passes were issued for trips to Brussels. That was an eye opener, and left me with an impression of Belgium that has coloured my feelings toward that country ever since. Unlike their Dutch neighbours, Belgium did not appear to have been plundered by the Germans. We were in the middle of a war, yet the shops were stuffed with items I had not seen for some years. The restaurants made one forget army rations. I went to the main Gallery and found a treat to send home to Anne – a shop dedicated to marzipan goodies. Also, I was able to buy her some fur-lined gloves without having to surrender clothing coupons.

But it was the attitude of the people towards us that was so surprising. We had been wildly cheered when our tanks entered Belgian towns and villages just a few weeks before. We were showered with flowers and bottles of wine. I noticed that this mood had now changed. We were treated with indifference. As a contrast, the Dutch had nothing to give other than friendship and a genuine show of gratitude.

Mid-December 1944 marked Hitler's last desperate military gamble with the counter-attack in the Ardennes, with huge casualties on both sides. Over Christmas we were heavily raided, it must have been the last fling of the Luftwaffe, with a strange assortment of aircraft, including some Mustangs, which they had captured and rebuilt. On New Year's Day, using our turret-mounted machine guns, we brought down a Focke-Wolf 190, and every tank crew in the Regiment claimed to have bagged it.

January saw the beginning of what turned out to be the last big push to defeat the Germans. It was still bitterly cold, and on our front we started our progress to the German frontier. There was fierce resistance and the going was rough and slow. There were many small-scale battles and casualties. Place names spring to mind: Echt, Sustern, Schildberg, Heide, St. Joost, Montford. Also etched into the memory is a close shave when one of our deadly RAF Typhoons launched a rocket salvo, and narrowly missed us. Today they call it 'friendly fire'. What a crass description.

At last, early in February, we found ourselves inside Germany. For me, it was a mixed feeling of elation and fear. We had been told about Hitler's order to all Germans, military and civilian, to fight to the last. Not only did we have to face crack Panzer and Infantry divisions, but now the enemy included a motley array of hastily trained civilians, especially young boys, in fact, children.

This was our first introduction to the deadly Panzerfaust. This lethal anti-tank weapon (we knew it as a bazooka) was fired from the shoulder. Its hollow-charge projectile cut a small hole through the tank's armour, allowing the explosive charge to go off inside the tank. Unlike the desert, which was ideal for tank warfare, we were fighting in close country. Forests, narrow lanes, hedges and ditches provided ample opportunities for ambushes. Young boys would hide in a ditch, and at the last moment pop up and fire their Panzerfaust at close range. We had to be very alert. We simply fired at anything that moved, or which could be a hiding place for the enemy, and as we advanced, self-preservation made us shoot up farmhouses, buildings and shops. I remember in one small town we encountered snipers firing from the top windows of the local branch of the bank. We loaded explosive rounds into our main gun and blew the place up. Soon thousands of Mark notes were fluttering through the air, an amazing sight. The same treatment was meted out to the local jeweller, with his choice stock blown into the street. I hope that our infantrymen, who were following us on foot, benefited.

On one occasion, when we lost contact with the infantry, we had to dismount in order to flush out some enemy troops who were hiding in the basement of a villa. I had to break the glass of a large window to climb into the living room, slipped and badly lacerated my wrist. I'm afraid that this is going to be a bit of a Walter Mitty story. I made my own way to our field dressing station; our Medical Officer had been killed and a brand new Second-Lieutenant doctor, who had just arrived from England, straight out of Medical School, was in charge. The gash right across the wrist luckily missed the main vein by a whisker, and he started to stitch up the wound. He threaded a length of catgut into the eye of a big curved needle, and with the aid of medical pliers, inserted the sharp end of the needle into one side of the gash for it to come out again at the other side. He then clicked the pliers on to the protruding end and pulled it out, but his hands were shaking so badly that he also pulled the length of catgut right through the gash. He tried this two more times with the same result. I then said to him to let me have a go. He got his corporal to thread the needle and then I did the actual sewing. Nine stitches were required, with the corporal knotting the ends together. And I was able to rejoin my crew.

Had my sons ever asked me, "What did you do in the war, Daddy?", that would have been my prize story.

The weapon most feared by tank crews was the infamous "88". In the North African campaign Rommel's troops discovered that their powerful 88mm anti-aircraft guns could play a devastating part in desert fighting. When armed with armour piercing rounds they were capable of penetrating the thickest armour of all types of Allied tanks. By the time of the Normandy invasion, this lethal gun had become the main armament of German battle tanks, and we only had to spot one, or hear on the regimental wireless net that an "88" was in the vicinity, for one's heart to stop several beats. Tigers, King Tigers, Leopards and Panthers were their names – absolutely terrifying. One of our Troop's Honey tanks was knocked out by an "88". The round penetrated the side armour in the rear, went straight through the two side-by-side V8 Cadillac engines and out through the side armour on the far side. The crew escaped. Later we inspected the hulk of that Honey, and when we looked through the hole in the side, it was like looking through a barrel of a gun with the clear imprint of the spiral rifling marks left by the armour piercing shell.

On 23rd March we crossed the Rhine at Wesel and on the next day there was a massive airdrop of the 6th Airborne Division, with 3000 aircraft and gliders. They

established a six-mile deep bridgehead, which was the launch pad for the British 2nd Army's final thrust to Hamburg and beyond. I discovered many years later that my future brother-in-law, Colonel John Tillett, was in one of those gliders. He had played a vital and courageous part in the now famous capture of Pegasus Bridge in Normandy, on the eve of D-Day.

Again, memory conjures up place names, each one adding its own details to a long-forgotten campaign: the river Elbe, Osnabrück, Dortmund/Ems canal, and especially Fallingbommel. Here we stumbled across a massive Prisoner of War cage, waiting to be liberated. Stalag XIB housed mainly British servicemen. Many were captured during the recent ill-fated airborne assault on Arnhem. We were overjoyed when we were able to free a contingent of 8th Hussars. Some had been captured years before in the desert, and others were bagged more recently in Normandy. It was a great day for the Regiment, and I remember relieving our tank of all its cigarettes, chocolates and the remainder of some bottled Calvados, which had been hidden in our tank turret since Normandy.

But this feeling of euphoria was short lived, as soon after, beyond Fallingbommel, we approached Soltau. We came across an appalling scene. In spite of all our training, plus the experiences we had now acquired fighting the Germans, we were totally unprepared for this. At first we thought it was another PoW camp. But when we saw emaciated skeletons shuffling around among corpses lying all over the place, we simply did not know what to make of it. I remember being very relieved when the infantrymen of the 1/5th Queens were summoned to sort things out, as our Recce Troop was ordered to press on.

The words 'extermination' and 'final solution' had not yet entered our vocabulary. It was only a few days later that we heard reports about the discovery of Belsen. Representatives from our Division had been summoned to this huge concentration camp so that they could report back to all the regiments. We were too preoccupied for any of this to sink in; it was only weeks later, when we were exposed to the newsreel footage of Belsen that it began to dawn on us what we ourselves had witnessed. And for those who were not totally convinced, it now became very clear what it was we had been fighting for, and what many of our comrades had laid down their lives for.

We crossed the Elbe on 24th April and shortly afterwards took Harburg, where we came to a halt on high ground overlooking Hamburg. Surrender negotiations now commenced. The local military commander, Major-General Woltz, had been told by the German High Command to surrender to the "Desert Rats" (7th Armoured Division) which was just as well, as Hamburg had been threatened with yet more 1000 bomber raids. On 3rd May, in pouring rain, we entered Hamburg, a city flattened by the RAF. I had seen devastation before – the sight of London and the area around St. Paul's, looking for my labour exchange in 1941, was still fresh in my mind. But this was different. As we were driving through the streets, with a grandstand view from the top of the tank, clear impressions have remained with me. I could not spot one single building that had escaped damage. Many of those still standing were burnt-out shells. I nearly had my head cut off by a tram cable, which was dangling loosely at tank turret height. And then there was that awful stink of death. Civilian casualties had been enormous, with thousands buried in the mountains of the rubble we were passing.

Naturally, we felt a sense of bravura. We were the victors, proudly riding in our tanks – the conquerors. But these jubilant feelings were soon tempered by the reactions from the Hamburgers who lined the streets. After all, the RAF had flattened Hamburg,

its inhabitants had suffered the fire storm with its massive casualties, and now we were entering their city. We expected a hostile reception.

Hamburg had been one of the great Hanseatic ports, with a thriving trade with the rest of the world; its population, which made up this maritime region of Germany, was well disposed towards the British.

And now we watched them as they watched us, some looking on dazed and resigned, some were smiling, a few threw flowers at our tank, and on one street corner a group of people actually applauded. They were expressing their sense of relief that it was all over – no more bombing, no more fire storms, no more casualties. For us, this was rather difficult to take. An anti-climax.

Our Recce Troop set up temporary residence close to the Alster near the Gauleiter's House, with our tanks neatly parked in the street. German troops were surrendering to the Allies in droves and we knew that the end of fighting was imminent. We behaved fairly outrageously; from the Naval barracks, which housed the 400 German Wrens who had surrendered to us, we liberated heavy navy roll-neck sweaters, which were standard issue to U-Boat crews; and on our first morning all of us, including the officers, wore them, much to the consternation of our Divisional Commander and Commanding Officer, as they stopped their half-track vehicle to inspect this curious addition to the British army. Our Troop Leader got a suitable rocket. I have treasured that sweater ever since, and the next severe cold weather will, no doubt, see it on parade again.

We managed to find something stronger than tea to drink in the cellar of a rowing club a few yards away on the Alster. Thus reinforced, we went into Gauleiter Kaufmann's magnificent villa where I spotted a bronze bust of Hitler. Two of us carried this outside and put it on a plinth next to the villa's flagstaff, draped a swastika flag round its shoulders, and rammed an enamel chamber pot on its head. All very childish, but we were young and had been through a lot together, and now, moderately inebriated, we savoured the excitement of victory. Twenty years later, I came across this bust in the United Services Museum, then still in Whitehall, with a small plaque saying that it had been found and presented to the museum by the 8th Hussars.

We moved out of Hamburg two days later to do some mopping up of German troops in Schleswig-Holstein, northeast of Hamburg. A mass of humanity was on the move. In addition to the tens of thousands of German soldiers and naval personnel, only too ready to be disarmed, we were quite overwhelmed by hordes of Hungarians, Rumanians, Austrians, non-combatants, refugees from the east, slave workers and so on. Only the SS arrogantly marched towards us with heads held high. Our infantry soon changed their demeanour.

Although we knew that fighting had stopped, we were very much on our guard. I came across this passage in a journal written by an officer from the 5th Royal Tank Regiment that was on our flank:

'As the leading tank was nearing a T-junction, it was met by a small ten-year old boy. He stood alone defiantly, armed with a Panzerfaust with his finger on the trigger. The sergeant tank commander dismounted quickly and disarmed the boy. When he had made the anti-tank weapon safe, he bent the boy over his knee and gave his arse a good spanking, then before he sent him back to his mother, gave him a bar of chocolate.'

On 7th May, we were in our tanks near Pinneburg, when the news came through on our regimental wireless net with the order to cease fire, and that the next day, 8th May, had been declared VE Day. I tore off my headset and shouted to the crew that it was all over and that we had the order to clear live rounds from our main guns. Another order came from our troop leader telling us to dismount and gather round him. In my euphoria, I stupidly jumped off the top of the tank and broke my leg. Some war wound! The regimental medical officer took one look and got his orderly to strap up the suspected break with tough, elasticised bandages, and told me to soldier on. I did, in great pain. A week later, I was x-rayed in a German Naval hospital, confirming the break. The bandage stayed on for another month and, luckily, the break healed with no ill effect.

The Regiment now bivouacked near Itzehoe, well north of Hamburg. My crew was issued with the new M-24 Chaffee Light Tank. I wished that it had been sooner as the new 35mm main gun packed a lot more punch. But, mercifully, we were never going to fire anything in anger again. We were at a loss to guess what was going to happen next. The war had come to a sudden end and thoughts of coming home, and what it was going to be like to be a civilian again, became a preoccupation.

Early June, the order came through that the 7th Armoured Division must stand by to move to Berlin. At the same time, a big load of battleship grey paint arrived that had been lifted from German Naval Stores in Kiel. And that caused a painting frenzy. Our tanks and scout cars and other vehicles bore the dirt and scars of twelve months campaigning, and now we had the order to make them look as good as new, not only to impress the Russians in Berlin, but also to outdo our fellow armoured regiments. Even the new Chaffees did not escape this treatment. We embarked on this bullshit regime with gusto. The regimental tailor's sewing machine also worked overtime to make our uniforms parade-worthy again, and to embellish them with newly issued medal ribbons. Our barber had a field day too. It was my 21st birthday that month. I am sure that it was duly celebrated; alas, I cannot remember anything about it.

At the Yalta Conference in February 1945, the Allied leaders, Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt, decided on the division of Germany, or carve-up as it was called, once hostilities had ceased. Berlin, which was going to be slap bang in the middle of the Russian Zone, was itself divided into the Russian, American, British and French sectors.

And so, on 4th July 1945, our Division, sampling its first acquaintance with Hitler's famed Autobahn, progressed through the Russian zone and, via Magdeburg, entered Berlin.

Over twelve years had elapsed since I last saw this city – the place of my birth. I was rather bemused by this curious coincidence, the irony that I should be in Berlin of all places, savouring the end of the war. I had been too young to form any attachments to it, and in any case, so much had happened since 1933 that my memories about it were extremely hazy. Probably just as well. Because what we experienced now beggars description. It was far worse than Hamburg. It had been two months since the Russians had stormed the city, street by street, in the most ferocious fighting to date. What Allied bombers had failed to flatten, then suffered the onslaught from murderous Russian artillery. More than half of all the buildings had been destroyed. There was no electricity, water or drainage. The weather was hot and the stench of the dead bodies in

the ruins was overwhelming. And yet, here we were, the victors, occupying the capital of the defunct Third Reich, being received by Berliners more as liberators than conquerors. We soon realised why.

In the final battle for Berlin, the Russians threw in a force of over one million troops. A large proportion were infantry made up by men from remote Mongolia. They had never travelled outside their homeland before and they were promised that when Berlin fell, they would get a few days immediate leave plus the army pay that was owing to them. They had never set eyes on a 'western' city before, let alone white women.

As a result, when the end came, tens of thousands went on the rampage. Anyone wearing a skirt, regardless of age, was in grave danger of being raped. Those who resisted were often murdered, and this went on for about four weeks, before the Allied sectors were properly established. The statistics are appalling. The historian, Antony Beevor, in his book 'BERLIN The Downfall, 1945' writes: 'Some two million German women were raped, 120,000 were hospitalised, while 10,000 died'. No wonder that we were looked upon as liberators when we arrived.

We were stationed in Berlin's Olympic stadium, a gigantic Nazi showpiece, made famous by the 1936 Olympic Games. Russian troops had just moved out and we got an instant insight into how they lived. The place was unspeakably filthy. Toilets had been shunned – there was excrement all over the place, and our Medical Officer shut it down and would not allow us in until the whole area had been cleaned up, fumigated and disinfected. We bivouacked outside for the first few nights next to our tanks. This was on a vast parade ground that marked the entrance to the stadium, flanked by dozens of tall flagpoles. It now became our tank park, and we would do all of our maintenance work there.

The Russian Commander of Berlin asked for the British army's help to round up a mass of deserters, as their few days leave on conquering Berlin had expired weeks before. We saw these hoards roam the streets, sometimes with a dozen watches strapped to their arms they had taken from their victims, checking that they were all ticking. Telling the time was not for them. Our Military Police helped the Russians clear them from the streets in our sector.

Already in April, shortly after we crossed into Germany, Field Marshal Montgomery had issued his non-fraternisation order to all troops. It simply said that we were forbidden all contacts with German civilians, unless in the course of duty. Now, on the very day we had entered Berlin, Montgomery issued a new order:

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH FORCES IN GERMANY

Great progress has been made in the de-Nazification of the British Zone and in removing Nazis from all responsibility in German life. Further, the Germans have shown themselves willing to obey my orders and to co-operate in the reconstruction of their country on non-Nazi lines. I have already modified my orders about non-fraternisation and allowed you to speak and play with little children. I now consider it desirable and timely to permit a further modification of these rules. You may now engage in conversation with adult Germans in the street and in public places. You will not for the present enter the homes and houses of the Germans nor permit them to enter any of the premises you are using except for duty or work. I know the non-fraternisation policy has been a strain upon many of you who have to live and work in close contact with Germans, and I appreciate the loyal way in which you have honoured it.

*Signed: B.L. Montgomery
Field Marshal
Commander-in-Chief
British Zone*

If ever there was an open invitation for soldiers to find comfort in people's homes, this was it!

Each morning a troop of tanks took it in turns to go, on what was called, a flag-waving drive. With Union Jacks fluttering from the aerials and sirens blaring, we travelled at a good speed through the main thoroughfares, all the way to the Brandenburg Gate and parked for an hour by the Tiergarten, before returning to the Olympic Stadium. I don't know what Berliners made of that. I think they were too busy to take much notice. I carry a picture in my mind of people, mostly women, working in the ruins to begin to clear away the debris with spades and bare hands and still discovering bodies. At the same time, miraculously, some sort of city life was emerging. Trams were starting to operate, and when we went on our runs in the early morning, the Berlin rush hour was beginning to make itself felt again.

Tommy was busy doing some interpreting for the Regiment, so I did not see a lot of him. His German was still very fluent, whereas mine was very rusty. I began to explore Berlin on foot in the evenings. Tommy had told me the address of our old apartment in the Kaiserallee at the corner of the Günzel Strasse. The blue enamelled plate with the house number 36^A was still fixed to the entrance porch. But all that was left was the façade, precariously upright, waiting to be demolished. But the old baker round the corner had survived and was still in business. Anne had sent me some names and addresses for me to try and trace and that was how I was able to find our old nanny, Frau Müller. She had survived the years of bombing and the final street battles, and could hardly believe her eyes when I told her who I was. She was living in a small room on pathetic rations, with no one to help her forage on the black market. This was now a thriving institution, partly financed by a ready supply of cigarettes and coffee, which sustain armies. While I was in Berlin, I was able to make her life a little more bearable with provisions she had not seen for some years. Tommy was also able to find her and provide her with items that she, no doubt, considered luxuries.

It was on one of my walks exploring the city, that I was approached by a woman and her daughter and asked whether I was interested in acquiring a camera. She then explained that it was a ciné camera and asked whether I would like to see it. What better reason, I thought, for disobeying Montgomery's orders, as they took me to their flat. They showed me a 16mm Ciné Kodak Magazine camera, and I felt that Christmas had come early that year. We agreed a price. A 7 lb tin of concentrated soup, 2 lbs of coffee, 400 Senior Service cigarettes and a few bars of chocolate. All highly illegal, but very exciting. We made a rendezvous at the Tiergarten where, on my daily run, my tank usually stopped for an hour before returning to the Stadium. I told her exactly where, and so the next day she waited for me in the bushes and when we arrived she came forward and the great exchange took place. I was now the proud owner of a ciné camera, and I did not realise then how useful it was going to be to me once I was demobbed.

At a Brigadier's inspection on our parade ground outside the Olympic Stadium, together with six others, I was picked out to act as one of Churchill's guards at the Potsdam Conference – with little insight into the significance of this historical event.

On 15th July, the conference delegates began to arrive in Berlin, as the Regiment was girding itself for the great victory parade scheduled for 21st July. Bullshitting our gear took on a new meaning. Tanks and vehicles were endowed with yet another layer of paint, and all brass fittings, buckles and belts, out-sparkled each other.

The 21st was going to be a day to remember. On the Saluting Base was Churchill and with him were Montgomery, Attlee and a host of Cabinet Ministers and high-ranking brass from all the allied services.

The route started at the Grosse Stern at the foot of the Franco-Prussian War Memorial and then all the way to the Charlottenburger Chaussée as far as the Brandenburg Gate. Regimental bands struck up and for twenty minutes tanks and armoured cars roared past the base, led by the 3rd Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery, the senior regiment on parade, followed by the 8th Hussars, the senior cavalry regiment. It was going to be the last time that Tommy and I were alongside each other in our respective tanks. I know that both of us felt, in the middle of this jubilation, a great sense of relief, not having to worry any more about each other's safety.

Soon after, Tommy left Berlin as he had been seconded to the Royal Engineers who were responsible for getting the German rail network to function again, acting as a liaison interpreter.

The Potsdam conference took place in the Cecilienhof Palace, to the west of Berlin. It was in the Russian sector, and the delegates were accommodated nearby in Babelsberg, the Beverly Hills of Berlin, near the UFA Film Studio. The whole delegation area was sealed off by Russian troops and the streets were lined every thirty yards by Russian Officers (none below the rank of colonel) with Tommy-guns at the ready. This had been the wealthiest part of Berlin, with opulent film stars' villas to match. Churchill's villa was in the Ringstrasse, its grounds sloping down to the waters of the Havel. Our job was to protect the house and prevent incursions from the Havel.

The villa next door housed a high-ranking Russian General, a delegate to the conference, and I got to know one of his guards. He was a colonel, aged seventy, with a long white beard tucked into his belt. We managed to converse in halting German. I remember swapping cigarettes with him. He enjoyed my Senior Service and I sampled his army issue cigarettes: long tubes, half filled with, what I assumed, was tobacco.

Mary Churchill (Lady Soames), WSC's youngest daughter, a captain in the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service), was her father's aide-de-camp, and she used to come out of the villa and bring us cups of tea. At one point, we heard Churchill bellowing from a window at the top of the house that his bath water was not hot enough, and Mary rushed back inside to attend to her father's needs.

Outside the villa, a ceremonial guard, mounted by Coldstream Guardsmen, counter-marched on the pavement, but the noise made by their army boots deeply disturbed Churchill. Someone at the War Office in London was detailed to go to Woolworth's and buy a consignment of screw-on rubber heels – a wartime expedient to save leather. A Dakota was flown from Berlin to England to pick them up, and the problem was solved.

There was a photocall for the world's press in another villa, and I stood in the bushes together with Russian and U.S soldiers guarding Churchill, Stalin and Truman. It's odd

to think that we referred to Stalin as Uncle Joe, a term of affection. Churchill, as we now know, regarded him in a very different light.

Churchill and Truman acknowledged Soviet predominance in Eastern Europe by accepting Polish and Soviet administration of certain German territories, and agreed to the transfer of the German population (over ten million people) to Germany. Plans were agreed to introduce democratic principles of government in Germany; deal with reparations; measures to outlaw the Nazi Party, and so on. Also, the Potsdam Declaration (26th July 1945) demanded from Japan the choice between unconditional surrender or total destruction. Stalin was told about the atom bomb.

At the end of each conference day, I got to know a civilian whom I took to be one of the team of Churchill's Special Branch officers. He used to come into the garden at the end of each day for his constitutional stroll, puffing away at his pipe. He was very friendly and much concerned about our welfare, and keen to find out what we were going to do after demobilisation. A few days later, on 25th July, Churchill left for London to hear the dramatic results of the first post-war General Election. He was no longer Prime Minister, and his successor returned to Potsdam. It was Clement Attlee, my pipe-smoking acquaintance. Politics had not played any part in my life, and although I probably knew that Attlee was wartime Deputy Prime Minister, I did not know what he looked like. I felt suitably chastened. Twenty-one years later, when I was filming the Mountbatten Series, I met him again, as one of many eyewitnesses, telling the story of how he appointed Mountbatten to be India's last Viceroy. ("I needed a change of bowling at the top in India and Dickie was the man for the job.") We talked about the Potsdam Conference and he clearly remembered his strolls in the grounds after work.

After the conference, the Regiment stayed on in Berlin and we were able to relax a bit more. PT was once more part of the routine and being keen on hockey, I played several Divisional matches in the Olympic Stadium.



Sept. 1944 Nijmegen Corridor, Holland
Together with Tommy



April 1945 with Tommy on the way to Harburg
and closing in on Hamburg



4th July, 1945. 8th Hussars Tank Park
in front of the Berlin Olympic Stadium



21st July, 1945. Winston Churchill takes the salute
with Field Marshal Montgomery and Clement Attlee



Photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London

21st July, 1945. Berlin Victory Parade
The brothers in their tanks. Tommy, extreme left, PM in centre

Chapter 7

It was in June 1945 that my sister was able to make contact with our mother. We learned that she and Harry Kahn had been rounded up by the French Police in Paris and shipped to separate camps in Marseilles. In 1943, with the help of an escape organisation, they managed to cross into Switzerland on foot, and after initial internment, lived with a family in Winterthur and then settled in Massagno, overlooking the Lake of Lugano. They had escaped from France in the clothes they were wearing, plus a small bag with a few personal possessions that my mother had been able to hang on to since Paris. They had to start all over again, setting up home in an old rented farm cottage. The Swiss Government and a Jewish charity provided a small living allowance for refugees. Harry was able to organise the odd contract with Swiss publishers and started earning modest fees translating books from English into German. Mother had to learn a life-style totally foreign to her. She had been used to a pampered life; she had never known the need to go out and work; cooks, nannies, servants had been at her command. But like so many others, she managed to adapt and run a household for Harry on a very tight budget.

Tommy was the first to manage to get to Switzerland and visited them when they were still in Winterthur. I was able to wangle special leave some months later. This turned out to be quite an adventure. I was given a seven-day leave pass and with the rail network still largely in ruins, it took that many days just to get to Paris. And there I was delayed for five very enjoyable bonus days, while rail bridges were being repaired further down the line. Finally, I got to Basel and found the platform for the train to Lugano. To my surprise, I ran into Lady Marjorie Corbett-Ashby who was on one of her high-powered political missions, this time to Switzerland. I had not seen her since I joined the army and she told me that she was so relieved that her intervention to use her influence to get me into the RAF had failed, or we might not have met that day. The other surprise was the station fruit stall. I spotted a rare sight, something I had not seen for five years – bananas. They became my sustenance for the four-hour train journey to Lugano. I did get some curious looks from some of my fellow passengers. They probably had never seen a banana-eating British soldier in uniform before.

My mother and Harry were at the station to meet me, and in spite of my uniform they did not spot me and I failed to recognise them. After all, eleven years had elapsed since we last saw each other, a great deal had happened in between, and the memories of a nine-year-old were a bit hazy. I asked for directions to their house, and with my kitbag over my shoulder, climbed up the steep slope to Massagno. It was a hot August day and by the time I made it to the house, I was exhausted and slumped down on a small patch of grass outside their front door and fell fast asleep. Voices woke me up, and there they were. For my mother, it must have been quite an emotional experience, because in 1944 she had picked up a Swiss Illustrated magazine and was convinced that a photograph of a badly wounded British soldier, taken prisoner by the Germans at Arnhem, was me.

She had missed my formative years and must have been very intrigued to find out what sort of person her youngest child had grown into. For my part, I was rather amused by it all. I certainly was not aware of close ties or maternal love, but we got on very well.

There was a lot of family banter; it was all very light-hearted and superficial, and a relationship slowly evolved which made it congenial for me to visit them for many summer holidays to come.

In the autumn of 1945, the 8th Hussars moved into German barracks in Lingen, not far from the Dutch border. By now, I had the rank of Squadron Quartermaster Sergeant, and had to endure some peacetime soldiering, waiting for my demob number to come up. The rule was 'first in, first out', regardless whether you were a conscript or, like me, had volunteered, and I knew that it would mean at least another six months in uniform. I was determined to make this period as agreeable as possible and I had a bit of luck. Soldiers were able to join a newly formed RAF gliding club near Osnabrück, which was about two hours drive away. The RAF personnel staffing the club, especially the WAAFs, made everyone very welcome. The club was equipped with a fleet of different types of German gliders and sailplanes, and the instructors were German.

The club was democratically run; rank was ignored and we were all on first name terms. On an early visit, I met our Brigade Commander who had also just joined. I told the Brigadier that I might have a transport problem and find it difficult to journey to the club on weekends. He told me that he was due to carry out one of his feared regimental inspections and that he would fix that problem. The following week, we were on parade in our smartest kit. As our C.O., Colonel Goulburn, led the Brigadier past the Recce Troop, he stopped and said: "Ah, it's Morley from the gliding club. Tell me, do you have problems getting there?" "Yes, sir", I replied. He turned to the C.O. and said: "Please see to it that this Quartermaster Sergeant is given decent regimental transport." And that is how I was able to enjoy the permanent use of the Colonel's Daimler Scout Car on my weekly trips.

Gliding is a wonderful sport and I was able to make the most of it. The *ab initio* flying training was, to say the least, primitive but it worked. No question of sitting next to, or behind an instructor in a training glider. The contraption I was strapped into was a huge pair of wings attached to a narrow wooden beam; there was a small seat at the end of it with a joystick and rudder pedals. It was appropriately named a broomstick. There was a short lesson when the instructor got hold of the wing and tilted it up and down, so that one learnt how to counteract these movements with the joystick controlling the ailerons. He then went round the back, lifted up the tail, or pressed it towards the ground and I had to correct this to begin to master the functions of the elevator. End of lesson.

Next, he attached a rope from the nose of this contraption to the back of his car, and while someone else was holding the wings level, I was towed across the airfield, fast enough for the ailerons to react, but not enough for the 'broomstick' to take off. There were several tows, each one getting slightly faster, and on one of them I spotted a large molehill ahead, and as we skidded over it, I actually took off. I was airborne! I was actually flying, albeit for only about three yards and only inches above ground. Now a much longer rope was used. It was hooked onto a special ring, and to my right was a small lever that released the towrope. And off we went. This time much faster, and when we had reached, what I felt was flying speed, I gently pulled back on the stick, and hey presto, I was seriously airborne. I pulled the release lever, the instructor did a smart

turn to the right to get his car out of the way, and I made my first solo landing. And so we progressed, reaching a height of about eighty feet and learning how to make turns and decent landings.

Then came the next stage. I was promoted to an advanced training glider, in fact, a sailplane. It was called a Grunau Baby, with a proper cockpit and equipped with an array of flying instruments. A powerful winch was positioned several hundred yards away on the edge of the airfield, its huge drum housing hundreds of feet of towing cable. The end of the cable was attached to a jeep, which then tore across the field to bring it to the launch area. The cable was attached to the nose of the glider, and with hand signals from the instructor to the far edge of the field, the winch operator took up the slack in the cable, and as it tightened, we moved forward. When flying speed was reached, we quickly took off. And then by pulling the stick hard back into my stomach, the glider shot up into the sky at an alarming angle. You were literally lying on your back and I could only see the clouds above me. As the winch rapidly hauled in the cable, the glide path flattened out and the horizon mercifully came back into view. That was the crucial time to pull the release lever, and you were free. From then on, I progressed to making circuits of the field and practised making accurate landings. This meant coming to a halt with the sailplane's skid resting on a 6ft by 2ft bright orange piece of canvas. (These were the Allies' recognition panels tied to all our vehicles to avoid 'friendly fire').

Learning the art of thermal soaring came next. This was real flying. Thermals are rising bubbles of warm air. When a glider enters one of these, the needle on the variometer, the instrument that measures the rate of climb or descent, tells you whether you have sniffed out a thermal. Also, you feel by the seat of your pants that you are being pushed up, and then the trick is to find the centre of this invisible bubble and with tight turns to circle around that point to stay within it and to rise with it. That is the art of thermal soaring. A barograph, which you take up, records the height gain. And one day, after a lot of practice flights, I managed to climb to a height of over 3000 feet, and clocked up an entry for my Silver 'C' Certificate.

My most memorable adventure was on my first cross-country flight. This means finding and climbing within a thermal until it peters out and then pressing on, sadly losing height in the process, hoping to find another one, and so on. I was about thirty miles away from my airfield when luck ran out. Thermals were getting scarce as it was getting late in the afternoon, and the heat of the sun was no longer triggering thermals to form and rise through the colder air. And for obvious safety reasons, the drill was that at a 1000 feet you had to pick out a suitable landing spot; it had better be a field, and, ideally, without cattle or power cables. This then gave you just enough time to pick the exact spot, work out wind direction and the best approach for a safe landing. Unfortunately, the only open space I saw was a football field, with lots of buildings, tall trees and many huts around its edges. The trouble was that a game was in progress. I approached the field by making several circuits round it, getting lower all the time. Luckily, the players realised that I was going to attempt a landing and cleared off the pitch. I flew in just clearing the top of one goal and came to a safe halt at the other end of the pitch in front of the other goal. Before I was able to undo my harness, a couple of British Military Policemen came up and welcomed me to a prisoner of war camp. The German POWs helped to manhandle the glider off the pitch, and they resumed their game.

In spite of the huge kick I got out of these exciting gliding weekends many miles away from my boring duties back in the barracks, I was eagerly waiting for news of my demob date. I had been told that it would probably be towards the end of 1946. I had my first home leave in the autumn. In those ten days I was able to catch up on all the home and family news. Tommy had just been demobbed (he had volunteered for the army a year ahead of me) and it just increased my wish to come home for good as soon as possible. On my return to the regiment, I learnt that it would now not happen until 1947.

June of that year marked a very British ceremony. I had to report to the CO's office, where Colonel Goulburn announced that my naturalization papers had come through and he told me to swear the oath of allegiance. I was more than happy to oblige:

'I, Peter Morley, swear by Almighty God that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King George the Sixth, His Heirs and Successors, according to law.'

Colonel "Cuthy" Goulburn shook my hand, wished me well, and offered me a drink to mark the occasion. At last, I now had British citizenship, but it did not escape our notice that we do have the most bizarre ways of going about things. After all, I had served 'King and Country' for four years, seen action with the 8th Hussars, guarded two Prime Ministers (Churchill and Attlee) at Potsdam, and all that time I was officially classed as an enemy alien. It's a funny old life.



Special leave to Switzerland



Seeing my Mother after 11 years



My Mother and Harry



Arriving to a friendly reception at the Osnabrück RAF Gliding Club in the Colonel's Scout Car



Solo from Day-1 in the 'Broomstick'



'Biggles' Morley in his sailplane

Chapter 8

At last, in September 1947, my number came up. There was a lot of drinking in the mess the night before my departure – the words ‘Civvy Street’ and ‘dear old Blighty’ figured largely in the noisy alcoholic singing repertoire. Trains had now resumed almost normal service, and the channel port, Ostend, was not far away. Like many servicemen, I had fallen prey to a particularly stupid venture. During our advance through Germany it had become an act of great prestige to be able to claim the proud ownership of a Luger pistol. It meant, of course, that you had acquired it from a German prisoner or took it from dead soldier, usually an officer. When the Army realised that troops coming home on leave or demobilisation were bringing these lethal souvenirs into the country, a strict order was issued, which if you were caught, would have had very serious consequences. The challenge was to beat the system and to invent foolproof smuggling methods. Mine was to cut open my army issue water bottle, and to stuff it with the dismantled parts of my Luger. I then soldered it up again, and replaced its webbing holder.

On the way across on the ferry there was a Tannoy announcement warning everyone that Military Police were waiting at Harwich with the special task to search for illegal arms. Mercifully, I took fright and tossed my Luger overboard into the channel. Mine was not the only splash in the water on that day.

The demob centre was in York and the train journey from Harwich marked the last time I was going to be in uniform. We were kitted out with basic clothes to make civilians of us again. I chose a double-breasted grey pin-striped suit, which was to be my ‘one-and-only whistle’ for the next ten years. My gratuity payment, based on rank and length of service, was all of £90. Back in London, I joined my father in the basement flat in Hogarth Place. The winter of 1947 presented a challenge to us all. It was incredibly bitter, and coal for the fireplace was severely rationed and often unavailable. We had a small paraffin Valor stove, and both of us huddled around it trying to keep warm. I used to queue for several hours with our one-gallon paraffin can to get our ration of the wretched stuff. This was not an easy time, especially for the elderly. I gave my miserly sugar ration to my father, so that at least one of us could enjoy a cup of tea. As a result, to this day I find sweetened tea undrinkable.

My four years in the army had not blunted my desire to pursue a career in films, and film editing was on top of the agenda. But how to go about it still remained a mystery. I wrote to all the studios and small film companies and got identical replies saying that there were no vacancies, as so many ex-servicemen from the film industry, who had joined up for the duration, were now returning to their old jobs. In any case, what has since become a classic Catch 22 syndrome prevailed: no job without a union ticket – no union ticket without a job.

With hindsight, I often regret that it never occurred to me at that time to seek a university education. As an ex-serviceman, I would have qualified for a grant, but my family and friends never mentioned this possibility, probably because they knew that I was totally obsessed with a career in films. I realised some months later that my old Bunce Court class mates had all chosen the university route. Sometimes I wish that I had done things differently – maybe taken a degree in architecture, which had always intrigued me. I would have enjoyed the camaraderie of college life; I am sure that it

would have helped me to overcome a natural shyness, and encouraged greater confidence in myself. And then, subsequently, I could have decided whether to pursue a film career or not.

I was so angry about the hopeless union situation, that I decided to fight it – and I had an idea. If I could produce a privately financed film, surely I could then apply for a ticket. I had struck up a pub friendship with a demobbed Squadron Leader who had opened a small television retail shop very close to our flat, opposite Earls Court Station. At that time there was only one channel – BBC TV. I had noticed that at night he had six TV receivers in his shop window, all were showing the identical programme. Passers-by stopped outside and watched these new magical moving pictures, in silence, as my friend had not rigged up a speaker to relay the sound outside his shop. My idea was to place a seventh TV set in his window that would show a different programme, and I hoped that this might cause a bit of a stir. I persuaded him to let me film an advertising feature, proclaiming his wares, hire purchase offers and after-sales service. I was to gamble my gratuity on this venture. The first move was to set up a company, and with the help of my father's accountant, P.J. Morley Film Production Limited was born. This, I felt sure, would vouchsafe my acceptance for union membership – after all, I was now a film producer!

My prized Magazine Ciné Kodak camera, bartered for and procured in Berlin in the shadow of the Brandenburg Gate, now came into its own. The small cast was made up of the shop owner's family, representing the public visiting the shop and being shown the various television receivers, with prices and so on. As this was a silent film, I drew and then shot the title cards pinned to my bedroom wall. The film's running time was seven minutes, which I thought was long enough to hold the attention of passers-by.

I enjoyed solving the task of finding a method of showing it in the shop window. The owner gave me a defunct television set and I gutted it. I had bought a small 16mm projector, and asked a local engineering company to manufacture, from a drawing I made, a film loop device, which I attached to the take-up spindle of the projector. This was crucial to the whole enterprise, as my masterpiece could now play continuously on a seven-minute loop. With my bedroom as a workshop, I squeezed all this into the confined space inside the TV cabinet. A thick sheet of tracing paper replaced the cathode-ray tube, ready for the back-projected picture. A series of small mirrors bent and enlarged the image to fill the false TV screen. It worked. My friend was delighted and we installed it in the shop window, ready for the big switch-on that night. But we had not foreseen a totally unexpected problem. As darkness fell, crowds started to gather to have a look at this extra television programme. This was repeated the next night and the following morning the police arrived in the shop and told the owner to remove the television set with the 'other' programme, as the crowd it was attracting was causing an obstruction on the pavement. So that was the end of that. The owner and I licked our wounds. He paid up his share of the cost, but I had blown my gratuity. My new National Provincial Bank account looked very sick. But, full of optimism, I applied to the union for a ticket; I was a producer, whose company had made a film. As a condition of being accepted, they asked for the impossible: proof that my company had employed a full-sized unionised film crew and film editor and paid them standard union rates. Disaster. The whole scheme had failed, and I was back to 'no job, no ticket; no ticket, no job'.

Luckily, during this period I had met and become friendly with Geoff Hughes who was a director with the Shell Film Unit, making mostly scientific films. He also had problems getting into the industry and he recognised my plight. The Shell film unit, which had been set up in 1934, was still not unionised, and he arranged for me to be interviewed by his boss, the head of the unit. Sir Arthur Elton had taken on its leadership after the war, and I had been given fair warning that he was not the easiest person to talk to. Correctly, as it turned out. He quickly summed me up and declared: “You will never make a career in the film industry as I cannot detect one spark of talent.” He made me feel very angry and I was now more determined than ever that I must get into films and prove him wrong. And Geoff Hughes tried again. He arranged for me to be interviewed by one of the bosses of The Film Producers Guild. The Guild was a collective of Documentary Film companies, with offices and preview facilities in Guild House, Upper St.Martin’s Lane, just off Cambridge Circus. We thought that if I had the good luck to land a job there in any capacity, I would at least be working in a film environment, and who knows what that might lead to. Anything to get a union ticket. And they did have a vacancy, but to my dismay, it was as an assistant projectionist in their preview theatre. I had had my fill at the Dominion at the beginning of the war and never thought that I would have to go back into a projection box. I persuaded myself that this was a necessary ruse to achieve my aims and accepted the job on those terms. The weekly wage was a princely £5. Projectionists were looked after by a different union (NATKE), which did not prescribe a closed shop policy, so that I still had to overcome the vexed membership hurdle of somehow joining the main film union, the ACT.

As it turned out, it proved to be the best move I could have made. The Guild’s array of film companies produced a wide range of documentaries, mostly sponsored by industry, the Government, charitable foundations and so on. They also owned Merton Park Studios in south London, which made ‘B’ movies to support main feature films in cinemas. And I was determined to exploit this situation.

I was now to get my first introduction to the basic processes of film-making, both technical and creative. It was my job to screen rushes, first assemblies, rough cuts, fine cuts, voice tracks, music tracks, dubbed tracks, animation roughs, grading prints, etc. I was able to follow all the stages, from the first ideas to the final show print. And equally important, I got to know the Guild’s producers, directors, writers, cameramen and film editors – always game for a chat when they came round to the projection box after a screening. Luminaries like Humphrey Jennings, John Grierson, Jill Craigie and Paul Rotha hired the preview theatre on occasions, and I felt that I had become a small speck of dust on the wheel of the British post-war documentary movement.

Of course, it was very frustrating to screen other people’s work all day long, when I was aching to have a go myself.

It was during this time that I grasped the opportunity to make my first amateur film. My old school, Bunce Court, had returned from its wartime evacuation in Shropshire, to its home in Kent. It was destined to close down in 1948 – it had fulfilled its role of giving both sanctuary and education to pupils, most of whom had been engulfed by the tyranny of Nazism. It had accomplished its mission in the most admirable way, and the time had come for it to bow out. In 1947, I went down to Kent for its first peacetime reunion, and got the agreement from the head, Anna Essinger, to make a little film in advance of its closure. The school paid for the film stock costs, and I dusted down my precious ‘liberated’ Magazine Ciné Kodak, bought some cheap lights, wrote a script and

spent three weekends shooting it. I called the film, *Once upon a Time*, and to my surprise it earned a special commendation from The Board of the Amateur Cine World. Over fifty years later, I was able to provide some archive footage clips from it for historical documentaries being made in the USA and Germany, dealing with subjects such as the 1939 Kindertransport.

There were numerous attempts to talk myself into an opening in one of the Guild's many cutting rooms, always thwarted by the union's mad closed shop dictum. It was not merely 'jobs for the boys' that drove this policy, but there was resistance to letting new blood enter the industry. To the ACT the word 'merit' had little meaning. It was now 1949 and I could hardly believe that I had spent almost two years in my quest to 'get in'. My salary had increased to £7. I was still sharing the basement flat in Hogarth Place with my father. Neither of us had much spare cash, but we managed to keep our heads above water. Food rationing – four years after the war – seemed to have become a permanent way of life. Today, it sounds almost too absurd when reminiscing about this period, realising that we had to wait till the mid-1950s for rationing to be finally abandoned.

In 1950, rescue came in the guise of one of the Guild's ace producers, Ronald Riley, the head of a small and very successful company, Verity Films. He took me under his wing. He recognised my frustration and knew that I was not cut out to be a projectionist for the rest of my life. He found a classic opening for me – as a tea-boy. He had heard that Technical & Scientific Films, a small Guild production company, was on the lookout for someone, and he put me up for the job. There was no interview – I just started the following Monday. I had no problem accepting the demotion from assistant projectionist to tea-boy, but the drop in wages to £4 a week was very painful.

T&S had a staff of ten and was located up the road from Guild House, and, therefore, removed from the constant glare of the ACT. In any case, the grade of tea-boy was not recognised by the union. T&S was housed in a Victorian building at the corner of New Oxford Street and Shaftesbury Avenue, above James Smith & Sons, London's oldest manufacturer of sticks and umbrellas, with its original large and ornate brass plates announcing its name and business, still intact in the 21st century. Whenever I pass it now, it reminds me of the very first car I owned, bought for £70. It was a 1932 Alvis Firefly, and I used it to travel every morning from Earl's Court to New Oxford Street, with masses of places for parking!

My job was ill defined, and that suited me well. The brief I got from its managing director, Denis Ward, an ex-ICI chemist, was to lend a hand wherever I could make myself useful. He was impressed that I could work their ancient 35mm projector, and relished the possibility of film screenings to some of his clients. He also told me to run errands for the resident film editor, Pam Bosworth, and I felt that this could turn out to be the golden opportunity I had been waiting for. Pam, who some years later became a top-flight BBC film editor, gave me great encouragement. I spent my time watching her in the cutting room and helped her to file film trims and other more menial tasks when they were required. In those days when a wrong cut was made in an optical soundtrack, it could not be unmade, unlike the later magnetic sound tapes, which were joined with a special Selotape that could be unpicked. So a new print of that section had to be made overnight from the original 35mm negative held by Humphries Film Laboratories, in Whitfield Street, just off Tottenham Court Road. I used to fetch and carry cans of film

on foot (up New Oxford Street and past my old Dominion Theatre), but charge two pence for the bus fare. This boosted my weekly wage by the odd shilling.

Soon Pam let me assemble rushes for her, and quite quickly I got the feel of handling 35mm film, with the thrill of making my first decisions on joining one scene to another. And then I had some real luck. Denis Ward came up to the cutting room, proudly announcing that T&S had just been commissioned to make a cinema appeals film for The British Legion's Poppy Day. I had already told him about my amateur Bunce Court film when I joined T&S, and he was prepared to try me out as film editor. Pam backed me up and, at last I was able to get my teeth into something tangible. This was the first of a number of films I was to edit. The small team over the umbrella shop knew perfectly well that I was blacklegging, but they were very understanding and helped to protect me from prying eyes. The documentary convener for the union was famous for being both very charming and quite ruthless – so when Bessie Bond announced that she was coming round to check out the union status at T&S, I was given the day off. But I knew that sooner or later I would be rumbled, and I got some helpful advice on what tactics to adopt.

One of my sister's close friends was Oswald Hafenrichter, who was considered to be one of the ace feature film editors, whose credits include such classics as Carol Reed's *The Third Man*. I met him, and he introduced me to another editor, Rex Endsleigh, who was a member of the ACT union committee representing editors. He explained to me that film companies were obliged to inform head-office when they wanted to fill vacancies covered by the union's many technical grades. If the ACT books showed that an unemployed technician in that grade was available, he or she would have to be offered and then given the job. Merit played no part. But if the union was unable to provide such a person, the company would be free to employ anyone they wished, even a non-cardholder. He then planned to let me know the moment the books showed that there were no unemployed assistant editors available. I got his call some months later and my T&S boss immediately declared a vacancy for this grade. As the union could not fill it, he told them that he was going to give the job to me, and that I was coming over to their office in Soho Square for official membership papers. And that is how, over three long years after demobilisation, I acquired my ticket. And by the time the various committees had accepted my membership application, I had already been promoted to full editor.

The company slowly expanded and I soon found myself scripting and then directing a variety of films. Two titles I can recall with great clarity, because they gave me a useful grounding in styles and techniques, which I would be able to exploit later on in my television work. One was a colour film for The British & Foreign Bible Society, celebrating its centenary, dealing with social issues in Ruanda and Burundi. The only material at my disposal was a large collection of contemporary indigenous paintings and sketches. I had my first experience in, what is now, rostrum camera work. Except that in the early 1950s it was no more than pinning a picture on the wall, and carefully panning with the camera to achieve smooth movements over the selected area – some of the close-up details being merely half an inch wide. I began to learn the value of exploiting the still image – and by lingering on it for quite some time and adding appropriate music, I realized one could highlight important visual details and create a desired mood with an eloquence, which the moving image often finds difficult to achieve. A perfect example of that is Ken Burns' hugely successful American documentary series *Civil War*.

The other title was a ciné magazine for the industrial steel giant, Richard, Thomas & Baldwin Ltd, largely aimed at their huge work force. This was a forerunner of television magazine programmes. These quarterly editions of 'Ingot Pictorial' consisted of two or three specially filmed items covering training, safety, personnel issues, also morale boosting and recreational stories. All of us at T&S contributed to these, and the variety of subjects and their treatment of them was the best sort of training for budding writers, editors and directors. For example, I learnt how to cut a number of these short magazine items to music, eschewing the spoken word – again, something I was able to put to good use later on in television. In fact, I was unaware that I was going through a period of unstructured, but intense learning, which was not available elsewhere, as film schools had not yet become fully established. I suppose that I really ought to think about this period as my time attending a rather special university.

I have always believed that the magical atmosphere within a cutting room creates the finest training ground for anyone who seeks a career in film or television. It is, after all, the focal point of the production process, bringing together the expertise and talents of writers, producers, directors, editors, cameramen, sound recordists and all the other crafts that contribute to the final product.

When I am asked by young people to help them get into the industry, I urge them not to be afraid of starting as a cutting-room tea-boy, runner or sweeper. Because it is here, after a few months, that you begin to discover whether you are developing that magical facility – that invisible small screen embedded in your forehead – which automatically triggers your visual senses and translates thoughts and words into pictures. If you have made a cut, joining two shots together, but think better of it by trimming three frames from the outgoing shot, you can picture the effect in your mind's eye before you do it. Or you wish to start music two beats before the picture cut – you hear, see and feel the effect as the thought comes to you. Honest assessment of all this should tell you something about your potential; whether you are blessed with the necessary talent; whether 'you have got it'. This, of course, applies equally to the other crafts, whatever they are, and in the cutting-room they all come together, opening up the options whether to stick to editing or pursue a career as a cameraman, recordist, director, animator, even writer. Today, when digital picture editing is becoming the norm, and would-be editors look for training in the many video facility houses, I would still recommend a solid grounding in a film cutting-room. Its unmatched tranquillity beats the busy hustle of video editing. The ever-changing technology of video editing (linear and non-linear) makes it enormously expensive, with the cost of using the latest gismos being charged at many hundreds of pounds per hour. The last time I worked in a facility house I reckoned that saying good morning to the editor costs three pounds, and falling out for a quick pee used twenty pound's worth of editing time. The meter is remorselessly ticking over all the time, whereas the tranquillity of the film cutting-room provides the luxury of time – to be able to sit down and reflect. Try a sequence one day, sleep on it, tear it all up the next morning and have another go.

Something else, which was important for me, and presumably for others too, is the tactile property of film; the feel of it between your fingers; holding it up to the light to spot a frame; laying soundtracks in a synchroniser; feeding film into a Moviola; rolling up out-takes and so on – somehow, magically, these sensations stimulate that special visual sense: the ability to 'see it' in your mind's eye. Editors brought up solely on video will probably have a problem in understanding this.

And now the relentless march of technology has changed all this. The video facility houses are strongly challenged by digital non-linear picture and sound editing, now available to all, on desktop computers – and you can work from your home.

* * * *

Back in our basement flat in Hogarth Place, my father had little concept about my work, and I think that he regretted that I had not taken up, what he would have described as, a proper job. We got on very well though, sharing the household chores, but life was pretty frugal. He made his modest living dealing in rabbit skins, and had his pitch on the pavement outside Smithfield Market, standing there in all weathers. His earnings had always been minimal, and my contribution, small as it was, managed to keep us afloat. There was just enough for him to afford a short annual holiday with his close friend, Madeleine Adcock, and I saved enough to stay for two weeks in the summer with my mother in Lugano. I could never mention my destination to my father, but he knew well enough. Mother and Harry Kahn eventually married and took on Swiss citizenship. Harry earned their keep by translating books, and was in great demand. I managed several sorties from Lugano into Italy, and got my first introduction to Florence, Venice, Rome and Naples. One year, I managed to explore Sicily, long before it became today's tourist attraction.

Anne was totally absorbed by her intensive work at the Warburg Institute. She devoted a lot of her spare time helping our father with his purchase tax returns and typing. Most weekends she came to Hogarth Place, so that we saw a lot of each other.

Tommy had married Molly Jermyn, a teacher from Ipswich. They lived near Holland Park and then bought a house in Camden Town, which became the family home. They produced three sons: Anthony, David and Richard. Tommy had started in the catering business after the war, and in the seventies he bought a hotel near Bovey Tracey, in Devon, which he and Molly ran. Sadly, she succumbed to cancer. He remarried, and later retired in Devon. He died in 1997.

In September 1954, we had to move our father to a nursing home in Osterley, Middlesex. He was now 72, and had been unwell for quite some time. The family doctor had diagnosed lung cancer. He had been an extremely heavy smoker all his life. He died peacefully in his sleep a month later, and we felt that the doctor had mercifully minimised his suffering. He had been a kind man, generous to a fault; the great optimist, always believing that tomorrow was going to be better than today. He never forgave our mother for deserting the family twenty-one years earlier, but he never talked about it. The three of us were to miss him very much.



My Father, aged 68

1950



With sister Anne and brother Tommy



1950. My first car. A 1932 Alvis Firefly



1950. Film Editor - at last.
In my cutting room over the exclusive
James Smith & Sons umbrella shop
in New Oxford Street



Chapter 9

The following year things turned round. ITV was to launch its national television service in September 1955. Associated-Rediffusion (A-R) had successfully applied for the London weekday franchise. All the new ITV companies were feverishly recruiting staff and quite a number were enticed away from the BBC. Others came from the film industry and the theatre, and hurried training programmes were set up to meet the huge demand that the launch of this new enterprise was going to make.

Bob Evans, one of my colleague directors at The Film Producers Guild, had joined A-R early that year to start his television training. He felt that television was going to be good news, and wondered whether I had thought about moving over. I hadn't, but he persuaded me to have an interview, which he volunteered to set up. And that is how I came to face Lloyd Williams, an ex-BBC floor manager, who had joined A-R as their production chief in charge of hiring and firing staff. Bob had told him about me, and came round to see me at T&S to brief me. He said that as long I expressed a belief in television, and had an enthusiastic desire to be part of it, I shouldn't have problems with Lloyd Williams.

On entering his office, he said: "Sit down, Peter, and tell me why you want to be in television." The informality came as a bit of a shock, but I felt confident, and with Bob's advice fresh in my mind, I launched into my eulogy of the new challenge. I told him what a magnificent medium it was; that it was here to stay; that it would revolutionise communications; that I wished to play a part in it; that I would bring my documentary experience to it, etc. He wanted to know a bit about the films I had made and then asked me how much television I watched. I told him that my job really prevented me from viewing a lot of the programmes I wanted to see, as I worked long hours (true) and got home rather late in the evenings. "Do you own or rent a television set?" and I replied, "As a matter of fact, I don't have a set at home, but I have unlimited access to the one in my friend's flat upstairs." "What is your favourite programme?" came the next question, and I thought to hell with it, I had better own up, "Mr Williams, the only programme I have ever seen was the Coronation, and I thought it was absolutely splendid." "Right," he said, slamming his palm down on his desk, "when can you start?"

I was almost speechless. We then briefly discussed the terms of employment. I declined the invitation to join the company as a staff employee, and opted for a short-term contract. I proposed to him that the contract should be between A-R and my company, P.J. Morley Film Productions Limited, which was lying dormant after my doomed attempt to use it as a ruse to acquire a union ticket. And in turn, my company would contract me to work for A-R. A useful employment arrangement (with obvious income tax advantages) I used forever after.

I was now a free-lance, a status I was to enjoy for the rest of my career. Instinctively, I thought I would be happier being able to preserve a certain amount of freedom and individuality in this new exciting environment. I was hoping that the day would come when I could direct programmes of my own choice and, if necessary, thump a table when disagreeing with a programme controller or head of a department.

Lloyd Williams found it difficult to understand this, and was a little hurt when I refused his staff offer, but nevertheless proposed a three-months contract at £24 per week. I accepted, and he wanted me to start the next day, but that was impossible as I was just finishing a film for the British Productivity Council and was due to take it into the dubbing theatre in two weeks time. We then agreed a starting date, and as I got up to thank him, he opened up his production schedule and said, "You are on the air with a live programme three weeks into your contract."

It was really quite amazing the risks that these new television companies were prepared to take in order to start up and sustain a mainstream television service. But all that pressure created great excitement for those of us who felt compelled to take the plunge. We were about to embark on a great adventure.

Associated-Rediffusion had taken over Adastral House, the wartime Air Ministry building at the bottom end of Kingsway, where it meets the Aldwych. It was now named Television House, and it was going to be my place of work for the next twelve years. The building had been pretty well gutted to make room for three small studios, and for the modernisation of the offices occupying six floors. It was total bedlam, and it continued to be so for months after A-R went on the air, with the new lifts not yet working and builders' rubble and dust everywhere; female staff had to be given a 'stocking and hairdressing allowance' – and yet, somehow the station was made to function, propelled by the enthusiasm of all of us who were lucky enough to be in at the start.

I had been promised some intensive training sessions to help me master the technical side of live television production, but the moment I arrived, I had to concentrate on my first programme, and there simply wasn't time to attend these. In fact, the only training I can boast about was a ring binder that arrived on my desk entitled 'How to control Budgets for Television Programmes'. A fat lot of help.

All directors were allocated production assistants, and my PA was Margaret Balfrey, a repertory actress who had joined A-R some months earlier. She had attended a training course and she was at least able to answer some of my queries. Together we went to A-R's main production complex in Wembley, and that was my first introduction to a television studio. As a fly-on-the-wall observer in a director's control gallery, I overlooked the studio floor down below, and watched camera rehearsals; I had to come to grips with live television's multi-camera technique, and had just one day to do it in. I stood behind the director, a lady wearing a large hat, facing a bewildering bank of monitors. She called out ceaseless instructions through the talkback microphone to the cameramen, floor manager, boom operator, and clicking her fingers, cued the vision mixer sitting next to her. Her PA added to all this by calling out shot numbers, timings and clearing cameramen to move to their next positions. When it was over, I introduced myself to the owner of that splendid hat – it was Joan Kemp-Welch, herself on a training mission for her first programme. She had been a stage and film actress, and became a brilliant, award-winning television director for A-R. Her many TV dramas included Harold Pinter's early works, and *Laudes Evangelii*, Bucchi's ballet specially choreographed by Massine for its first television production.

By now, I had installed a rented television set in Hogarth Place and it became my mentor by proxy. While I was frantically preparing my first programme – a dreadful advertising magazine – I did get a chance to fly solo. A-R put out a nightly epilogue to

mark the end of that day's transmission called *And so to Bed*. It was very simple (and cheap) with a pianist and his grand piano, in a small studio in Television House. There was a duty roster for directors to be responsible for these late-night epilogues, considered to be a bit of a chore. But I was very keen to have a go. From a creative point of view there was not much one could do, other than find interesting angles to shoot the pianist. But the excitement was in going on the air, and as Margaret, my PA, counted down from 'ten' seconds to the start of the programme, the flow of adrenalin increased by several knots. When she reached 'three', it was my turn to observe the ritual of saying 'Good luck, studio' over the talkback microphone, and we were on.

In the control gallery, you face a bank of monitors. There is one for each camera showing its output, and another for displaying the picture you have selected to go to the transmitter. And then there is another one, usually placed on top of the others, which shows your chosen picture coming back from the transmitter – as broadcast. And that was most salutary because here, for the first time, you had living proof that millions of people might be watching you, and you are entirely responsible for everything they see and hear, no matter how brilliant or awful your programme.

There now followed a string of these Advertising Magazines, and the only thing to be said for them was that they made it possible for me to learn – to get to grips with the grammar of live television programme making. With no one around to use as a sounding board giving help or advice, I had to look upon each one of these transmissions as an essential tutorial. The scripts for these 20-minute offerings were pretty dire. Often a corny home situation with the actors, while engaged in some domestic routine, having to handle dialogue like: "While I remember, did you know that Gladys next door has lent me her new vacuum cleaner to try out? Here, I will show it to you. Maybe you would like to have a go – it's called a Goblin", etc. etc. I will say no more.

These AdMags were the closest advertisers were allowed to get to programme sponsorship. This was one of many rules laid down by the Independent Television Authority. The ITA, established by act of Parliament when ITV started in September 1955, was the regulator and controller of the network, embracing all the regional television franchise holders. And they kept very close to the minutiae of programme contents. All the AdMag scripts had to be submitted, and it is not surprising that we often had to accommodate last-minute changes.

I really enjoyed making these awful programmes. The thrill of being in charge, and the excitement of going on the air was stimulating, but I soon felt that I needed to get my teeth into something more taxing.

In the next few months there was a variety of afternoon and early evening programmes, including my first all-filmed adventure. I can't remember why I was chosen for this project – maybe my film background counted for something. But A-R took a huge risk when they flew me with a commentator to Rome, to pick up two Italian camera crews and shoot the World Bantam Weight Boxing Championship – and I had never been to a boxing match in my life. In those days the only way to get pictures back to the UK was to go and film an event, bring the negative back, edit the rushes and then go on the air. Satellites still had to be invented.

I was then allocated to the Remotes unit – a life-changing moment if ever there was one. I was asked to devise and direct an Outside-Broadcast from No.1 London, Apsley House, the home of the Duke of Wellington. This was in a series of OBs called

Afternoon Out. The unit provided me with one of their Production Assistants. Her name was Jane Tillett, a very pretty and cheerful PA, and extremely efficient. We got on well, but in the confines of a windowless office the size of a cupboard, she announced that she could not work with me because of the awful fug caused by my heavy smoking habit. I grasped this opportunity to give it up and was successful; and I have not touched a cigarette since. Little did I realise at the time that within two years we would be married and now, almost half a century later, this ex-PA is the mother of our two sons and grandmother of four granddaughters. Jane and I celebrated our 43rd wedding anniversary this year, coinciding with ITV's 50th anniversary party – a memorable occasion.

* * * *

This was to be my only OB for the Remotes Unit, as Caryl Doncaster had clapped her eyes on me. Caryl was a highly regarded, fiery, no-nonsense producer, who had come over from the BBC and was put in charge of the Features Department. She bubbled with programme ideas and surrounded herself with film directors, journalists and actors to pioneer television documentaries and, what became known as Current Affairs Programmes. This turned out to be a lucky break. I was now able to call on my past directing and editing experience and apply it to this new television grammar.

Caryl had thought up a series called *People are Talking*. I teamed up with Elkan Allan, a journalist, and our first contribution was called *On the Firm*. These were half-hour investigations into topical subjects, and this one dealt with business expense accounts.

Peter Black in the *Daily Mail* wrote:

This new kind of Journalism which substitutes for words the direct impact of faces, voices and pictures, made a lively feature of the expense account lark last night. The interviews and the fourhanded discussion afterwards produced a number of talking points which were valuable in themselves, doubly so through the sharp impact of television on the audience.

This was the first opportunity I had to integrate film clips with the live studio pictures, and I am sure that my film editing past played a role in this; the manipulation and juxtaposition of pictures has always held a fascination for me.

Altogether I directed four programmes in the *People are Talking* series; one dealt with the British Motor Industry and another with the commercialisation of Christmas. But it was the third one that caused a big stir. It was to be an investigation into a new phenomenon that had crossed the Atlantic. We called it *Fan Fever*. It explored the mass hysteria of young girls when they attended their pop idols' concerts. Oblivious of the film camera in the orchestra pit of the Coventry Theatre, not more than three feet away from their faces, I captured, what at the time was considered sensational material. Dickie Valentine was the artist a few feet behind on the other side of the footlights. Even before he started singing, these young girls were in a frenzy. And when his performance started one of them, so innocent looking when she came to take her seat, went wild, tore off her bra and threw it on the stage. I treasure the following cutting from *The People* which says as much about the times we lived in, as it does about me:

ITV SCRAP 'TEENAGE' FRENZY FILM. Parts of a film showing the reactions of an audience of teenage girls to crooner Dickie Valentine has been destroyed by order of Independent Television bosses. The decision never to show these scenes to viewers was taken because the film showed girls in frenzies while Valentine was singing. According to ITV producer Peter Morley, who made the film: "Some of the girls got completely out of control. They became very emotional, I will not give any details, but they were things which should not be seen in a public place."

Fan Fever got huge ratings and became a talking point in the media. Dilys Powell, the doyenne film critic, wrote to me: 'I looked in at *Fan Fever* last night and thought it really excellent. I do hope you will get the chance to do more work of this kind.'

The Observer television critic, Maurice Richardson:

Associated Rediffusion's *Fan Fever* programme last Tuesday was an excellent piece of reporting, and a bold one coming as it did on the eve of Liberace's advent day. You saw crooners themselves: one, Dickie Valentine, expressed his satisfaction that his organised fan-mass now totalled 8,000. You saw fans en masse in screaming ecstasies. You saw fans interviewed individually. A girl who was tattooed with "I Love Johnnie Ray"; a girl who had cut out, and wore on her dress, a piece of carpet on which Johnnie Ray's foot had trod; a girl who dreamed of him constantly "very unpleasant dreams in which Johnnie always dies." We saw bewildered parents who "simply don't understand," parents, who were shocked, a father who had finally come to the conclusion that it kept his daughter out of mischief. We saw a very amiable woman psychiatrist whose sympathy with adolescents appeared to be boundless. We also saw Liberace's manager. He launched a sharp attack on the tempestuous Elvis Presley – the ultimate Rock and Roller – as an undesirable influence on youth, put in a plea for a clean family life "and no running around with single women." Altogether this was one of the most fascinating TV half-hours for some time.

New Statesman - Tom Driberg:

Such is the prestige of the BBC's *Special Inquiry* series that Associated-Rediffusion essayed on Tuesday night an experiment in the same genre "a special hard-hitting report," as they called it, "on a burning issue of the day." The burning issue in question was "fan fever" - the behaviour of the teen-age girls who worship singers of popular songs: "what turns ordinary girls into a social phenomenon?" The hard hitting was the impact on our eyes and ears of some really first-rate documentary recording of the girls' behaviour: oblivious of the camera, they screamed, writhed, gasped, beat their pretty but clammy brows, suffered the delicious agonies of divine possession common to all the lower mystery religions. All this made vital television. It was refreshing to see on commercial television so vigorous and objective a social document.

News Chronicle - Philip Purser:

Documentary is a word brought into disrepute by television. Too often it has meant dreary and portentous reports on the one hand, novelettish "true life",

playlets on the other. Documentary can be television at its most stimulating and informative. A shining example was "Fan Fever" last night, ITV's inquiry into mass-adulation of the popular singers of the day. The ingredients, whether on film or from the studio, were assembled with the quick sure strokes of a master draughtsman.

Some people thought that we were experimenting, except I did not feel that these programmes were experimental. We were simply trying to throw light on something new and intriguing, using cameras in an untried manner, and also breaking some of the traditional film editing rules. And in so doing, without any conscious awareness, we helped fresh thoughts and images to emerge. That really was the excitement at the time. There was no yardstick to measure your work by – it was all so new.

The pressure to make programmes to help feed the voracious hunger of the broadcasters' schedules meant that you simply got on with it. My score for 1956, my first full year, was twenty-four programmes. There was no time to reflect or analyse what we were doing, let alone indulge in esoteric discussions and arguments about the new medium's purpose and style. With some relish I have always told younger people, who are new to the industry, that in those early days it was really quite difficult to be unoriginal. No matter how good or awful the programme turned out to be – the chances were that nothing like it had been attempted before. Today it is infinitely more difficult to create something that is truly original.

Looking back on this period, with *Fan Fever* being transmitted barely one year after the inauguration of ITV, one can trace the first glimmer of recognition that the upstart 'commercial boys' – that is how BBC insiders referred to us – were making a mark. Dramas, documentaries and news coverage started to have an impact on the BBC, causing television historians and pundits to declare some time later, that the competition presented by ITV at this early stage motivated and inspired the BBC to develop and achieve its worldwide reputation as the leading purveyor of television.

* * * *

I had by now relinquished my mole-like existence in the old basement flat in Earl's Court that I had shared with my father, and moved south of the River – to Lambeth. My new landlord was Prince Charles. As the Duke of Cornwall, he had inherited the huge Duchy of Cornwall estate, comprising vast tracts of land in Devon and Cornwall, and also a large chunk of Lambeth, close to the Thames. Mostly residential, with some fine Georgian housing, it had become a hotchpotch of styles including the Oval Cricket ground and Kennington Park. In 1955, The Duchy of Cornwall built London's first – and now politically incorrectly named – bachelor flats. Today, they would be classified as studio flats, with one bedroom, kitchenette, and bathroom – ideal for this bachelor. Named Rothesay Court, it was both close to the Oval, and to the Houses of Parliament the other side of the Thames; popular as convenient pieds-à-terre for MPs wanting to live within division-bell distance of the House of Commons. It took me no time in the mornings to drive to the National Film Theatre car park, and then stroll across Waterloo

Bridge to the Aldwych and Television House. The daily unfolding of the rich panorama of London's riverside frontage, always seen in a different light, and in all weathers, was exhilarating.

In January 1957 I started my own weekly series. It was called *Members' Mail*. This was village pump politics at its most basic, and MPs were the stars; this was long before BBC radio instituted 'Today in Parliament', let alone allowing cameras into the House to see MPs in action.

Every week this filmed 15-minute programme showed an MP coping with a local constituency problem. There were twenty-three of these, all filmed on location. It was a tight schedule, finding and organising locations, filming and editing each episode ready for transmission every Tuesday night. We had to observe strict guidelines laid down by the ITA, regarding political balance – in this case the correct proportion of Tory, Labour and Liberal MPs. Recruiting these good people posed no problems; they were only too keen to be seen on their constituents' television screens doing a valuable job. All of a sudden, I found myself being quite popular with our MPs and it sharpened my judgment of politicians. Journalist and writer, Dan Farson, travelled to the locations in advance to winkle out potential participants, find interviewees and reduce the story to its bare essentials to suit the 15-minute format.

I will never forget Colonel Bromley-Davenport. He was the Tory Member for Knutsford in Cheshire, a very colourful figure in the House of Commons, referred to by another Tory MP in this series as 'our resident buffoon'. He had just solved a very malodorous problem in Goostrey, a small village in his cabbage patch.

Yorkshire Post:

Drains, sound an uninspiring subject for a TV programme, but drains it was on Tuesday when Rediffusion's vigorous feature department presented their latest "Member's Mail". The village of Goostrey, in the Colonel's constituency, is a pretty place, but sanitation is primitive. The film cameras left viewers in no doubt about that. The long struggle for improvement was packed into a short time with considerable skill. Rapid interviews over the stable door, in the local and by an offending stream, had an encouraging vitality. Rediffusion's documentary team deserve every praise for their work.

Antonia Fraser wrote in the *Evening Standard*:

Colonel Bromley-Davenport, MP for Knutsford came on the screen in Member's Mail. Apparently his constituency stinks. Or rather stank. Now, thanks to the gallant colonel, the gurgle of its new drains is music to the ears of its inhabitants.

As always, we got reactions from viewers as they wrote in after these programmes; in this case though, there was an uncanny consistency of language in a large pile of identical postcards, with messages stating: 'Could we please see more of Colonel Bromley-Davenport on TV, he is such a brilliant man and comes over so well'. They were all written in the same hand, and they all shared the same dated Knutsford postmark!

During the six months it was on the air, *Members' Mail* covered a wide spectrum of local problems: Teddy Boys, old peoples' home, wrongful conviction, air pollution,

hooliganism, industrial disease, pensions, Zebra crossings, the mentally handicapped, cat stealing, gypsies, etc. etc. Nothing has really changed.

I began to notice during this early period of programme making, that I was somewhat ambivalent about the role of the interviewer. I felt that, if possible, one should try to establish the closest link between the person imparting information and viewers at home, treating them as participants rather than just onlookers. Interviewers, important as they are to so many programmes, change that relationship. I first tried this out with *Fan Fever*. Elkan Allan used his journalistic flair for sniffing out good stories and whittling them down to their essential ingredients. But when it came to interviewing the fans, I asked him to rephrase his questions so they would elicit statements rather than straight answers. I then coaxed the hapless fans to speak directly into the camera lens and I would take on the role of the invisible interviewer. I would stand right behind the camera, out of their direct sightline, and chip away at them until I was happy with their statements. In spite of the fact that these contributions sometimes sounded a bit stilted and awkward, they did provide a direct link with the viewing audience, demanding their attention. For members of the public to be grabbed in the street and then asked to speak into the camera for television was, of course, a total novelty at that time. It certainly sorted out the shy from the extrovert. I recall a hilarious moment when a Petticoat Lane stall holder, only too eager to boast about his victory on winning a long-running argument with the Council Overseer about his market trading permit, saying: "This was the biggest and most exciting thing I have ever had in my wife." The gathered throng that had accumulated to listen to him gave him a standing ovation.

At first, this rather artificial technique did not make me very popular with interviewers, but as these programmes began to attract attention, with encouraging press reviews, I persevered and my colleagues slowly accepted this strange style.

Derek Knight, writing in *Film*:

One of the main innovations of Associated-Rediffusion's team of film-workers has been the successful development of the speaking-to-camera technique applied to non-actors, and the consequent discarding of the interviewer. It says much for the ability and skill of directors like Michael Ingrams of 'Look In On London' and Peter Morley who directed 'Fan Fever' and 'Members' Mail', that people in fact do not dry up, do not stammer, but say what's on their minds calmly, where necessary with good humour. No easy feat. The direct speaking-to-camera by people in all walks of life has an impact which we filmgoers are not used to. It is documentary with the gloves off, and the laurels for virile and aggressive film-making are being seized by the team at Associated-Rediffusion.

Earlier that same year I had a call from the BBC. It was from Andrew Millar-Jones, one of the founders of The Guild of Television Producers and Directors. I had not heard of it before, but soon realised that it was an exclusive and elitist group of practitioners who had got together at the BBC to pursue mutual interests. I was told that as 'Commercial Television' (their name for ITV) was now a fact, they wished to extend an invitation for me to join the Guild. I was thrilled by this; to be able to have the chance of meeting people from the great British Broadcasting Corporation and talk

about television was hugely exciting, and I looked forward to my first Guild meeting. When I arrived, I realised that I was one of only three directors there representing ITV and much aware that I would have to work hard to lose the ‘outsider’ label. And to my surprise, after a short period they elected me to serve on the Guild’s Council.

Right from the start of joining ITV, I had become aware of people like Grace Wyndham Goldie, the Head of the BBC’s Talks Department. She had launched *Panorama* and recently created the ground breaking BBC *Tonight* programme. Grace discovered, employed and then provided creative leadership to a clique of director/producers who were pioneering documentary and current affairs programming. In fact, most of ‘Grace’s young men’, as they became known, rose to the highest ranks in British Television.

The Guild organised valuable evening sessions, usually held on the premises of the English Speaking Union in Mayfair, sometimes with Grace in attendance. I tried to go to these as often as I could – there was a lot to absorb and learn. Also, I made the acquaintance of Huw Wheldon who was rapidly rising to the higher echelons of the BBC as a master communicator and programme maker. At one of these Guild meetings, the expansion of television was discussed and the effect this might have on the creative freedom of writers, producers and directors. Ringing in my ears to this day, and often quoted, Huw told us: ‘*We must never forget that Television is a business that mass-produces handmade objects*’. Truer today than ever, when you consider the burdening commercial pressures on programme makers.

The Guild’s other activity was to organise the annual Television Awards Ball. The trophy presented to winners was a bronze mask the Guild commissioned from the sculptress, Mitzi Cunliffe. In 1958, the Guild amalgamated with the British Film Academy, and became the Society of Film and Television Arts (SFTA) and in 1976, it emerged as the British Academy of Film and Television Arts – BAFTA. The Guild’s trophy was retained and became known as the BAFTA mask.

Fan Fever 1956



Dickie Valentine with fans at the Coventry Theatre



Robert Mellish MP

Problem: Wrongful conviction of a dockworker



Planning the victim's 'to camera' statement with Dan Farson

Graeme Finlay MP

Problem: Behaviour of Teddy Boys



Dan Farson and I soften up our participants

Norman Dodds MP

Problem: Rights for Gypsies



Norman Dodds MP and a complainant



Duffle coats were 'de rigueur

Chapter 10

Altogether, I directed over thirty-five programmes in 1957 to help satisfy the relentless hunger of the transmission schedule. Within a week of the last transmission of *Members' Mail*, I was on the air with my fourth *People are Talking*. Entitled rather grandly, *The Future of Britain*, it indulged in the periodic navel-gazing when the economic news is dire: export orders cancelled, growing strike threat, BOAC buys U.S. jetliners, hire-purchase deposits on cars up again, another fares shock, etc. This was a studio-based programme with filmed inserts. It was the first time we used Kenneth Harris, industrial correspondent of *The Observer*, as anchorman; we hit it off, and he subsequently collaborated on several other programmes. In the studio we had Frank Cousins, Dr Donald Soper and J.B. Priestley. The highlight for me was filming an excerpt of Richard Pasco delivering a characteristic Jimmy Porter outburst from John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, to illustrate the lacklustre attitude of the then younger generation.

This was followed by a short season of magazine programmes called *On Stage*, reporting on the live theatre, with the participation of names to conjure with: Donald Wolfit, Anthony Quayle, Yvonne Arnaud, A.E. Matthews, Robert Morley, Elizabeth Seal, Dame Sybil Thorndyke, Sir Lewis Casson, Evelyn Laye – one could go on name-dropping for ever. One of the highlights was the re-opening of the Theatre Royal, Windsor. The Royal Family came across from the Castle to enjoy *The Rivals*, and I produced the outside broadcast of this event. I was then asked to come on stage and join the cast after curtain down, to meet the Queen, Prince Philip, the Queen Mother and the rest of the royal party. My first encounter.

Jane stayed on as my production assistant for the next extraordinary and slightly bizarre adventure. Controller of Programmes, John McMillan, decided to throw a huge party to mark Associated-Rediffusion's second birthday, which was to attract over eight million viewers. It was called *Salute to Show Business*. He felt that A-R had something to shout about, and not just its programmes. The company was beginning to turn the financial corner having lost £3 million by their first anniversary, and this high profile party would help to restore the City's confidence and please the Advertising Industry. Peter Hunt was the overall producer, and Joan Kemp-Welch and I were co-directors, sharing the various elements that made up this 2-hour spectacular. She made a film about the life of Dickie Valentine, while I shot *The Margaret Lockwood Story* in St. John's Wood Studios, starring her daughter Toots, playing the part of her mother. And I made another film telling the story of John Buxton, the legendary ghost residing at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket. The ghost was played by that great comic actor, James Hayter, and I filmed it all in the Theatre Royal with a cast of bit-players to break the bank: Dame Edith Evans, Leslie Arliss, Felix Aylmer, Fay Compton, Sir John Gielgud, Celia Johnson, Michael Redgrave, Sir Carol Reed, Sir Ralph Richardson, Athene Seyler, Diana Wynyard – to name but a few.

I then witnessed a dazzling demonstration of the curious ways of big business. The night before the celebratory broadcast, A-R threw a big party for the great and the good

on board the Royal Sovereign, one of those floating fun palaces on the Thames. This was an extravagant moonlight river trip with champagne and music for a ‘thousand stars of stage and screen’, as the brochure said. I had already filmed some very funny linking sequences with Peter Sellers and Kenneth Connor on board this ship to set the tone for the main programme; and that night I shot scenes of the party itself, to be included in a short opening sequence to the main broadcast the following night, showing the high jinx on the Thames. This meant getting the film rushes to Humphries, the film laboratory, for overnight processing as soon as the Royal Sovereign had docked, so that we could edit the footage in the morning for inclusion that evening. As these would not arrive at the labs until after midnight, Humphries Film Laboratories said that they could not handle the material unless they called in an extra nightshift, which they refused to do. I reported this to Captain Brownrigg, A-R’s General Manager. He told me he would come back to me within a couple of hours. Apparently, he had a telephone conversation with Harley Drayton, the Chairman of British Electric Traction, as well as Associated Newspapers, the owners of Associated-Rediffusion. And within the hour, he popped his head round my office door and told me: “Go ahead as planned, our film will be processed – Harley Drayton has just bought Humphries Film Laboratory Limited!”

* * * *

A-R was making its mark; it was being talked about and its programmes were attracting decent viewing ratings. Proof of this came towards the end of 1957, when the British Film Institute commissioned Derek Prouse, its programme editor, to mount a short season of A-R documentaries to be shown on the large screen at the new National Film Theatre on the South Bank. In the brochure for this event, he writes:

We have called the programme CAPTIVE CINEMA for the following reasons. The TV director's means are narrowly controlled; he is beset by inhibiting pressures: pressure of time; pressure imposed by the need to capture the widest possible viewing audience. It is therefore particularly impressive that in spite of all these conditions the TV directors should succeed so often in incorporating that rare quality in British documentary today – a friendly and unpatronising attitude to ordinary people, which can persuade them to reveal themselves fully and naturally before the demanding camera.

But in the best TV work there is something more; a quality almost disturbingly new – an urgency, an instinct for the timely reportage which catches its people when feelings are still running high, when resentments or a sense of injustice are burning and eager to communicate. The impact is nearly always irresistible and almost shockingly true. CAPTIVE CINEMA is selected from the work of the Features Department of Associated-Rediffusion, which is under the leadership of Miss Caryl Doncaster.

And in this BFI brochure Caryl introduces her team:
The films the National Film Theatre have chosen to show on December 11th are representative of programmes – many of them live and therefore lost – which

Associated-Rediffusion have been transmitting four or five times a week for the last two years. During this period a strong 'Features' team has grown up in A-R. It has drawn its talent from many sources. Peter Hunt and John Rhodes left the BBC when its documentary department was disbanded. Directors like Geoffrey Hughes, Michael Curren-Briggs and Peter Morley, and our capable manager Deborah Chesshire, came to us from the documentary film world. Writers like Elkan Allan, Cyril Bennett and Daniel Farson joined us from Fleet Street and Michael Ingrams came from the theatre. This mixture of skills and points of view have given our output a virility which I hope we will not lose when our techniques become more polished and a routine develops.

On the opening night of the Captive Cinema season at the NFT, each one of us introduced our programmes to the audience, and it was fascinating to see them on the large screen for the first time, let alone to read reactions in the film press.

Penelope Houston wrote in *Sight and Sound*:

For the most part these programmes are concerned to report on life and people, to let the implicit social comments emerge from the material itself rather than to state them openly. The longest and most hard-hitting of the films in the Captive Cinema programme follows this principle, but its material has been selected to brutal effect. 'Fan Fever', directed by Peter Morley, written by Elkan Allan and first shown on the day of Liberace's overpowering arrival in London, has to do with mass hysteria, with the idolaters who mob the stage doors, rip their hero's clothing to pieces. As a contemporary document, 'Fan Fever' conveys less an atmosphere than an impression of personality exposed, trapped, caught in the act of self-revelation. Television, and not merely television documentary, has made no discovery more valuable for itself than the simple one that people are interesting.

By 1958, ITV had become a fixture in the nation's homes. Its role vis-à-vis the BBC was manifest; all the regional franchise holders were in place, and Associated-Rediffusion was well in profit. My initial 3-months contract had been changed to a one-year rolling contract, and that worked well for me. It gave me a good deal of independence, plus a certain amount of security. A-R had by this time launched its weekly current-affairs magazine programme, *This Week*, and that gave our Features Department a high profile. Peter Hunt produced it and I made one or two filmed contributions to it. It was considered by the press to be a minnow compared to the BBC's *Panorama*, but the challenge, even in this field, was taken very seriously by the Corporation.

In the late fifties and early sixties, a great number of programmes were original in content and technique – innovation was the order of the day. When recalling these times, I often find myself saying that a particular programme of mine was the first of this, or the first of that – and I feel a bit self-conscious about making such extravagant sounding claims – but it was really like that.

It is too easy to label this period as the golden years of television. I have never subscribed to that because I believe that young people entering the media today will, in fifty years time, consider this to have been their golden years. I like to describe this

period as our years of adventure, exploring something entirely new, with the excitement of being allowed to experiment and to be paid for it. We were even allowed to fail. I believe that it was not until the late sixties that Television had metamorphosed into the full-blooded industry, as we know it today.

In attempting to recall these times, I keep on diving into my own archive, stored haphazardly in the attic; a jumble of press cuttings, articles, camera scripts, letters and photographs, preserved in odd boxes, old suitcases and plastic bags. It harbours memories of a prolific and eclectic portfolio of work; it was here that I discovered that my tally of programmes for 1957 totalled thirty-five. Needless to say, some were better than others.

Early in 1958, I started a weekly series with Wolf Mankovitz in conversation with an 'opponent' of his choice, and he picked them from all walks of life and relished having red-hot arguments. We called this thirteen-week series *Conflict*, and it was transmitted live. Cyril Bennett was the programme editor. The episode I remember with great fondness focused on comedy and the guest was Spike Milligan.

I opened each programme with a top shot looking down on Wolf Mankowitz and his guest, silhouetted against a chequer-board painted floor. I would superimpose the title *Conflict* and then a second caption gave the name of Wolf's contestant. But this time, on the ten-second countdown to the start of the transmission, Spike leapt out of his chair and ran off the set, and I had to go on the air with Wolf on his own. I looked down to the studio set from the control gallery and saw Spike grabbing one of the cameramen, trying to bite his ear. At that point the opening music had stopped, the lights came up and as I cut to one of the floor cameras, Spike came running back on to the set, hitching up his trousers. I knew we were in for an exciting 30-minute programme.

Surprisingly, it was a fascinating discussion about comedy and how comedians were adapting to television. However, on two occasions it was briefly punctuated by Spike, in mid-flow, looking straight into his camera to produce a rich repertoire of 'goon' noises and catch-phrases. With thirty seconds to go to the end of the programme, I would go back to the top shot, cue the end music and release the floor cameras to their caption stands for the end credit routine. At this point, Spike once more took off. Before the show started he must have grabbed a piece of chalk from the floor-manager, and as I cut to the first caption, which read: '*Conflict with Wolf Mankowitz*' a hand appeared, quickly scribbling on the caption card, 'Who he?' Cutting to the other camera with the caption 'Spike Milligan', he raced across to it and again a disembodied hand wrote 'Yippee!' Back to the first caption which read: 'Programme Editor Cyril Bennett', he chalked in '8 out of 10', and lastly, on the caption 'Directed by Peter Morley' appeared the simple words, 'Oh dear'. All of us just fell about, having savoured, once again, the hazards of live television.

After *Conflict*, I embarked on a new weekly series of twenty-six episodes, called *Only Yesterday*. Again, these were live studio-based productions, but this time they had an important filmed element. Each programme was dedicated to an historical event, illustrated with archive film, with eyewitnesses and survivors recalling their experiences in the studio. It was a very simple and effective formula, which at the time was considered innovative, and it attracted a large viewer following. A diverse range of subjects included: the R.101 Airship Disaster, the Reichstag Fire, the Jarrow Hunger March, Amy Johnson, the Submarine 'Thetis' disaster, Lenin's Death, and so on. What fascinated me most was discovering the richness of our film archives. Not just

the newsreel resources of Gaumont British, Pathé and Universal, but also the archives of The British Film Institute and the Imperial War Museum.

Only Yesterday whetted my appetite for visual history and for the next twenty years I had many opportunities to get to know the world's archives really well, and many times asked film researchers to raid them for a host of programmes.





1957



After curtain-down at the Theatre Royal, Windsor
A production of *The Rivals* marked the re-opening of
the Royal Family's neighbourhood theatre



8.0 SALUTE

to
SHOW BUSINESS

Independent Television's second year ends with a story about the people who entertain you with

**MARGARET LOCKWOOD
PETER SELLERS
DICKIE VALENTINE**

and a host of other great stars including

LESLIE ARLISS	FELIX AYLMER
ALBERT BURDON	SUSAN BURNET
PHYLLIS CALVERT	PEGGY COCHRANE
FAY COMPTON	KENNETH CONNOR
HERBERT DE LEON	
DAME EDITH EVANS	LESLIE FREWIN
SIR JOHN GIELGUD	JAMES HAYTER
RICHARD HEARNE	WILLIAM HOLDEN
RONALD HOWARD	JACK HYLTON
DOROTHY HYSON	JIMMY JAMES
CELIA JOHNSON	
JULIA (Toots) LOCKWOOD	
MARY MALCOLM	PADDIE O'NEIL
VAL PARNELL	MICHAEL REDGRAVE
SIR CAROL REED	
SIR RALPH RICHARDSON	
ATHENE SEYLER	BRUCE TRENT
DIANA WYNYARD	



Checking a shot with Assistant Cameraman Mike Rhodes and Production Assistant Jane Tillet



In Dame Edith Evans' dressing room with Writer, Hazel Adair



My first collaboration with Cyril Bennett: Discussing script with Margaret Lockwood and daughter Toots



Shooting a sketch with Peter Sellers and Kenneth Connor