BEHP 0070 T - KEN CAMERON TRANSCRIPT

ACTT HISTORY PROJECT COMMITTEE

Interview with Ken Cameron - 14th November 1988

(Int 1 = John ?, Int 2 = Bob ?) 1 = John Legard 2 = Bob Allen).

Tape 1, Side 1

Int 1 - Well, Ken, it would be interesting if you would tell us a little bit about how you got caught up in the film world in the first place. What sparked you off?

KC - If I can begin more or less at the beginning. I was born in 1915, which is quite a long time ago. I spent most of the first 22 years of my life in Scotland. I was sent to school in Glasgow, a very good school there, I had a very good education in a very, very strict, Scottish school, which was not pleasant - but anyway I had to go through it. But somehow during my school days I got interested in what we used to know as wireless, now radio, of course, in old fashioned days. And when I was at school I didn't know really what I was going to do with myself but I did fortunately have an interview with John Logie Baird, who was a neighbour of mine, and asked his advice on how I could get into radio or wireless or films or whatever it was. And John said that the only thing you can do is get an engineering degree, electrical engineering, at university. And as I told you in that little article, I got subsequently an interview with another neighbour who was across the road, Sir John Reith.

CINEMA VETS NEWS LETTER.

Int 1 - Now can I just interrupt, this was in Helensborough, wasn't it?

burgh

KC - Oh, yes. All my school days and most of my university days I was in Helensburgh. I had to travel to Glasgow every day to school, which was quite an arduous business. Anyway, I saw John Reith and he again said the same as John Baird had said, that you must get an engineering degree. And so I left school, I got my leaving certificate from school and in 1932, something like that, I became a young man about town in Glasgow. I was no longer a schoolboy, I even sort of, you know, I put on long trousers, smoked a pipe and drank beer and hated it all. And round about September, I suppose, I went to enrol in Glasgow University and to my horror I found that my Maths pass was not high enough to get me into Engineering. I could have got into Art or Divinity or something like that, but not into Engineering, which was a very frightening thing for a youngster. Anyway, I went along to the Director of Studies at Glasgow University Engineering Department and I said, 'What on earth can I do?' He said, 'There's only one thing you can do, you've got to go back to school for a year.' Now this for a boy of 18 or something was quite something. Anyway, I had no choice, and I had to go down to the outfitters and buy myself a new school cap and new short trousers and everything - because in those days you weren't allowed to wear long trousers at school - and I had to go back to school for a year, which is not very arduous in itself because I only really had to study Maths, although I went to other classes as well. But I won't go into the traumatic experience of being a boy of 19 or something, bossed around by prefects who were a year younger than you and all that sort of thing. But at any rate, eventually I got into Glasgow University. Now, in those days in Glasgow University in Engineering, you had to do two terms, the autumn term and the

spring term, in classes and labs and so on and in the summer term you had to go to an approved engineering factory or something or other to learn practical work, which wasn't much fun because the first year I went to a factory in Bridgeton Cross in Glasgow, called.. I can't remember what they were called, they made coal-cutting machinery and I was put onto a lathe turning out different pieces, and I turned out different pieces from 8 in the morning till 5. I was paid 9s 6d a week and I paid 10 bob a week for my train fare to get there, so I didn't really make a fortune out of it. But I got so sick of this in this summer, this smell of compound, the stuff they use on lathes - quite dreadful. Anyway, I went back to University in the September and then I met a friend called Charles Oakley, who's still alive, and he was running the Glasgow Film Society which in those days was one of the biggest film societies, if not the biggest in the United Kingdom. And I got interested in films then, I managed to get myself free tickets because I knew the manager of the cinema and so on, and I joined the Film Society and I became the student representative on the Council. The result is that on the Council I managed to meet quite a lot of interesting documentary people, like Paul ~~?Rothe~~ Rotha, Basil Wright, John ~~Baird~~ Grierson and so on. And during the winter the idea struck me that perhaps I could get into films this way. And I wrote to John Grierson asking whether he'd take me on as a trainee because he was also a Glasgow University man. And Grierson said, yes, and eventually I persuaded the University authorities to allow that as part of the Engineering course. So in the course of April, whenever it was 1933 maybe, I joined the GPO Film Unit as a trainee in the sound department. (A trainee in the sound department consisted of the Sound Engineer, who was

a man called Cyril Sullivan. I've no idea what happened to him, but anyway I was his boy and my job was simply to.. well there was a whole department. I had to load magazines and unload magazines, and when I got three buzzes I switched the recorder on and when I got two, I switched it off. And I topped up the batteries and I cleaned the equipment and then every night about 8 or 9 at night when we were finished shooting, I had to take the rushes up to Humphrey's* Labs and bring them back - for which, incidentally, I was not paid. And that was really my job for the whole of that summer.

* Himphries

Int - What was the recording equipment like?

KC - Very, very primitive. It was a Marconi Visatone, ?.... aerial track, which was very, very old and, let's face it, not very good. It was mounted in a sound truck which was post office red with GR on the outside and one of my jobs, of course, was to drive the bloody thing, too. And I had to top up the batteries. Of course, every Sunday I had to go in and scrub the truck out, for which I was not paid. Mind you, by this time I was living in Hendon - quite a long way to Blackheath. Anyway, that's all rather beside the point but that's where I spent that first summer and at least I learned the elements in sound recording, not much more. Then I went back to University for another two terms and my third year and I came out and I wrote to John Grierson again, if I could come back for another summer. But it wasn't convenient and he'd got somebody else to act as the teaboy or whatever he was. So I didn't know what to do but my old friend, Charles Oakley, stepped in again - he knew Robert Clark very well, another Glasgow University man - and Robert

Clark agreed to me going to Welwyn. So I was looking - by the way at this time I should say that my mother died when I was a very, very young boy, my father was based in Dundee, he was writing for the ?D C Thompson Newspapers, and I lived with an aunt in Helensborough. Well, when it came down to that summer, my aunt let her house and we came down and we took a little flat at Hatfield, which was not far from Welwyn. And I got into Welwyn, I worked in the sound department at Welwyn. There was a man called Midgley, who was the sound engineer then and he had an assistant boom operator called Alan Tyrer, whom I've seen occasionally mentioned.

Int - Alan Tyrer? Film editor? I've seen him at BAFTA from time to time, he's recently retired.

KC - Well, he was the boom operator and there was another chap who was the camera operator, whose name I can't recall. Any rate, I worked at Welwyn, just again a sort of glorified teaboy all the time.

Int - Can you remember some of the titles, some of the films that were being made there?

KC - Oh, yes. Dear me, what was the picture with Billy Bilton called, we were making quota quickies, and there was quite an elaborate thing, 'The Mutiny of the Elsinore', with Paul Lucas, which we made then - dreadful film. But any rate, I stayed there until my time came to go back to University. I went back to University and then in the course of God's good time I graduated with a rather inferior BSc, I might add. So then what

to do? It was no use writing to Grierson because Grierson had left the Film Unit, he'd gone back to Canada to form the National Film Board. But I wrote to ~~Cavel Canti~~, who is almost (Cavalcanti) in charge of the unit then, and ~~Cavel Canti~~ was an old friend of mine. And, any rate, I wrote to him and asked him if I could have a job. Many years later, many years later, I happened to see a letter, a note from ~~Cavel Canti~~ to a man called Fletcher, who was the civil servant who was the office manager, he was really the treasury man in charge of the GPO Film Unit, and ~~Cavel Canti~~, I saw my letter, and ~~Cavel Canti~~ passed my letter to Fletcher and in ~~Cavel Canti~~'s writing at the bottom was, 'Fletcher, I think our sound problems are over.' I didn't see that till many years later but it gave me quite a kick. Because in those days, the GPO film units fired their sound engineers about every three months or so. They never lasted more than three months because they quarrelled with Cav (CAVALCANTI) or quarrelled with Fletcher or quarrelled with somebody or other. They went through Ted Pawley, through Sullivan, through George Liam and through God knows how many sound engineers. Any rate, after I graduated, I joined the GPO, again as assistant to George Diamond, doing the same thing, scrubbing out the sound truck and topping up the batteries and so on. Then, not so long after that, George Diamond was fired because, as I say, they were all fired every little while, and Cav asked me would I like to take on the job. So I'd never recorded a foot of film in my life. I didn't know the difference between a galvanometer and a whatever it was. Any rate, naturally in those days I said, yes of course I will. So my pay was put up to £2 - 10s a week, which was big money in those days, you know, because when the Friday pay envelopes came down from Soho Square to Blackheath, two or

three had paper money in their envelopes but most of us had silver and copper - I had silver and copper - I went up to £2 10s. And, well I was thrown in at the deep end. I had to sink or swim and thank God I managed to swim. And I recorded quite a lot, I worked with Harry Watt and Humphrey Jennings and Jack Holmes and Lottie ~~?Rylick~~ Reinniger and ~~Cavel Canti~~ Cavalcanti, Paul ~~Rother~~ Rotha and so on. And we did a lot of location work, I had some really quite frightening times. I remember having to drive this bloody great sound truck down to the South of Wales to work with Humphrey Jennings on a film called 'Spare Time', and drive it back and then do a commentary of something else. These were just before the war. But shortly before the war in, I think it was early 1939, we all realised that this antiquated equipment we had, had passed its day and I had long talked with the treasury officials and persuaded them we must do something a little more elaborate than that. And it so happened that Joe ~~Rox~~ had closed down at Rock's Elstree and there were a couple of these bloody great sound trucks, these enormous great tea wagons, were going second-hand and I think that RCA wanted about £9,000 for the whole wagon, with all the RCA equipment inside it. And, after a lot of argy-bargy, I persuaded the treasury that we must have something new and we bought the sound truck. It was painted a very nice grey and all very presentable - of course they immediately painted it post office red, because this was the GPO Film Unit with GR on the outside, or was it ER, I'm not quite sure. Anyway, we got this new equipment and I simply didn't know how to work it at all and RCA very kindly produced one of their engineers, a man called York Scarlett, and York Scarlett came and worked with us for three months. He was in charge of the thing - I was doing the recording but he told me which switch to put on and how to

adjust the ? and all these sort of things, and we got on famously together. Then after three months or so, York had to go back to RCA and I was OC the Sound Department. I was the Sound Department. Of course, there are occasions when its impossible, if you're recording on the floor, to be in a truck at the same time, so very grudgingly they allowed me a Post Office's messenger boy, when he wasn't taking letters round he was allowed to come in and help me - very grudgingly. That didn't last very long and then, miraculously, I had a new assistant, this was just before the war, who was now a very famous person. It was Laurie Lee, and Laurie Lee was a very eminent poet and author - he came along for about three or four months as my assistant. And that was quite a combination, really, and this was just shortly before the war broke out. But I remember very clearly just about the beginning of September, the end of August in 1939, there was a great flap on - we were told to make a film called 'If War Should Come'. It was a very simple thing, Harry Watt, Humphrey, Jack Holmes, Caval Canti, everybody worked on it and it was simply: how to dig a trench, how to put on a gas mask, how to.. all these sort of things. And we made a film, we finished it on about, I suppose it must have been 30th August, 1939, and we dubbed the thing very late on the Friday night, I took the rushes over to Humphrey's. Humphries Humphrey's worked all Saturday, all Sunday and we produced about 40 or 50 combined prints and the whole unit, everybody, office boys, everybody, were told to be at Soho Square at 8 o'clock on Sunday morning, 3rd September to take these prints round to all the cinemas. And we all prepared to do that. Alas, at 11 o'clock Mr Chamberlain made his statement and war had come, so the film called 'If War Should Come' was rather pointless. So

we all charged down to Blackheath again, to remake the film called 'Do It Now', which was the same film virtually - it was how to dig a trench and so on. Alas, they closed all the cinemas on that Sunday, so the film has never been shown yet, I don't think. But that was really quite an ?e.. we worked day and night, very, very hard indeed on that film. (experience)

Int - Fascinating. I think it was shown on Channel 4, wasn't it, last year.

KC - Was it? I've never seen the film since that day.

Int - First time it's ever been shown.

KC - I haven't seen it for ... 60 years. But any rate, after that the GPO still ambled on its sweet little way, moving odd things and, of course, like most of the unit I was called up. I was called up in 1939, '40, something like that but I hadn't even time to button up my battledress before I was reserved. We had to go to some curious place at Holloway to get fitted up with uniform and there was a telephone call, I was to report to Soho Square and that was the end of it. So I threw away my battledress and went back to the GPO Film Unit. All right, the GPO Film Unit carried on, we made the same sort of things, well, before 'Listen to Britain', I can't remember the films we made in those days. But shortly.. oh, 1940, then the Cold War finished and the blitz started. Now Blackheath was surrounded by the docks and when the blitz started, Blackheath was really right in the middle of it, so immediately, of course, the Unit was moved away, they were moved to the old house at Denham, it

used to be quarters, offices and so on, and the directors and the editors and the camera crew moved in up there. But you couldn't very well move without the sound department, which, limited as it was, it was rather a stationary place, you know, with all the wiring and so on, so we stayed there. We stayed in Blackheath for many, many months and when they wanted to record a comedy, they came down to Blackheath, it was recorded, shot it back to.. I never knew anything about the film until we saw it in the theatres afterwards. That's where we made 'London Can Take It', things like that. And I remember very clearly one night, it was the night of the big blitz on London, the first big blitz, and it was about 7 or 8 at night and things obviously were going to get exciting, so just for fun I put a mike on the roof of the studio and recorded about 2,000 feet of the blitz noise - on optical film, mind you, it was long before magnetic film or anything like that - and about 2 or 3 in the morning we thought, well really this track should be kept and I rang Jack Holmes at home, he was in charge of the Unit then, and said, 'We have recorded this track, do you think.. dare I send it to the labs for processing?' He said, 'Oh, well, might as well, it might be useful sometime.' So I took it up to ~~Humphrey's~~ Humphries and we processed it. That track has been used for practically every blitz film ever since. It was a fantastic track, as a bomb fell about 100 yards away from the studio, it went pshhwew bonk ... Anyway ...

Int - This is 1940 we're talking about now - the autumn or winter of 1940?

KC - It was something like that, yes. When did the blitz start, was it autumn or something.. August - I can't remember. I remember it was fine, sunny weather because I remember when it was all over about 2 o'clock in the morning, I walked out of the studio to get a breath of fresh cordite and walked over Blackheath and there was a man who was wounded, with a splinter, lying on the floor and two of us tried to sort of help him along and ... oh, it was a horrible sequence anyway. But there was another interesting sort of anecdote about that period. We made a film called 'Target for Tonight', and, incidentally, as a result of 'Target for Tonight' which won the Oscar for the best documentary of the year, I was put up to £4 a week, which was a very memorable thing in my life. But apart from that, we were dubbing some pre-mixes of 'Target for Tonight' at Blackheath, obviously it was about 2 o'clock on a Sunday morning because that's when we always did do those things in those days but ... Changing the subject just for a second, Blackheath was also the headquarters of the GPO's Mobile Projection System and this is quite interesting because our Chief Projectionist was Dougie Smith, who was in charge of a whole row of these GBN, 35mm projectors ...

Int - 35 millimetre, non-flam film.

KC - Non-flam film - no, flam. I don't think non-flam had come then.

Int - I remember there was some 35mm non-flam film in the library at Crown and I was told it was used for those mobile shows but maybe it was a limited ...

KC - I'm not sure about that.. But any rate, going back to this thing, poor Dougie Smith had to go down.. and one of his jobs almost every week was to go down to Chequers to show a film to the Prime Minister, who was a mad movie maniac and he had to go down and they always showed them at about 3 o'clock in the morning because Mr Churchill always ran his films at some absurd time. But any rate, we finished this last pre-mix on 'Target for Tonight' in the middle of a howling great blitz and I went out again to get a breath of fresh cordite and I saw 14 brand new cans of film had just arrived and they were stuck in the hallway of this funny little studio. And I glanced at the titles, it was something I'd never heard of, any rate I went back into the theatre where Harry Watt was, I said, 'Harry, have you ever heard of a film called 'Citizen Kane'? He said, 'Christ, yes,' because he got his to New York and I didn't. And this was about 1940, '41 - any rate, I said, 'Well, there's a copy of it outside there.' He said, 'There can't be.' I said, 'There is, there's a copy of Citizen Kane' outside.' So we each paid a quid to Dougie Smith to work late and it was Gordon Hales ~~Hills~~, Julian Spiro, Harry Watt and myself, four of us in this funny little theatre, with only one projector, in the middle of a bloody great blitz on London, and we ran 'Citizen Kane' from beginning to end and finished about 6 in the morning. Now this was probably three years before anybody else knew or had ever seen 'Citizen Kane', apart from the Prime Minister. And, not only is it a very moving film, I mean I've seen it hundreds of times since, but in under those circumstances, just four of us in the middle of a blitz, reel by reel by reel, seeing this

fantastic film - I've never been through such a moving occasion in my life.

Int - Marvellous story that, yes. Very moving.

KC - Years before anybody else sort of saw it because I don't think it reached this country till '44, '45 maybe. It was ...

Int 2 - Did you subsequently ever meet up with Orson Wells at all?

KC - I met Orson Wells on one occasion, when he was doing some work on some film at Beaconsfield later on but I never got to know him at all. But I did meet, and became a very great personal friend, of Bernard Herrmann, who wrote the music, and that was one of his finest scores - in fact I spent a couple of weeks in his house in Hollywood later on. Benny and I became great friends, in fact many a time he's been here having lunch with Lizzie Lutyens, quite a pair, I can tell you. But that is quite a story about 'Citizen Kane', it's quite interesting. Shortly after that, the Unit decided to leave the old house at Denham and get into cahoots with the Army and the Air Force and then we moved to Pinewood. And then, of course, we shifted all the equipment there and we ... limited equipment. Do you remember the old four-way T desk, RCA thing, the little four-way mixer? That was not only our floor mixer but our truck mixer, it was also our dubbing mixer. We had to shift the whole bloody thing round with these big F-5 cables, you remember them. Any rate, then we moved to Pinewood and things, of course, became a little

more.. I mean I think I had two assistants then, or something. I suppose Ken Scrivenor joined me round about then.

Int - Well, when I joined Pinewood at Crown, you had quite a number of people, didn't you. Well, you had Jock May and ?~~Jim~~ Ken Scrivenor and Doug Hurring was there and ?~~Buck~~ Pat Jeffrey and ...

KC - Yes, well it became humanly impossible for one person to do everything ...

Int - ... Dougie Smith and - who was the second projectionist?

KC - Quite a lot of people, I know, it became quite a different thing.

Int 2 - Can I backtrack just a moment, to start off with, at Blackheath, with the Vis~~o~~ertone Channel, that was purely a floor channel really ...

KC - No. It was mounted in a truck but I mean everything that was in the truck had to come out. Well, we had no dubbing theatre then.

Int 2 - There was no dubbing equipment there to start with.

KC - Well, we had this little.. it was a two-way mix in those days, the old Vis~~o~~ertone thing, but we had no dubbing heads. We had nothing, do you see, in those days. If we had to dub a film seriously we went down to Twickenham or somewhere where they had

a monumental, four-way mixer or something like that. These were primitive days.

Int 2 - So when the RCA equipment came from the Elstree source, was dubbing equipment then installed at Blackheath?

KC - Yes. We had one Simplex projector and we had two RCA dummy heads and we had this little four-way "TEA WAGON" mixer thing. And we had no theatre, we were put into the corner of what we jokingly called the stage, which was about the size of this room. But it was very primitive, you know, terribly primitive. Even in the RCA days, we thought it was wonderful with this beautiful PR23 Recorder - they're still using them, beautiful stuff. We had, I think we had two microphones then. It was a little primitive but when we went to Pinewood we still had the same stuff. There was.. in Theatre 2, at Pinewood they had the ~~?Westtracks~~ WesTrex Channel, where it was much more elaborate and run by D P Field and Bill Sweeney. But we had just Theatre 1 and we had very, very crude stuff. But it worked and we did a lot of very good work with it. Indeed, the first job I was sent onto when I got the RCA Channel, I was sent up to Manchester to record the Halle Orchestra playing Beethoven 5 in sync, with Malcolm Sargeant conducting and I'd never recorded an orchestra in my life before. It worked - but the biggest and most important music session I ever had in my life was just immediately after the War, when Crown decided to make 'Instruments of the Orchestra'.

Int - I thought you were going to say that.

KC - Well, it's important, that, because there's no piece of music ever been written in the history of music which calls for more ... you'd need at least 30 mikes to do it properly because every single instrument is a soloist and, you know, we didn't do it in sections, we did it in great lumps. Well, I did have three mikes and a four-way mixer, so a fourth wouldn't have been much help, and I had Muir Matheson sitting on one side and Ben Britten sitting on the other in the old smaller hall at Wembly Town Hall, and we had the orchestra there. And, of course, it was long before magnetic recording - we recorded the whole damn thing - but not until the following morning did I know whether the ?snaps had come out. In point of fact, it worked jolly well - Ben was happy, Muir was happy, Malcolm was happy. And, as a result, I became a great friend of Malcolm Sargeant - and we all joked about Malcolm Sargeant, Flash Harry and all that sort of thing but Malcolm was extremely kind to me. We worked very well on that film and he did.. he supervised the music for several other films after.. not several, but three or four and he insisted on me recording them, which was very kind of him because it brought us work at a time when I needed everything I could get. And I've never forgotten Malcolm for his kindness and that, just as I've never forgotten Robert Donat, who always insisted on me recording comedies he wrote of films because we got on well together and you don't forget these things. These are famous old people now and all dead and so on but they were very kind to me and I appreciated it enormously.

Int - Going back to 'Instruments of the Orchestra', you then shot the picture at Pinewood Theatre, to play back on the old discs, didn't you.

KC - No. I think we used the optical prints. I think so. I'm not certain - this is going back a bit.

Int - I have a sort of feeling in the back of my mind that if my memory serves me right ...

Int 2 - Geoff Laborham talks in his interview about making up disc playback equipment for sync starting and things like that at Pinewood but that was probably after 'Instruments of the Orchestra', I should think.

KC - I don't think it was after, I think it was possibly before. But, you see, Pinewood.. you see we didn't have the facilities of the Pinewood sound department. They had Theatre 2, we had Theatre 1. D P Field and Bill Sweeney looked after their side of things and I had to try and look after mine and I couldn't draw upon their facilities, any more than (for what it was worth) they could draw on mine (laugh). But we got on tremendously well with DP and, I don't know if you remember DP.

Int - Yes, I remember him but he was at MGM Elstree, MGM Borehamwood, I should say.

KC - Well, that was a long time before that. And, of course, Bill went to Elstree. Joe Rock or whatever it was called.

Int - Peter Hanford was there too, wasn't he?

KC - Peter was there. Peter actually worked for us and John Aldridge worked for me.

Int - I see that actually in your book, 'Sound in a Documentary Film' in the acknowledgements, I see there's a little line to Peter Hanford for helping you to correct the things, or unsay the things that you ought not to have said.

KC - (Laugh) Peter was a great friend. I'm sorry to have lost touch with Peter but he was a great friend and a very fine mixer, very fine. And John Aldridge was a great friend and George Crool, who's now dead, I think - he was a boom ??. I mean at D P Field, Peter Hanford, who became a lieutenant and John and George were both sergeants and, you know, the whole thing was terribly military in those days. We had to be all checked in at the gate, you know, by RAF armed guards and Bill Sweeny was a flight-lieutenant or something or other and we were all put into sort of pseudo-war-correspondent's uniform to make us look presentable. The whole place was terribly military.

Int - Was that then the Army Film Unit? What was the difference between Crown and the Army Film Unit?

KC - Oh, quite different. There were three completely separate units at Pinewood: the Crown Film Unit, who were nominally in charge of Pinewood but in practice; then the Air Force Film Unit; and the Army Film Unit. Three completely separate things - they shared the same canteen and all got on quite well together but they were quite separate. Ian Dalrymple was in charge of Crown for some of the time.

Int - Until 1943 - when I joined Crown in 1943, Jack Holmes had just taken over.

KC - Yes, and Hugh Stewart was in charge of the Army, I think, subsequently Roy Boulting. And, I can't remember the name of the RAF man now ... **(Moyner.)** Pat Moyner was Adjutant, he was under ~~Pat~~ OH DEAR ME I CAN'T REMEMBER. John Boulting was Squadron Leader or something rather stupid but there was somebody in the top and I can't remember who. But it worked all very happily at Pinewood in those days. I had great fun and I mentioned it in.. no, somebody else mentioned it, that I started running lunchtime concerts at Pinewood. We had this very big Theatre 1, that seated about 150 people, quite a bit theatre, but I had the idea - I'd become very friendly with Myra Hess in the National Gallery concerts and I'd worked with her a lot ...

Int - Through those films in which she appeared, I suppose? 'Listen to Britain' and 'Diary for Timothy'?

KC - Yes. Well, it was after 'Listen to Britain' that I met her. But anyway, we became great friends and I did what I could to help her with the things but she successfully ran these National Gallery concerts and I thought it might be an idea to try and do some at Pinewood. At any rate, I asked Myra if she would come along and she said she would. And I put notices up, Lunchtime Concert, Theatre 1, 1.15, Myra Hess will play the Beethoven Appassionata, and wondered whether six or seven people would turn up. Christ! The place was absolutely crammed to the doors, all these brown jobs and blue jobs, and it was an

enormous success. So we thought we'd try and do some more and then I got friendly with Solomon and I asked him to come along and he did it. And they weren't all classical ones, we had the Black Quartet and the Gorilla Quartet that had some lighter ones too. I remember ...

Int - You had the Band of the Ox & Bucks Light Infantry and with Anthony Asquith playing the piano - Grieg's Piano Concerto.

KC - Oh, we had dozens of them and we always just had sort of ...

Int - You had Bernard Miles.

KC - Bernard came along - I can't remember them all. We had about one every two weeks or so and they were tremendously successful. I enjoyed doing them enormously ...

Int - Dennis Matthews was another.

KC - Dennis came along, and Dennis Braine came along - funny I was talking to Dennis Matthews just the other day. You know that little film we made with Dennis Braine and Dennis Matthews?

Int - Which I never saw. The one you made with ...

KC - Funnily enough they've got video distribution for it now. They sent me a cassette along two days ago. But another quite interesting story - it was during the War, about 1944, '43, I used to go up to Mallet Street to the Ministry of Information early in the

morning because Jack Beddington, who was in charge of the films division there, used to get imported films from all over the world and he viewed them to see whether they were suitable for distribution and so on. An awful lot of German, Hitler films, which are fascinating, and he used to run them at 8 o'clock in the morning and he was quite happy for other people to come in. And I used to go up because I saw some fascinating things there. But any rate, we had the film till about 9.30, 9.45 and then he got to the canteen to have breakfast and I used to go with him. And one day, in about '43 I think it was, we were talking about this and that and I said how much I'd love to go over to Hollywood to see how they did things there - this was, mind you, in the heat of the war - and Jack said, 'Well, why don't you?' which was a crazy thing to say but anyway, he said, 'Leave it to me.' And he fixed it and about five days later I was on the Queen Mary and I went to Hollywood. I had a first-class, single stateroom on the Queen Mary, which I shared with nine other people. Of course, there were 25,000 people on board that ship and it did the whole trip, going right down to the Azores, zig-zagging and right up again zig-zagging in four days, three nights. You turned round, everything wooph, you turned round the other way, everything wooph. Anyway, I got to New York, of course you couldn't get hotels anywhere there and eventually British Information Services put me into an hotel, a crummy little place called something or other, where I found I was sharing a room, of all places, with Alan Osbiston. He didn't know I was there and I didn't know he was there. And this was, I think, on New Year's Eve or something ... '43 or '44 ...

Int 2 - That's Alan Osbiston, the film editor?

KC - Yes. Anyway, we spent two or three nights together there and then I went over by the slowest possible train to Hollywood - I was told I could fly over but if I flew over, every time the plane stopped I'd be put off and somebody with a higher priority would get on. They said, it'll take you four days but it'll be quicker than by air. Anyway, before I got to Hollywood though, I'd been talking to Myra (Hess) and Myra had produced some rather lovely little souvenir booklets from the National Gallery concerts and when she heard I was going over to America, she said, 'Well, look, post is so very difficult just now, could you take four of these over to New York or post them or give them to some friends of mine.' I said, 'Of course.' And she inscribed them, one was to Kussevitzki, one was to Heifitz, one was to Bill Steinway, who was the head of the House of Steinway and one was for Toscanini. Now Toscanini was the nearest approach to God in the music world in those days and RCA were my host in New York and Wally Wolf, who was in charge of RCA in New York at the time, I told him about this thing, he saw this thing and he said, 'Well, look, come along the corridor and we'll talk to Walter Toscanini, who's Arturo's son.' And we went along the corridor and Walter was working for RCA then and Walter saw this booklet and said, 'Well, you must give this to the Maestro yourself.' I said, 'Well, I hoped you'd say that.' He said, 'Well, you be at Studio 8H in the RCA Building tomorrow at 2.30.' I said, 'I will.' And I was at Studio 8H at the RCA Building at 2.30 and through the window I could see the Maestro conducting a rehearsal of Beethoven 7 with the NBC Orchestra and it came to the interval, he came in, the Maestro came in, and went to his bathroom to have a shower. Walter banged on the door, said,

'Maestro, there's a ~~gentleman~~ friend from London, England, to see you.' And Walter left the room - I was alone in the room and shortly afterwards Arturo came out. He was wearing nothing but his underpants, he was dripping with the shower and he said, what is it, sort of thing. And I showed him this book (he was blind as a bat, you now) 'To my dear Arturo from his loving friend, Myra.' He burst into tears. (Laugh) It sounds crazy - it moves me now. For 20 minutes I was alone in a room smaller than this with Arturo, in tears, dripping wet, wearing nothing but underpants. It's incredible, but it's true - every bloody word of it. I went out of the RCA Building, I walked down 5th Avenue, I was about three feet above the ground. I've never been so moved in my life - and it's true, every bloody word of it.

Int 2 - Just to backtrack a little bit on your interest in music. Where did this start, did you learn music when you were young? (No.) **Was it having recorded the music that gave you a greater interest?**

KC - You know, I don't know. I mean, I did simple little sessions in the early days and got to know people, you know. People who are now quite well-known musicians, Jack ~~Wymer~~ Brymer, Jimmie Blades and so on. But I never studied music, I can't read a score, I can't play a note on a penny whistle but I got very, very fond of music and the more you get to know people, the more fond you get of it. And I got to know so many eminent musicians and I was terribly fortunate in my life in having to work with Adrian Boult, Malcolm Sargeant, Benny Herrmann, Myra Hess, Solomon - all these lovely people.

Int 2 - Because you were regarded in the film industry as being the eminent music recordist.

KC - No, Bob. I mean, no. I mean there was a time when I used to consider I was pretty good but that's all changed now. I mean I could no more record ... it's different now altogether.

Int 2 - I think it's easier now, actually, than it was.

KC - Of course it's easier. I mean I only had two mikes - you remember the old RCA bloody great ribbed (Ribbon) ... I only had two of them.

Int 2 - And you were a great advocate, of course, of recording in the town hall-type acoustic.

KC - Well, that was largely because Theatre 1 at Pinewood was a nice theatre for an orchestra of a dozen or so but when you were suddenly faced with, well, people who want ... I mean, for instance, D P Field had 'Desert Victory' and so on, he went to the Scala in Charlotte Street. And that was really quite funny, you know, because I remember 'Desert Victory' was the first of the big ones, Bill Alwyn wrote the score, and it's a full RAF Symphony Orchestra, about 90 players in the Scala, D P with his ruddy great sound truck hadn't even arrived by the time they started rehearsing. Then he drives up there, push out one single 630, ~~-~~ eight-ball mike, stuck it up any old where and just recorded. And a superb track came out - that was so fantastic, you know. Nowadays, I mean, you're not happy with

under 40 mikes and with masses of EQ's and so on. But the tracks then were better than they are now. At least, I maintain that, I'm sorry.

Int 2 - I couldn't agree with you more.

KC - But, it's true, you know. That old 'Instruments of the Orchestra' which we recorded in Wembly Town Hall with two old mikes, I still play. It's still a jolly good track. And, I mean, changing away from that altogether, I think I was talking to you the other day, ~~Charlie~~ Johnny, I'm getting deaf now but I can hear the dialogue in old films, I can't hear them now.

Int 2 - We'd like to come on to that a little bit later on but we've sidetracked you, because you were in Hollywood, on the way to Hollywood.

KC - I went to the Hollywood studio, they were very, very kind to me and hospitable to me, showed me all round the studios and I went to all of the studios and, you know, they lunched me and dined me and they were terribly kind. Of course, it was fortunate enough because I'd no money, you see I wasn't allowed to take any money out of this country and I got my per diem allowance - and I think it was $11 a day - and it cost me about $13 for a night and I had to cheat by charging up taxis and taking streetcars and so on. I hadn't any money. But they were terribly kind to me and I enjoyed that trip very much indeed. I was terribly lonely because I was in America on Thanksgiving Day, on Christmas Day and on New Year's Eve and I was absolutely alone. Lots of people invited me out but you always think - you

don't want to go and interfere with somebody's family thing, so I always said, oh no, I'm tied up, thank you very much, and so on. And I was absolutely alone - and I was terribly lonely.

Int 2 - What technical advantages do you think you gained from seeing the operations in Hollywood?

KC - Not very much. I mean, obviously their equipment was far superior but I couldn't get anything over here - even if we had the money, I couldn't buy it. I remember once ... do you remember the old RCA PR23 Recorder, you remember this very fine ...

Tape 1, Side 2

KC - Well, one day the sound truck caught fire at Blackheath, I don't why or how or what happened. But one of the things that suffered was that particular bearing on that PR23 Recorder and it had to be replaced. Now that was quite a thing in the middle of the War, we had to send the old one over to Hollywood, it was Indianapolis, I think, RCA's factory was then, and get a new one but it was terribly expensive. And we were absolutely.. it was the only recorder we had so we were completely out of action for weeks. I don't know why the truck caught fire, I can't remember but I know it did. Of course, in those days, you know, one of my jobs was to top up the batteries because it was all batteries, these bloody great things, these huge accumulators..

Int - Well, Ken, I thought possibly we ought to go back to the beginning. There was one thing that wasn't quite clear in my

mind and that was how you decided on the film business, rather than sound radio because having met John Reith and Baird and ...

KC - Well, I can easily go into that because I was at University and I was studying Electrical Engineering and my idea was to try and get into broadcasting, that's why I approached John Reith and so on, and he said it's out of the question, it didn't work, he wasn't interested anyway. Then I met, as I said, Charles Oakley and joined the Film Society and I did get interested in the movies and I met Paul ~~?Rothe~~ Rotha and Basil Wright and people and I had to do something during the summer, which was approved with the University, so then I got into the GPO Film Unit as the teaboy in the sound department. And that's why I started in films.

Int - But you were already interested in radio, weren't you and you made your own radio ...

KC - I was interested in radio but it was not until after I'd spent my summer with the GPO Film Unit and got onto the Council of the Film Society. And then I managed to get myself made film critic for the Glasgow University Magazine and also, curiously enough, for a weekly paper in Glasgow that's been dead for 50 years, called the GLASGO Weekly Herald. And I wrote a weekly article which I pinched from various people and they paid me five bob a week or something - but I got passes for every Glasgow cinema and I got the Trade Show passes - came through every day, shoals of them. In fact, from that period onwards, from 1941 onwards, I have never paid for a movie, nor do I ever intend to. But I had free pass certificates and so on, very useful.

Int - What next. Well, sort of going back, when I joined Crown, which was 1943, I remember that you were very involved in the Union activities, in fact you were the shop steward. It would be interesting to hear about that aspect of your ...

KC - Now you're sitting on the sort of thin ice. Yes, I was shop steward for a time but I'm afraid I was a rather naughty shop steward.

Int - Were you? I thought you were an excellent shop steward, you seemed to be ...

KC - I was a rather naughty shop steward because in those days I'm afraid I sort of learned the Union's secrets and let the management know about them (laugh), so it could forestall things. I mean, We're going to strike tomorrow unless we have teabreak five minutes earlier. So I told the management about this and they decided that probably one's teabreak would be five minutes earlier - this is rather stupid but.. We had these Joint Works Committee meetings, there were about four shop stewards and so on, every week or something like that. I remember the Chairman was Percy Ackland-Snow, who was Studio Manager. And I disgraced myself once because one shop steward insisted upon addressing him as Mr Chair, which I thought was so stupid and I went into hysterics of laughter and blotted my copybook completely over that. But, jumping ahead ...

Int - But, actually, after you were shop steward, you were there for three years, Jock May took over, didn't he? So the stewardship was still in the sound department.

KC - Yes, he did. He was a staunch, left-wing trade unionist - ooh, definitely.

Int 2 - John just said that the stewardship was still in the sound department, so that usually they always used to be, they were usually the militant ones, who were looked upon to provide the ...

KC - But I will tell you - this is jumping ahead a bit - my funny Union story. First of all, when I joined the GPO first of all in earlier days, it was only a part-time thing, I applied to join ACT and they wouldn't have me.

Int 2 - That was when?

KC - '35, '34, very early days, you see I was only a part-time and it's understandable. ACT was a very young body then, they wouldn't have me. I was a little piqued about it because I was doing a Union job - anyway they wouldn't have me, so that was that. But when I joined the Unit properly after I graduated, of course I applied to join and I was taken on as a fully-fledged ?? and I remained that, with certain problems actually - do you remember Stewart McAllister? - there were rather ugly scenes over him once because he refused to join and.. or did he want to join and they wouldn't let him, I can't remember. But I went to a General Council meeting and spoke on his behalf but I can't

remember the details of that. But much more important was, in about 1952, this was after Crown had been closed and I'd formed my own company Anvil, shortly after that, I remember once sitting in my office one morning, it must have been about 10 o'clock, and the telephone rang. And a friend, a dubbing editor who was at ~~Shepherd~~ Shepperton, who must be nameless, rang me up and said, 'Ken, what have you been doing now?' I said, 'What do you mean?' He said, 'Well, what's gone wrong with you and ACT?' And I said, 'I don't know what you're talking about.' He said, 'Well, have you seen the agenda for the next General Council meeting?' I said, 'Of course I haven't, why should I?' He said, 'Well I suggest you go and try and see a copy of it.' I was intrigued about this and I pottered over the road to see my old friend, Syd Sharples, who was shop steward. And I said, 'Syd, what's all this about the General Council?' He said, 'I thought you'd be coming over soon.' And he showed me the agenda and Item 1 was two forewords on it: Member's conduct, Ken Cameron. Nothing more. I was desperately trying to keep in with everybody in this because I needed the work terribly in those days. If it hadn't been for people like Johnny and Edgar and so on, we wouldn't have survived and the thought of some slur like that was really serious. So I got back to my office and I rang George ~~?Eldon~~ Elvin, and I said, 'George, what's all this about?' And George said, 'Well, Ken, you shouldn't have done it.' 'George, what have I done?' George said, 'Well, you've signed the Rules of the ACT, you're supposed to obey the Rules and you've broken the Rules and therefore this has got to come to the ...' 'George, what the Christsake have I done?' And it turned out I'd taken on a trainee without going through the Employment Bureau, which to me seemed completely inconsistent

because how can you have a young trainee who's a member? He's got to be a member before.. It didn't work out. Anyway, this developed and escalated and became long, acrimonious correspondence, which I still have upstairs, incidentally - quite friendly with George but the General Council were really fighting me about this thing. And it became really rather serious, until one day I received a telegram summoning me to attend the next General Council of ACT, and I remember the words, To give reason why action should not be taken against me for activities prejudicial to the affairs of the Union. Now, this was really rather serious, so I rang George and I said, 'I'm sorry, I'm not going to this meeting. I refuse to go, why should I be sat on in judgement by six or seven people whom I may have employed or may want to employ in the future.' After all, I was running my own company then. And George said, 'Well, what are we to do?' I said, 'All right, I'll resign from ACT.' And eventually he rang back and said, 'All right, we'll accept your resignation from ACT, provided you resign your job as Sound Supervisor for Anvil Films and you will not do any more recording for them.' And I said, 'OK, that's done.' I resigned and that was it. But then I read the rule book very carefully. I had to have somebody else to run the sound department for Anvil, it was important to have somebody to run it. And I read the rule book and the rule book said that in employing a new operative, preference must be given to members of the Union who were suitably qualified for the job and it had been advertised, the job. So, I advertised the job in the employment lists of ACT. Anvil Films require Sound Supervisor. There are certain qualifications: since Anvil has a Scottish company, Anvil Films Scotland and a certain degree of technical ABILITY? is needed, the

successful applicant will be an Engineering graduate of a Scottish University; secondly, since the successful applicant has to meet, on social terms, composers, conductors, instrumentalists and so on, it is essential that he is a member of a club, such as the Saville in London, where he can meet these people - and there were, I think, one or two other qualifications. And I awaited the allotted six weeks or whatever it was and I had no applicants. So, according to the Rule Book, I was inclined to employ a non-member, so I employed myself. And not till six months later did ACT realise they'd been conned. Six months later, I think it was George Elfin rang me up and said, 'All right, you win. But there's nothing to stop you joining the Union now.' I said, '... the Union.' And that's probably the only time that ACT have been completely conned and I was absolutely right in everything I did. I didn't break the rules one scrap.

Int - An interesting story - nice story.

KC - I'm still a great friend of George.

Int - What year was this? Now, this was well after Anvil had got underway, wasn't it?

KC - Oh, '53, '54, something like that.

Int - Yes, this was about two or three years after Anvil had ...

KC - But I never joined ACT again. I mean I was still good friends with George and still see Ralph Bond and Sid Cole

frequently and socially and very happy together. I've only met Alan Sapper once and we didn't get on very well but that's beside the point. But it was rather.. they could have done me.. they could have killed the company and, after all, I had formed this company, together with Richard Warren and a few others; we had no money, you weren't allowed to get an overdraft in those days, we pawned our houses, we did everything.. and got to know. We kept four or five members in work at the proper salaries until we could manage to get it going. And then, as I say, Edgar and Shell and one or two other companies brought us work and kept us going and then, thank God, Independent Television started. And Independent Television, you know, they were screaming, they couldn't get their work done anywhere. Sapphire Films at Southall, I think, or was it Walton, I forget which.. Walton, they were making, at one time, three series of films, 'Robin Hood', 'Lancelot' and 'Buccaneers', two episodes a week. That's 18 reels a week, and they had to get them ~~re-ordered~~ recorded and dubbed somewhere - there were very few independent places in those days. And we worked night and day, seven days a week. I remember there was an American called Leon Becker, who was a sort of post-production supervisor, or whatever you like to call it; he used to book the theatre for months ahead but I remember Leon ringing me up one day, he said, 'Look, Ken, I'm in trouble, I must have an orchestra from 10 pm till 1 am on Thursday. Can you help me?' I said, 'Leon, I'm sorry, I'm booked.' So he said, 'Oh, Christ, who's booked you?' I said, 'You have.' I could fill that theatre up 20 times over in those days.

Int - And, of course, Group 3 time when I was working at Group 3 and you did all those films there, didn't you?

KC - Oh, yes, and then the Group 3's started and then, of course, Group 3 moved into Beaconsfield and became our landlords and then we had all their work. Then they went out and Independent Artists came in ...

Int - So you had continuity for many years.

KC - Fortunately, Anvil started 36 years ago and it's still doing well.

Int - We ought to go back a little bit because we want to hear about the transition from, well the later part of Crown, the final moments of Crown and Anvil becoming the phoenix out of the ashes, as it were. So, where did we finish up, we were towards the end of the War, weren't we. We were still at Pinewood. Well, before that we had the Beaconsfield ... we want to pick it up after you came back from Hollywood.

KC - Well, we moved from Pinewood to Beaconsfield in ...

Int - 1946, literally right at the end of the year. I remember the farewell party at Pinewood in Theatre 1, which was quite an occasion.

KC - Anyway, we moved to Beaconsfield ...

Int - That was an interesting period, wasn't it? A non-existent studio virtually.

KC - Well, the theatre in Beaconsfield was.. it had been the theatre in the old days before the war, then it had been turned into a canteen for C of E ? Rotax during the War, and then there'd been a big fire. I don't know what had happened but the fire was so devastating inside that theatre that all they did was lock the doors, put a padlock on it and forget about it. Then we went over to.. there was Alexander Shaw and Dustin Buck and I went over, we really went over ostensibly to find out which was the best pub to use in Beaconsfield because there were nine near the studio. But eventually we got into this theatre - the smell was terrible, it was just an awful wreck of a building and we called the Ministry of Works in and we told them what to do and they did it. And they turned it into a very presentable theatre, a very nice theatre. We got a new dubbing console from RCA, I think it was twelve-way or something, and they gave us an extra six dummy heads and we really made it, for those days, quite a presentable little theatre. It was before magnetic - just.

Int - This was about the summer of 1947, when you opened the theatre at Beaconsfield.

KC - Something like that. And it did really quite well, we managed to shoot reasonable.. in fact I even had an orchestra of 35 in there once, God knows how we got them in!

Int - That was when we recorded 'England of Elizabeth', Vaughan Williams.

KC - 'England of Elizabeth', Vaughan Williams, I've still got some pictures of it. And the sound's all right, considering. I think we had magnetic just. I remember we got the old GB ~~?caley~~ Kalee, you remember those yellow, flat things, I forget what number it was ...

Int 2 - Horizontal ...

KC - Yes, huge things, and we had that in, we had two of those, I think. And they were quite good in their day. We put that in and eventually we could record magnetic and we sort of developed our first virgin loop system, it was the first virgin loop system in the country, I think, by building our own erase heads and.. we made the most extraordinary things. But it worked, the whole thing worked.

Int - Did you in fact have the whole of the original Crown sound department, did their whole lot transfer to Anvil? Completely en bloc?

KC - Yes. ...

Int - We're going back just a little bit now, we're going back from what we were last talking about, the beginning of Anvil. We're going to the beginning of 1941, '42 time, early wartime. And if you can tell us a little bit about working with Humphrey Jennings and ~~?~~ "Fires Were Started" and that sort of period,.. "Listen to Britain"

KC - Humphrey Jennings was an experience. I think he was the most wonderful documentary director there ever was, probably

ever will be, but he was an absolute menace to work for. He made a film called 'Listen to Britain', which I think was one of the loveliest short documentaries that's ever been made, in spite of the fact that it's now God knows how many years old. But when Humphrey went on location to make a film, he insisted on, first of all there was a large, hired Daimler, which contained Humphrey Jennings; then there was another, rather inferior utility, which contained probably Chick ?Fowler and some of the other technicians; then lumbering on behind was this enormous great six-ton sound truck that I had to drive, which contained this RCA optical equipment, which was very bulky. And we used to traipse round the whole of England on this film. And one classic occasion, which I shall never forget, when we got to somewhere in the Lake District, and Humphrey said, 'Top of that mountain, that's where we're going to shoot tomorrow.' And so early in the morning, the large, chauffeur-driven Daimler with Humphrey trooped round this winding road, and the utility thing with Chick Fowler or Fred ?G... trooped up the mountain, and mine, this great, huge sound truck, steaming and blowing everywhere, trooped up this mountain. We eventually got to the top of this mountain, two or three thousand feet high, and gaspingly I got out and said, 'All right, Humphrey, we're here at last. Now where shall we set up?' He said, 'Oh, don't bother. I don't want any sound, I just want to put the camera on top of the sound truck.' (Laugh) And that was the sort of way Humphrey worked. He was a nightmare to work for, you know, and the whole of 'Listen to Britain' was terrifying. We worked sort of all the hours that God made, night and day, and came back with nothing, except in

one case a signal going clonk. That's all we had, it took 24 hours to shoot - I mean, it was crazy. (Laugh)

Int - Presumably, it wasn't quite like that when you were doing 'Fires were Started' because that was presumably a fairly closely scripted film and it was a definite..

KC - Well, Jock May shot all the locational ~~fires with~~ on 'Fires were Started' and it was all done down in the docks and they had the docks there and they set them on fire and they shot, and they had the whole Fire Service, it was very well organised and it was a very fine film. But Jock did all that, I wasn't involved on location. Jock May did all that and did a wonderful job on it. But I was only involved in the final stages, the music and the commentary ? and so on of that. We did some of it at Pinewood. We did the famous 'One Man Went to Mow' at Pinewood. But Jock did the vast bulk of 'Fires were Started' and it was a very fine film, I think. What it looks like nowadays, I've no idea, it probably doesn't look so hot now but ...

Int 2 - Still very exciting, I think.

KC - Very exciting and very well made. Technically, one has to bear in mind, it's a long time ago. All these things are a long time ago now, a very long time ago.

Int - Just to go back to what we were talking about when we weren't recording, I seem to remember you and your sound crew set off one evening from Pinewood to get some realistic effects

of the flying bomb and you came back the next morning looking rather damaged. I mean people were slightly bandaged.

KC - That was quite true. We were making a film called 'V-1, the Flying Bomb' or something like that, and we had to get a track of the flying bomb coming from the distance, going right over and going into the distance - hopefully going by in the end. Not so easy to do because you didn't now when they were going to go away. Anyway, we went down to what was called 'bomb alley' with the sound truck and put a thing on the roof, and mind you it was still optical, you couldn't just have film running, it was expensive stuff. Anyway, in the course of time, a bomb came over and it looked as though it was going to sort of come in the right way and so we started to record. This thing chou, chou, chou - it got right overhead and old Nobby Clark, who was our boom operator then, it came right overhead, he said, 'Flying bomb coming over, passing over.' Completely mucking up the track. (Laugh)

Int 2 - Were you hurt? John was saying you were coming back bandaged and so on.

Int - I think there was a near miss because I remember that you definitely came back looking rather the worse for wear.

KC - Some people had quite a few near misses but we were terribly fortunate, you know. I mean the studio was never hit - much. No, the nearest miss I had was at Pinewood when one evening I was in my office. It was when we had the offices in the old dressing rooms and mine was ... Who was that little

Indian boy? (Degamba Chategi.) No, it was an Indian star who played in ... ~~Saboo~~ SABU, yes. Well, I had his dressing room. Any rate, they were lovely offices to have, private bathroom and everything - but a V-2 burst just over Iver and I found myself sitting in the corridor. But so little problems we had, really, with the War. Obviously, we all had inconveniences but I was terribly lucky, you know. I mean, I was called up but I was reserved immediately ...

Int - We had a Home Guard platoon at Pinewood.

KC - Home Guard! I was a Corporal in the Home Guard. That's the nearest equivalent to a General in the regular Army. I did have this occasion when once, on a New Year's Day, a snowy New Year's Day, we were down - do you remember the Crooked Billet, a pub near Pinewood? - well, for some reason we had a room there as our headquarters and we were on duty there once all night. And I put Humphrey Jennings, who was a Private, I put him on guard duty outside - I was a Corporal - forgot all about him. (Laugh) About two in the morning, I thought Christ, he was out there covered with snow. (Laugh)

Int 2 - One of the headings in your book 'Sound and the Documentary Film' ...

KC - Oh, Bob, you're going back into antiquity.

Int 2 - Well, I've got to say here that 'Sound and the Documentary Film' was for me, way out in New Zealand, one of the best text books that I ever had. KC WELL BOB YOU'RE VERY FLATTERING **It's not flattering, I'm**

speaking the truth because besides having, what shall we say, some technical information especially about RCA equipment in the back, which I'd never set eyes on out there, it also had a philosophy in the front of it, which was ever so valuable to me as a formulating.. my own techniques and the way I wanted to operate in life. However, one of the things that impressed me at the time was your statement about dubbing films and very humorously, but very seriously too, I think, saying who should be present at the dubbing session. Do you remember what you said?

KC - Vaguely, yes. I do remember that I have had awkward incidents with people who have been in dubbing sessions who have been tiresome. I can very well remember, I think it was probably Jack ~~Lean~~ Lee, but anyway in those days, as you very well know, a dubbing session was a very tense thing. There was no rock and roll, no nonsense like that and at the end of a ten-minute reel you were really pouring with sweat and two people would be sitting there and talking about the lunch they had last night in a loud voice in the front row of the seats and so on, and that sort of thing drove me furious. In fact, I remember one famous occasion, it was Jack ~~Lean~~ Lee, we were dubbing a film in the take, you know, which is crucially important and this chattering went on and eventually I pressed the button for the projectionist to cut, stopped the machines, put the lights up. They carried on talking, chattering away about last night's lunch or whatever it was. After about ten minutes, I think it was Jack, turned round and said, 'Ken, what's happening?' I said, 'As soon as you've finished talking, I'll carry on dubbing.' And that stopped it. You know, they didn't

understand. They didn't understand that a dubbing ~~mix and~~ mixer on a reel - on optical too - you were terribly tense, you were only coping with four or five tracks or so but after a long day at that thing, you were just dripping with sweat, and they didn't understand that at all. And I just put my foot down, cut the machines and just waited until ... it didn't matter to them, they just carried on chatting - 'Oh, what's gone wrong? Has something gone wrong or something?' 'No,' I said, 'when you've finished talking, we'll carry on.'

Int - You still get the same sort of thing today. It takes a different form but the fact that you've got rock and roll means that if there are many people there, they can say stop and ...

KC - You've got more than rock and roll now, you've got such sophisticated equipment.

Int - Well, you know, the fact that you can go back in the middle of a reel makes it easier for people to stop and start again and then it can be a much slower process.

KC - But ~~your~~ you're magnetic, that's the important thing. You're not using expensive twopence-a-foot stock and fourpence-a-foot ... that's where the money went.

Int - I was thinking of the time factor. You can spend just as much time on the rock and roll method of dubbing as possibly on the optical.

KC - You can, but you're not spending expensive stock.

Int - But in theory you should be able to do it much quicker because you were doing it in short bursts. But because of the other people ...

Int 2 - I don't think there are many people in the business today who realise the tension that there was when it was straight onto optical.

Int - No, well this is what I was talking about earlier.

Int 2 - And as you were mentioning when you were talking about rehearsal prints and then going over to the re-record prints that you didn't want to have to run too much because of ...

Int - And the labour-saving business of mag, I mean, we spent nights getting the final tracks laid in time for the dubbing session the next morning.

KC - I don't think that there's almost any mixer living now who remembers - very few at any rate, very few - dubbing mixers who remember the strain and the tenseness. I'm talking about 1944, that's 45 years ago.

Int 2 - I do remember because the first picture that I actually dubbed onto - well, feature-length one, was a feature-length documentary in New Zealand and it was straight onto optical, it was a Gaumont ~~Caley~~ Kalee optical channel then, it was eight reels and we had ten rolls of sound stock that could be used, the other sound stock we had wasn't sensitive enough for the light for the

Gaumont ~~Caley~~ Kalee. We had ten rolls of stock to do the eight reels on. We did double sides, of course, up one side and down the other, but we just got it in, so that was not only the tension of blowing out on a roll but not having enough stock to do it.

KC - You're just a wet rag when it's finished.

Int - But coming back to you again and why I was bringing in the book was, there's a lovely chapter heading by a quote from ~~Cavel Canti~~ Cavalcanti, saying, 'Why is it I can always hear the announcement and never hear the dialogue?' Now, this brings us on to ~~Cavel Canti~~ that we would like to hear ...

KC - I remember that. It's true. It's perfectly true. This is not entirely relevant but in the very, very early days of the War, GPO made a film called 'The First Days' and it was a sort of resumé of the first six months of the War. And when it came to dubbing it, we had this little theatre at Blackheath, which was roughly the size of this room, screen there, projection there, and there was a small grand piano there, and this of course was about three o'clock in the morning, as it always was somehow in those days. And ~~Cavel Canti~~ was lying, full-length on the piano, right beside the loudspeakers. Now, he said, 'I want to hear the commentary but I want a very subtle effects track ~~?s...~~ - just, you know, footsteps to be minutely quiet, the horses footsteps.. everything terribly quiet. Very subtle and very delicate, the whole thing.' And we started dubbing the film and as soon as he'd hear an effect at all, he'd say, 'Down, sh, sh.' So we'd turn it down, until, you know, it was the way he thought he wanted it. A week or two later, we had the

premier of the film in the Regal, Marble Arch, which was an enormous place about the size of the Albert Hall, acoustically terrible, and we had the film there. And you could not hear a single effect. Nothing at all. You could hear the commentary but not a thing was there except that. Well, after that we went along to our pub, which was the Blue ~~?B...~~ Posts I think, in Soho, where we usually had a lunchtime drink and the whole of the GPO Film Unit were at one end of the bar and I was alone at the other end. You know, it was an awful tense thing because the sound track was dreadful. I know it was dreadful, we all knew it was dreadful. In fact, if I'd had more intelligence, then I'd have known it was dreadful but there was nothing I could do. I was just a wee boy then. But that was one of the many occasions when I resigned or was fired. As a rule, sound engineers from GPO, they were fired every second Friday and they resigned every alternate Friday - that's what normally happened. And as a rule it worked quite happily, they just left and somebody else.. Well, of course, I was frequently fired by Cav, frequently fired. But on the Friday morning he'd ring me up and say, 'Ken, you are stupid, do not do this thing.' But on this particular occasion I remember, it was a Tuesday or something I resigned, sent my letter of resignation to Cav but on Friday there was no letter from Cav, there was no telephone call from Cav and I thought, 'Christ, this is really it, I've really had it.' It was not until about five o'clock in the afternoon, Cav rang me up and said, 'Look, Ken, I have your letter. You will wipe your bottom with it.' But it was a very, very tense thing. And, of course, the track was appalling, I knew it was appalling. But what could you do with a man who's sitting with his ear glued to the loudspeaker, saying, down, down, down. What could you do?

It was a subtle enough track at the best of times but there was nothing in it, except the commentary.

Int - But he had his many other qualities. I mean, remarkable man, ~~Cavel Canti~~, I imagine that he was a delightful person to work with. Everybody seemed to speak so highly of him.

KC - Oh, he was a wonderful man, Cav. I adored Cav and I will never hear a word against him.

Int - Because he, alas, left Crown Film Unit fairly soon, didn't he? He went to Ealing ...

KC - Well, not fairly soon, he was with GPO a long time.

Int - Well, he was with GPO for quite a time but he wasn't at Crown very long, was he?

KC - No. But you know, all the people who have been in charge, or nominal charge of GPO Crown, <u>all</u> of them were kind and pleasant and Jack Holmes, Ian Dalrymple, ~~Cavel Canti~~, Basil Wright, Alex Shaw, they were all delightful people to work with. I would never hear a word against any of them. I fought with them, I had terrible rows with Harry Watt because he was, you know, pretty ...

Int - He was a fairly direct sort of man, I would imagine, to work with - no messing around.

KC - I remember when we were shooting 'Target for Tonight' up in Mildenhall, Laurie Lee was my operator then, he was in the sound truck in the operating part, which was shut off by a shutter, and I was outside with Harry and, I can't remember, Harry told me to do something that I disagreed with, I can't remember what it was, but it ended with Harry saying, 'You bloody well do what you're told.' And I said, 'I bloody well won't.' And the door slammed and Laurie Lee put his head inside and fled. But Harry was heavy going.

Int 2 - Did we talk about 'Night Mail'?

Int - Oh, yes, we didn't talk about 'Night Mail' specifically.

KC - 'Night Mail' was before my day. I joined as an apprentice between 'Night Mail' and 'North Sea'. 'Night Mail' had just finished and 'North Sea' hadn't begun and I came in between. It was ~~the ?same thing with Bill ?Bluett~~ "The Savings of Bill Blewitt" with Harry, Harry and ~~Cavel Canti~~ Cavalcanti. I actually missed the completion of 'Night Mail' only by weeks.

Int 2 - Another one that comes to my mind, that impressed me in my earlier days, was 'Song of Ceylon', Basil Wright's 'Song of Ceylon'.

KC - Oh, well that wasn't a GPO film. It was made by Basil and it was made for the Empire.. no, it wasn't that, but it wasn't GPO. But it was made by Basil at about the same time but it wasn't actually a GPO film. I mean it's amazing how they persuaded the Post Office to make some of the films they did,

but it was no relation to the Post Office at all. I mean, Len Lye ~~Lythe~~, all his things, Lotte Reiniger ~~Lotty ?Raneger~~, all sorts of interesting people in those days, who are long since dead.

Int 2 - And those were GPO activities, were they?

KC - Len Lye's ~~Lythe's,~~ a lot of them were GPO for the Post Office and Lotte Reiniger ~~Lotty Raneger~~ made two or three silhouette films for the GPO. Yes, I was six or five months with the GPO in '35, then I wasn't there for the next year, I was at Welwyn, then after that I joined the GPO in '37, I think. From then on I was there permanently but I missed a lot of the PLUMS ~~problems~~.

Int - So you came into your own really with those sort of, those early wartime films, just before the war and there were some quite short sort of films like 'Britain at Bay' and 'Britain Can Take It' and where you had some marvellously elaborate tracks ... and 'Heart of Britain'. You did the Huddersfield Choral Society, I remember.

KC - They were during the war. Pat Jackson's 'Men in Danger' and Humphrey made 'Spare Time', that was before the war. 'Western Approaches' was a wartime thing. Well now, I didn't record that. I was in the dubbing sessions but we had an American called Kay Ash, do you remember? They brought in a Western "Q" ~~Cue~~ Channel and Kay Ash brought in an American operator, whose name I can't remember. They were both in the American Air Force and they recorded the film on a Western optical

Int 2 - They did the location recording?

KC - Yes. On a lifeboat the whole time on a Western ~~Cue~~ "Q" Channel and we did the dubbing later on. I shot the music with Cliff Barker, I remember. But I didn't record 'Western Approaches'. In fact, Kay Ash did a fantastic job - I mean an optical ~~ques~~ "Q" channel, shooting the whole bloody thing in a February gale in the middle of the Atlantic on optical sound is quite remarkable. And usable - nearly all the sound was usable.

Int - It stands up very well. I've got it on VHS tape and the sound quality is amazing.

Int 2 - Is that three-strip Technicolour, too, or did they use Monopack.

KC - Monopack. I think it was the first Monopack almost in this country.

Int - I think they did have three-strip as well, didn't they, for some of the scenes, for the lifeboat stuff and the studio stuff and then they had Monopack for when they went on a convoy, didn't they, to America and back.

KC - I think the exteriors were mostly Monopack, the location stuff, I think so. It's a long time ago, I can't remember. But you know for sound effects we did the most extraordinary things, there was no Nagras ? of course. But 'Coastal Command' - Jack Holmes wanted the noise of a Sunderland, it had to be a Sunderland, passing over and arriving. Well, Sunderlands didn't come down to this part of the country at all, so we took this

bloody great sound truck, this six-ton sound truck, I drove it up to somewhere on the west coast of Scotland, and we chartered a tanker, or whatever it was, a freighter, and lifted the sound truck onto the thing, drove right out to Isla in the Hebrides. And then we sat down and waited and after a few days we persuaded a Sunderland to fly over - and back to London. It just sounded 'whooooo'. And we did the same thing on 'Close Quarters', getting ...

Int - The Asdic and all the underwater stuff.

KC - Yes, it was depth charges. We took the Western ~~Cue~~ "Q" Channel from Rothsay out into a submarine, right out to sea, and they dropped depth charges and then we got this.. it just sounded like 'gonk', and we came back again. A complete and utter waste of time and money and everything. In fact, when we had that particular occasion, we had Peter Hanford and John ~~Aldridge~~ and George Cole with us with this ~~Cue~~ "Q" Channel and we put this Western ~~Cue~~ "Q" Channel up into the sharp end of the submarine. And Peter Hanford was operating it, I remember, this thing. And we went out to sea and the depth charge was dropped and everything was going quite happily and Peter noticed that the sort of water was getting a bit deeper on the ... and he thought it's nothing, normal submarine, and a sailor came into the thing and he said, 'Christ!' and he went out and slammed the door. And a little while later, a sort of petty officer came and looked in and said, 'Christ!' and slammed the door. Then they surfaced. Apparently somebody had got.. they'd submerged, leaving something open. Peter was about an inch deep or a foot deep in water then. But when you think of it, looking back on it, it's

so crazy. I mean, all these effects can be done so easily, By BERYL MORTIMER a ~~mortar~~ with a couple of tin cans. But.. they were real.

Int 2 - Did you not use like a single system set-up, as RCA had a galvo up the back of a Mitchell camera and that sort of thing. Did you use those at all for location work?

KC - Only once when we made a film in Africa, again which oddly enough won an Oscar, Terry Bishop made it, 'Daybreak in Udi'. And they built.. we had a little man, Freddy ~~Arnot~~ (Arnaud), as sound ENGINEER ~~editor~~, and he built it himself with a GLOW LAMP ~~blowlamp~~ and he did a wonderful job and he shot most of the usual sound in Africa with that thing - and it won an Oscar. **(Very good film.)** But that's the only time I think we used a single system, I think so.

Int - I remember, Ken, one time a long time ago at Pinewood, you spent a week, or a weekend anyway, in the cutting rooms.

KC - I did? I must have been mad.

Int - Yes. Because I was the assistant and you spent the weekend laying a music track. Can you remember that? (No.) **Well, you had a recording of, I think it was something like the Royal Fireworks Music, it had been recorded presumably for some other film and perhaps had been discarded. But you said that this music that you had available would be absolutely ideal for a film that we were editing at the time, called 'Onwards to Victory', which was a compilation that Jos Jackson had made, based on excerpts from Churchill's speeches and you said that**

this was absolutely the right music and you said you'd prove it. And so you settled down and I was your assistant.

KC - I remember. I didn't - I was there, that was probably no more than that.

Int - I remember you there and the synchroniser, fitting it, moviola. There you are.

KC - Maybe. I remember that though. I remember recording the music too.

Int - The music wasn't for that film.

KC - No. It was recorded in the old Queen's Hall, with Malcolm conducting and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. I remember that very clearly. We shot the whole of Handel's Water Music and most of the Fireworks music and it was the night, or the night before Queen's Hall got bombed. Because we parked the sound truck outside, took the cables right over, you know, you had to do it in those days, and we recorded all this music and it went quite happily. And then Humphrey or somebody wanted the Leonora 3 trumpet call for some other film and the whole orchestra was sent away, except for George Eskdale playing the trumpet doing Leonora 3. And on the trumpet call which we used for some of our films, you could hear hmmmm, mmmmm, German bomber coming over, and it's still on the track. And I remember when we packed up afterwards, you had to get up to the roof of the truck to bring in the cables for some reason, had to go over the pavement, do you remember in those days. But I remember

hearing something coming then and I jumped off that nine-foot truck in one jump and got into the gutter and found myself lying beside a policeman. That was the night the Cafe Royal copped it. You remember the night the Cafe Royal copped it and about 300 were killed. As the bomb flies several hundred yards. I remember that very well and you can still hear the.. if you can get hold of the track, you can still hear that bomber going over.

Tape 2, Side 3

Int - Ken, I think it would be interesting to hear about some of the sort of, your ideas on the later period at Crown, when say John Taylor took over. John Taylor, Donald Taylor and Ralph May and Grierson, indeed, when Grierson was there. How did things work out with you as far as the Sound Department were concerned? Because by then we were well-established at Beaconsfield, weren't we.

KC - We had so many, we called them Producers in Charge, I think they were more sort of executive people. We had so many in those days, Alex Shaw, we had Grierson as sort of ...

Int - Yes, Alex Shaw left before we went to Beaconsfield, didn't he?

KC - I don't think so because I seem to remember coming over from Pinewood to Beaconsfield with Alex Shaw and Dusty Buck, as I said, to decide which was to be our pub because there were so many pubs, we had to decide and we went to about nine different pubs and by the time we came to the last one, I don't think we really knew where we were. But we eventually settled on the Saracen's Head as deemed to be our pub. But Alex Shaw was there and Dusty Buck.

Int - He was there at that point but when we actually moved in at the beginning of 1947, John Taylor was sort of taking over.
KC - Was John taking over? Oh, well, John took over and then Donald, I think, and then ... no, Grierson, he was the sort of

almighty figure up there, you know, like God. But I don't know who came after Donald.

Int - Ralph May, but as a General Manager, he was.

KC - Yes. I think they realised that Crown was on its last legs and it was spending too much. It was making too few films too badly.

Int - Nevertheless, there were some quite distinguished films being made because we had Phil Leacock working with us and he did 'Out of True', the mental health film, and 'Life in her Hands' about the hospitals ...

KC - But they were costing too much.

Int - ... like the films that I worked on, you know, the West Indies films with Graham Wallace and Reg Hughes.

KC - Yes. But they were costing too much and they'd become uneconomic from the Government point of view. I remember we realised that Crown was on its dying day.

Int - But although we were just sort of possibly not so busy as we were in the early days and the films were expensive but the Sound Department was doing very well because you took on outside work, didn't you?

KC - Exactly. That's what made the formation of Anvil possible but in the latter days of Crown, it was quite obvious that it

was bound to die and there was a change in government. The Labour government was defeated and the Tory government came in and Boyd Carpenter was Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

Int - And, of course, we were no longer attached to a Ministry, we were only attached to a Department.

KC - And it was announced that ultimately Crown was to be closed, which was a terrible disaster for us all, but I remember Stuart McAllister and I went up to the House of Commons when there was to be an adjournment debate on whether Crown was to carry on, or not. The adjournment debate lasted 30 minutes and it was about 2 o'clock in the morning and the motion was made by somebody or other and Boyd Carpenter spoke for 29 minutes, and that was the end of it and Crown was closed. And Mac and I were about the only two people in the Strangers' Gallery at two in the morning, and we walked out and we both wept in Parliament Square. I remember that very, very clearly but that was the end of Crown. And we were all fired, just like that. Some of them, who were sort of ex-post office employees got quite a substantial redundancy fee but a lot of us who were not, didn't. I don't know they worked it out, I shall never understand that, but at any rate, that was the end of Crown. But, the interesting thing was that.. well, I say this with all modesty, I was terribly reluctant to see this Sound Department going because we'd built it up into quite an efficient Sound Department and we were getting a lot of outside work, like Johnny's work and other things anyway. Work was coming in to us and we were really making quite a lot of money and also, the important thing, we were doing all the foreign versions for the

Central Office of Information. And foreign versions meant that practically every documentary had to be made in about 15 or 16 different languages, which meant translation, commentary, dubbing, a very big job. We had a Polish girl called Lucia Krakowska who joined the Sound Department as sort of factotum of foreign versions and when Crown was ultimately closed, Bob Fraser, who was Director General, came down to announce the end and everything, that was the end of Crown. And I went to Bob, oh, two or three days later up in the London office and said, 'All right, Crown's dead, but you've still got about seventy three foreign versions waiting to be finished, who's going to do them?' And he said, 'Well, what do you mean?' And I said, 'Well, we have the translations, we have the copies, we're half way through the material, we know exactly what to do. For heaven's sake, let us finish them.' He said, 'Well, how long will it take.' I said, 'Three months.' And he persuaded the Treasury to let us stay there for three months, nobody in Crown except the Sound Department and one or two projectionists - about five or six of us, that's all - he persuaded the Treasury to let us stay there for three months, which gave us a chance of putting our foot in the door. And while we were busy carrying on with these foreign versions, doing them very well for the Central Office of Information, Ralph May and myself saw if we could try and get a grant or some money just to carry on with because in those days, an overdraft was not permissable. But it so happened that Ralph knew Wilfrid Eadie, and Wilfrid Eadie knew Sir Charles Hambro, and Wilfrid Eadie, through Ralph, introduced him ... At any rate, one day, Ralph May and I had a meeting with Sir Charles Hambro in his bank in Pall Mall or wherever it was and we went up together and we asked for an

overdraft of £1,000. He told us, it's not allowed, you know. What security could we give him. I gave the Deeds of my house, Richard Warren gave the Deeds of his house - worth even in those days a good deal more than £1,000 - and we got an overdraft of £1,000. And we started. We had considerable trouble getting even a name, we tried all interesting names, like Phoenix and so on, things arising out of ash and so on, we tried, oh, I don't how many names. But eventually the director of companies, or whatever it's called, agreed to Anvil as a name.

Int - How did you arrive at Anvil?

KC - I think we'd tried everything else, we began with an A and worked backwards. It's a nice solid-sounding name. But any rate, we registered the company and we got the overdraft and Rich Warren, Ralph May, Ken Scrivener and myself, we were the first directors. Rich Warren wanted Ralph May and I wasn't going to be alone on the recording side so I brought in Kenneth Scrivener, so there were four of us. But we didn't take any money for months. We managed to employ Doug Smith as projectionist and I think Doug Hurring as operator. That's all we could afford - and Mary came in to make tea - and then we published that simple little brochure. And, well thank God for Edgar and Sinclair Road of Shell, and one or two other kind people brought us work. It must have been a bloody nuisance to come right out from London to Beaconsfield just to record a commentary but they did it, and it kept us and we charged £8 an hour I remember. But we managed to survive and then, as I told you before, thank God Independent Television started and wooph, it all started, we got the work. The first film that Anvil

produced was some extraordinary thing about the cotton industry, some terrible film, they again helped us a bit and then - oh, one thing after another happened and then 36 years later we were still there.

Int - So how long after setting up the company did you actually complete your first production?

KC - Oh, we made a production, this cotton thing, almost immediately and then, just for fun, I made a little film myself, with Dennis Matthews and Dennis Braine on the Beethoven Horn Sonata, which was just a shot in the corner, we shot it in one day and I've got a tape of it now, actually. But it was just for fun, you know. And Bill Williamson, Lambert Williamson, he paid half of it and I paid the other half - I don't suppose it cost more than about £800 to make the whole thing, and it had a moderate sort of success. And then unhappily Dennis Braine - he was undoubtedly the greatest horn play there ever has been - had the misfortune to kill himself and then wham, it started, the British Council took the film and we got several hundred pounds back from that. And now it's going out on cassette again.

Int - Of course, it'll be wonderful for television. But, I seem to remember, was it about that time I joined you for a short time and you made a film called 'The Bosun's Mate', which was a short story by W W Jacobs and was that your first venture into storytelling, as opposed to documentary?

KC - It was the first, yes - there ? ? for the W W Jacobs story. I think Richard actually did it, didn't he? Richard

directed it and.. it wasn't very good, it had Barbara Mullen and ...

Int - George Woodbridge, who played the old policeman and Edwin Richfield.

KC - Yes. It got a circuit booking after a fashion. And then we made a feature.

Int - But what prompted you to go in for storytelling as opposed to documentaries?

KC - We had no work. But we made a feature, which we shot, I mean Paul Rotha directed it, a terrible film.

Int - Yes, I remember that, it wasn't all that bad, it was rather good, I thought. 'No Resting Place', no, it was called 'Cat and Mouse', wasn't it.

KC - Terrible film, dreadful. We shot it in a studio run by Anglo-Scottish. It was a dreadful film, a terrible film, it died a death. But I think it got its money back because we had a guarantee from Anglo-Scottish to distribute it but that's about all.

Int 2 - That was at Bushey, was it?

KC - No ... Halliford, that's right.

Int 2 - I hadn't realised, one of the things - for clarification really - when Anvil Films was formed, was not just taking over the Sound Department that had been the Crown Film Unit Sound Department at Beaconsfield but was also creating a production to produce pictures.

KC - Well, put it this way, Bob, it was really the Sound Department because that was the only hope we had of making revenue but Rich Warren and I had been great friends for donkey's years for the whole of Crown, and I was desperately sorry to see that Crown was closing and he was desperately sorry to see Crown closing and we simply met together in my office and said, 'Well, let's try and do something about it.' And it was simply that. And he brought in Ralph May because Ralph knew Wilfrid Eadie and that's where money might have come from and I wasn't going to be outnumbered two to one, so I brought in Ken Scrivener.

Int 2 - Just again for clarification and for people like myself who don't really know - Rich Warren worked as a director for Crown, film director for Crown ...

Int - Yes, he was, and a producer.

Int 2 - Ralph May - had he worked at Crown?

KC - He was General Manager of Crown in its latter days, yes.

Int 2 - And, the Eadie you mentioned, was that the Eadie who was the formulator of the Eadie ?funds?

KC - Yes, Wilfrid Eadie. I never met him but he was a sort of intermediary with Sir Charles Hambro. Ralph knew Eadie, Eadie knew Hambro and in those days an overdraft was banned, you weren't allowed it. But we fiddled it, through Eadie.

Int 2 - And Ken Scrivener had been working with you at Crown?

KC - He'd been working with me since 1940, I think.

Int 2 - But he was working with Crown.

KC - Yes. He joined me at Pinewood but whenever GPO moved to Pinewood, 1940, '41, I can't remember, something like that. He joined me then as a trainee. I remember he called me 'sir'. That was a long time ago, he's retired now, of course.

Int 2 - His son now works ...

KC - His son ... and doing extremely well, I hear great stories about him. Oh, Ken's retired now, but Rupert is doing very well, I believe, too, which is awfully nice to know that the continuity's still there. I'm very sorry that one of Rich's sons didn't join us, you know. Not interested in films, I suppose, and that's that. It's a pity because continuity's a nice thing.

Int 2 - We understand that your own son is a surgeon, so he didn't go into ... a stepson.

KC - But I didn't meet him ... You see I married Bessie 13 years ago, so I didn't meet John until he was 14, I suppose.

Int 2 - Too late to establish a film ?lead.

KC - Oh, he's not interested in that anyway.

Int - Going back now, having established Anvil, then you got into production and, of course, then you started doing a lot of films for COI, didn't you? Some of the work that Crown would have made, presumably, if they ... yes, production, we're talking about production now.

KC - Quite a few, not a great many. I don't think COI were over co-operative, frankly. They never were, they never have been and they never will be. It's an organisation I never liked. I liked the Ministry for Information fine, but COI, after Bob Fraser left ... went sour on us. We did their foreign versions because we did them cheaper than anybody else but that's the only reason. They weren't over co-operative.

Int - But anyway, at least you had that area of activity, the production side, which was very important obviously to your ... but you were presumably rather cramped for premises in a way, weren't you? Just the Sound Department for a whole company.

KC - Well, we built a little.. built a wee hoose, six offices, a sort of pre-fabricated thing just outside there but it made some space but ... it was cramped, of course it was cramped but.. Ralph and I had to share an office and so on but.. It was very

good fun in those days and when Grierson was of course in charge of Group 3, and he was at Beaconsfield, he was a sort of landlord, the bossman. About half past eleven every morning Grierson would come stumping up to my office, open my little cupboard where there was a bottle of gin or Scotch and he'd drink most of it. He was a bastard that way, you know. But I remember, some months later before we left, he came up and said, 'You know, I've been drinking a lot of your drink recently, haven't I?' I said, 'Oh ...' He said, 'I've bought a bottle.' And he put a bottle of Scotch down on the desk and proceeded to drink the lot. (Laugh)

Int - Sounds like Grierson being true to form.

KC - Oh, he was a good character, John.

Int - I liked him very much. I thought he was terrific. I mean, I know he had his people who didn't really care for him but I thought he was very stimulating, wasn't he? He was a catalyst, I mean, he deliberately needled people in order to put them on their ~~mettle~~ metal and bring out the best in them.

KC - He was a great character and he did an enormous amount. Oh, yes, I liked John very much indeed. We fought like cats. Though I think if you do like people and you're working with them in a business like this, you do fight like cats. And if you don't fight like cats, you don't get on with them at all.

Int 2 - It's interesting to hear you say this because when you say, fight like cats, or fight with them, you mentioned about

with Harry ? Watt and Grierson and ~~Cavel Canti~~ Cavalcanti, but always being the best of friends - so what were the fights about?

KC - Nothing, nothing at all.

Int 2 - On technical grounds or ...

KC - Oh, possibly, you know. Probably over a mike shadow or something stupid like that. They were all trivial things and they were all forgotten in ten minutes. But I mean you had to have these fights occasionally.

Int - Well, there was a certain person who you mentioned just now, ~~Stuart~~ Stewart McAllister, he used to come in in the morning and say, 'Now, who can I have a row with today?'

KC - But you're wrong about ~~Stuart~~ Stewart McAllister, he never came in in the morning. He came in at night and worked all night and in the morning he was so exhausted, he had to go home and sleep, so he came in again at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon and worked again all night. He was a nightmare to work with, Mac, but a very loveable, adorable character. Mike and I used to meet almost every Sunday during the War, about 2 o'clock in the afternoon or half past one, so we used to have a pint of beer and we used to go and find a movie somewhere. We went to some curious place, it was a little cinema called the Tolver~~ver~~ in ...

Int 2 - Yes, at the back off ? Road. Hampstead

KC - Yes, where we saw crummy old things and so on. He's dead now, years ago. But Mac and I, we were very great friends and, as I say, we fought like ~~?manx.~~ macs

Int - And of course he and Humphrey used to fight each other, although they had a fantastic collaboration, wasn't it?

KC - Oh, all the time. Mac with a pencil stuck in his mouth and a stupid old hat on his head.

Int 2 - What I'm interested in, as being an sound operator as well, is that your relationship with people we're talking of as directors, film directors, and knowing my own relationship with directors for trying to get the best possible sound recordings, often with difficulty because of co-operation with other departments and especially with the things which the director could sort out if he were really..

KC - Well, I think it happens with any sound ~~editor~~ engineer, if he's worth his salt. You must have a row occasionally, otherwise you won't get anything worth while.

Int 2 - It is sad then why people come up to, and expect that the sound person is the person who regularly takes ugly pills.

KC - Well, I don't know. I don't think my life was much different from any other sound ~~editor~~ engineer. I mean we fought and we made friends over a drink at night afterwards, and as long as the end result was acceptable, that's all that really mattered. And.. oh, in dubbing sessions, you argued like hell with people.

But that's what film's all about, I think. That's what film-making is all about.

Int - Film-making - it's ideas, it's different people's ideas all coming together.

KC - I'll tell you an amusing little story - after the War I went over to Hollywood for a while, I was going to spend ten days with Benny Herrmann, who was a very old friend of mine, a wonderful composer. And when I was staying in his house, he was writing the music for 'Psycho', which is perhaps the best score I think has ever been written for a motion picture, in my opinion. Any rate, he went into this little office and was scoring away like mad and after three or four days, recording started. And he asked me to come down to him and I went down to Columbia with him and we recorded the piece with an orchestra of 90 - all strings. No wind, no brass, nothing but strings. It was a most fantastic score, all the first fiddles divided into three, triple; and the second; and the violas and the 'cellos and the basses, all divided into three. It was the most fantastic score, it was a wonderful sound. Anyway, he was recording for three days, I think. And on the end of the third day, he drove me home, or back to his house, and Hitch was in the car with us and Hitch and Benny were in the front. Now, there was a sequence in 'Psycho' with windscreen wipers, a very important sequence, and Benny had written a score for that, synchronising the wipers - he'd taken enormous trouble over that. And Hitch told Benny, 'I don't want the music over, I just want the noise of the wipers.' And there was a row developed between these two, a hell of a row. Hitch won - it

was his film and there was no music over the thing. But Benny never wrote another score for Hitch. They quarrelled and that was the end of it. Which was quite remarkable because, I mean, let's face it, Hitch was a wonderful director and Benny was the most magnificent composer.

Int - So, the break-up was when you were in the car with them that night, presumably. How extraordinary.

KC - And they never worked together again. But I worked with Benny before that on a remake of 'The Man Who Knew Too Much'. Well, we recorded.. it was rather funny, actually - we had booked the orchestra and a choir and the soloists and we were going to record.. we couldn't record in the Albert Hall, for obvious reasons.. we recorded in the Festival Hall, just after it had been opened. And, I don't think, you know, nobody had ever recorded in that bloody place before, and I remember ringing the BBC and asking if they could give me some advice on how to do it. They said, 'We can't help you with that bloody place.' Any rate, we had the Festival Hall and the orchestra & choir booked for two days to record this one piece of music, the big orchestral sequence. And everybody assembled and I stuck a mike in what seemed to be the reasonable place, it was a single, not stereo or anything, so.. and we recorded this piece of music and Benny came back and it was on magnetic, we heard it back and Benny seemed quite happy. But any rate, we can't let it go like that. And then Hitch arrived. And I was told that if Hitch put his hands in front of him like that, he was happy; if he put them behind his back, he wasn't happy - I didn't know it at the time. Anyway, we recorded it again and I think the second time

we put all the first strings over to the right and the second strings.. we changed the thing round. It sounded exactly the same. (Laugh) And we came back, played it back, and Hitch heard it back and he did this, and I thought, 'Oh, Christ, thank God for that.' And after about an hour, we'd finished, and there was nothing more to do and we'd finished and we'd got the track, we'd played it back, it was OK. So we sent the orchestra home and the choir home and the soloists home and that was it. But the following three weeks we recorded in the Albert Hall - doing the playback stuff - and that was quite difficult. I mean, I was only looking after the playback thing and they told me to provide speakers which would provide playback for the Albert Hall. They didn't exist in those days. I mean, imagine what you need to fill that place. All I had was a couple of sort of hundred-watt HH amplifiers, which had a sort of squeaking noise in the back. Any rate, the whole recording went all right, the playback went out and went on for week after week and so on. And I remember very clearly one instance when, it was just after the lunch break, the cameraman, Bob ~~Books~~ Burks, went up to the Production Manager, whose name I can't remember, and said, 'Is Hitch back from lunch yet?' He said, 'No, not yet.' 'Ah, shit.' And all round this whole of this place in the Albert Hall, all the technicians, the electricians, were all saying, 'Oh, shit,' to each other - that was the sort of standard American expression, as you very well know - but this curious sibilant noise going all round - shwshwshw, saying to each other. But I remember anyway Bob ~~Books~~ Burks went up to the Production Manager and said, 'Is Hitch back from lunch yet,' he said, 'Ah, shit.' 'Oh, here he comes now.' 'Ah, shit.' (Laugh)

Int 2 - This was - you did say this was the remake of 'The Man Who Knew Too Much'?

KC - With Jimmie Stewart and Doris Day.

Int 2 - ... it was obvious when you mentioned magnetic. The other interesting thing, of course, when you said about swapping sides and it didn't sound any different because it was being recorded mono too.

KC - Yes, but we just changed the strings over from one side to the other. It didn't make a scrap of difference.

Int - Well, we've finished talking about 'The Man Who Knew Too Much' now. But Bernard Herrmann, you said that he used to come here occasionally and you entertained him and Liz Lutyens to lunch. That must have been quite an interesting meeting up.

KC - He came two or three times and he came with Liz. It was quite an interesting.. In fact I had Benny and Liz and my brother, James, here and really it was quite interesting conversation. (Laugh) (Very powerful.) Pretty powerful, yes.

Int - Ken, it would be interesting to hear about the later stages of Anvil at Beaconsfield and then the transition to Denham. But before that, there was just a point that Bob raised and that I hadn't thought of, that's a good idea - what about your OBE and the citation for that? What is your OBE for, to put it absolutely straight?

KC - Well, to put it the right way, I think it's that somebody had to have it. Somebody GOT THE CAMLE ? ? and I got it.

Int 2 - Don't be so modest, Ken.

Int - No, seriously.

KC - Ooh.. the citation is 'To services to the Film Industry', which ~~doesn't~~ means anything. I swept out the loos at the right time.

Int - It wasn't any particular moment? No. It was a recognition of Crown, too, wasn't it?

KC - Well, it was very kind. I appreciate it very much.

Int - What year was that?

KC - '51, I think. Before we left Pinewood. Well, I tell you what, I got it from the King, so the Coronation was '52 of the Queen, so it was before that, 1951, yes.

Int - So it was in recognition of your work during the war period.

KC - Bob, I don't know. I mean, one doesn't know these things and, well, I don't go so stupid as to say it was a mistake but there are so many people who did far more than I did but I was the one who was picked out with a pin. And I value it very

much, I still have the citation upstairs, signed by Queen Mary, of all people. That's going back a bit. But I know it was the King, it was the last Investiture he gave.

Int 2 - That was at Buckingham Palace, too?

KC - Yes. But.. oh, it was very nice to get it.

Int 2 - Have you had any other awards for your work?

KC - No. I'm honorary member of the Film Institute, life member; and I'm an honorary member of the Film Academy; and I'm an honorary member of the SMPTE. I don't have to pay many subscriptions now, put it that way - and BKS, I'm a Fellow of BKS. I get free cinemas when I want to go, which isn't very often. It's very nice - I mean, one mustn't joke about it, it's very nice to get these things.

Int 2 - Well, I would say in your case they're all well deserved, anyhow, with the contribution made over a working life, dedicated to sound recording for motion pictures.

KC - Bob, when I really think what people are doing now, the fantastic work you see on BBC and ITV, there are some fantastic recording services now. By God, I'd have loved to have had the facilities they have. But give them a couple of old ribbon mikes and an optical channel and let's see what they can do. I'm talking, you see, 40 years ago, it's a different thing. It's a different world. And, I mean I admire the work they do now fantastically. I see some things, the balance they get on -

that the BBC get in the Albert Hall, the most remarkable balances, I think. How lovely it would be to be able to do that - but 40 years ago, it wasn't so easy.

Int - But in spite of all the new technology of sound recording and ... what do you think, on the whole, of the standard of dialogue intelligibility in modern cinema because this always seems to me to be rather..

KC - I think it's gone down dramatically. I think it's gone down dramatically for two reasons and I think that the principal reason, in my silly opinion, is that artists do not articulate, do not speak properly, and directors do not insist upon articulating and speaking properly. And, secondly, I think that the sound engineers on the floor should <u>insist</u> that there should be a better intelligibility, better articulation and so on. I think to let things go, as they are undoubtedly doing now, is wrong. I mean, I made a bloody nuisance of myself frequently by saying, 'Look, I'm awfully sorry,' I even said it to Laurence Olivier, I have done, 'I think that a little more emphasis on that word.' I may be impertinent but I think, after all, if somebody's going to pay money to see a film in the cinema, then they have a right to know what is being said. And this Method method, or whatever you call it, of mumbling in your beard, is wrong. I know I'm getting deaf, I'm getting very deaf and I've got a hearing aid and so on, but I still go to movies and I can't hear what's being said. I went to see a thing with Bessie a couple of weeks ago, which everybody raves about, called 'A Fish Called Wanda'. Well, I'm glad to say I could not hear the dialogue. I couldn't hear the dialogue because I gather it's

not very savoury and I walked out, I got into the car and listened to a Mozart piano concerto, which I could hear, and I enjoyed. But to me, to sit in a movie and not hear the dialogue. I saw you a week ago, we went to the Film Academy and saw 'Babette's Feast'. Now as it fortunately happened, the dialogue's Danish with English sub-titles, so the question.. But, I was astonished at the projection there, how good it is compared with, even a good local cinema.

Int - Good point, that, yes.

KC - I mean, the picture projection, the sound projection, the comfort, the air-conditioning is out of this world. **(A BAFTA theatre.)** Absolutely superb. And I do congratulate BAFTA - as indeed they should, they should make it superb there - but it is superb.

Int - The showcase theatre, isn't it, of the country really, I suppose.

KC - But this was Danish dialogue, so the question of sound didn't matter. But it was a bloody good film.

Int 2 - If I may make an observation there, that while the introduction of magnetic recording into the film industry is a milestone in quality, it's also, in my personal opinion, and I'm sure that from what you said you would probably agree, (a retrograde..) **is a start of where deterioration of dialogue quality began.**

KC - I couldn't agree with you more, Bob.

Int 2 - Because the magic magnetic, (anything goes..) you didn't have to take quite the same, the care that you had to take with optical recording in the whole chain, right from microphone, right through to finished print. And also it was the start of where a sound engineer began to be (became careless..) a button pusher instead of being.. well, he only needed to be a button pusher instead of being an engineer and a creative engineer at that, too.

KC - Bob, I couldn't agree with you more. I think it's a pity to say that magnetic recording is the milestone because I don't think it's ~~there~~ eir fault but it's the convenience of it has made it.. I mean it's so easy. And first of all ?foley and ~~?b~~ post-synching is so easy now that, why bother to get a good track. Well, we fought to get good tracks in those days. We didn't always succeed. I mean, 'Target for Tonight', we did our damnedest at Mildenhall, with planes running overhead, to try and get a decent track and sometimes we didn't succeed but we tried, we tried like hell. They don't try now, there's no point in trying. Loop ~~develop~~ the bloody thing and be done with it. And that's not right.

Int 2 - No. I'm happy to say that most of the feature pictures that I've done have been ones where the producer has made a requirement for wanting the maximum amount of original dialogue and original tracks because of economics. And a number of the directors because they want that because of the original feel that the dialogue has, than the ? ~~or~~ post close sync.

KC - And they're right, too. Looping will never get the same effect but sometimes, of course, it's impossible, we know that. But I don't think they try now. I don't blame the sound ~~editors~~ Engineers, I'm sure it's not their fault. It's the whole hassle and fuss of making pictures quickly and cheaply and then.. I don't know what it is.

Int - In fact it's partly, I think you referred to it earlier, it's the new tradition of a projecting of the voice because in the old days when you went to the theatre, you could hear every word that people said. Now if you go to the theatre, unless you sit in the front six rows of the stalls, you can't hear a thing.

KC - I've only been to the theatre once in the last 15 years. I paid quite a lot of money to sit in the middle stalls and I couldn't hear a bloody word and I walked out. Life's too short.

Int 2 - It also comes as an advent of what people consider as being natural, I suppose. The BBC, for example, once, to be an announcer on the BBC, you had to speak a standard English pronunciation. Now, you can.. anybody can be a BBC commentator or announcer - accent or articulation doesn't really matter much. It's personality what they try to tell you the people have but..

KC - I think it's a downgrade.

Int 2 - It is. I'm not against the personality but I think the personality should have regard to the people who are listening.

KC - There is a compromise. For instance, you talk about BBC announcers. What about a man whom I admired enormously, Bob Dougal, lovely personality, lovely diction. Richard Baker, again superb, but not always. To me, Bob Dougal was one of the supreme, beautiful.. And, going back a long time, Frank Richardson, and going back a long time, but do you remember Joseph McLeod.

Int - Yes, Joseph McLeod and Alvar Liddell and Frank Phillips and Stuart Hibberd, but it was very formal, wasn't it. It was a different convention in those days.

KC - Oh, dinner jacket and the lot. But what's wrong with that?

Int 2 - A lot of those names you've just mentioned, of course, did commentaries for documentaries during that period that you were connected with.

Int - Frank Phillips we used quite a lot.

KC - Frank Phillips, I picked him up at Park Royal almost every Monday. He was doing commentary and I always picked him up at Park Royal and took him out to Pinewood, did a commentary and brought him back again. But I'm trying to think of this lovely man who's dead, who came to us so often ... oh, it doesn't matter, I can't remember now. Of course, Leo ?Gen again came out almost every week and I always picked him up at Park Royal, he got a tube to Park Royal.

Int - And there were people like.. the newsreel commentators, E V H Emmett and Bob Danvers-Walker and John Snagg and Leslie Mitchell, and they were all, you know, absolutely as you described, very articulate and very good diction. Whereas now, it's an entirely different tradition, it's a different ballgame. But I suppose this is really what we're talking about, it's a different requirement and therefore ...

KC - I don't think THE BBC newsreaders are bad. They're pretty good n the whole but ...

Int 2 - It's the reporter type more than the actual anchor person.

KC - You know, we're talking going back over 20 years and so on, my brother, his diction was perfect and I see they're repeating a series of his, starting tonight. And he had no education whatsoever. He left school at 14 and became a news boy, an office boy in Manchester. He'd no education whatsoever, absolutely none and yet his English, his books are beautifully written.

Int 2 - Well, yes, there was a personality with the voice, too, with the person and the voice there was always a listenable quality to whatever he was saying.

KC - But he taught himself. But I mean you wouldn't find him splitting infinitives and mucking.. his English is very good. Anyway, we're being irrelevant, aren't we?

Int - Well, no, it's a nice sort of spin-off in discussion.

Int 2 - We've now got down quite nicely that you have a brother who was well-known, as well as yourself.

Int - I remember the first time I met your brother, it was in the cutting room at Beaconsfield and we wanted a commentary writer for the film on foster parents. And you said, 'Well, my brother might be able to do that for you.' And I have an idea - am I right in saying that was perhaps the first film he actually wrote for? A film called 'A Family Affair', directed by Margaret Thompson.

KC - I remember the film but I think the first film he wrote the commentary for was 'Eldorado'.

Int - Yes.. I would say that came.. about the same time, wasn't it.

KC - I remember the first time that copy was run in the Central Office of Information's theatre in Norgeby House and the man who was in charge of distribution was a man called Charlie Dand, and Charlie Dand said, 'I'm not going to have that rubbish written by that hack journalist.' And I shall never forget that. Jim wasn't there, thank God, or else there might have been an explosion. Hack journalist is going a little bit.. unfair because he was a pretty good journalist. They gave him a CBE for it, anyway ...

Int - He was top in that area, wasn't he.

KC - ... which was one up on me. (Laugh)

Int - Well, do you think we should continue now with the chronology, as it were? When did Anvil leave Beaconsfield and move across to Denham, and why did you have to leave Beaconsfield?

KC - There was no question of why, John. We moved it because Beaconsfield had been closed. It was owned by King's College, Cambridge, and the lease ran out or they sold it or something or other, and that was the end of it, we had to get out, there was no argument about it. But it was fortunate that.. But shortly before that, they'd had a music mixer at Denham, Ted Drake, and for some reason something went wrong there, at any rate, and the Studio Manager at Denham, big fat chap, he asked me if I'd go over, and the first session I did was with Charlie Chaplin (**Sophia Loren.**), this awful film he made called 'Countess from Hong Kong'. Anyway, Charlie wanted a trial session with a smallish orchestra of about 40 to see whether the studio was any good or whether the orchestra was any good, whether the music was any good and whether I was any good. And I was asked by this chap to go over, and it was Geoff ~~Labraham~~ LABRAM who held my hand and looked after things and we recorded this stuff. I remember, the day before hand, I was summoned to go over there by the producer of the film, again whose name escapes me. He said, 'Now remember very carefully, if you see Mr Chaplin, you address him as Mr Chaplin or sir.
But certainly not Charles - and on no account, Charlie.' I said, 'Yes, sir.' Anyway, we assembled the orchestra, we did

this thing and everyone was working quite well, except - I don't know if you remember in the music stage at Denham, they had three Westrex speakers for the triple track, there, there and there, on the floor. And during this thing, Chaplin would walk from there, there and the top went, the top went, the top went, the top went, and it was becoming furious. I was doing my best and I eventually said, 'Mr Chaplin, perhaps you would just stand here, you hear a better result of things.' And he said, 'All right.' And eventually after half way, I lost my rag and said, 'Charles ...

Tape 2, Side 4

Int 2 - So you said, 'Charles, sit down.'

KC - I said, 'For Christ sake, Charles, sit down and be quiet.' And there was an awful hush and the producer was quiet, and Gordon Hales was the editor, he was horrified - because he was a timid little man at the best of times - and he was horrified and there was an awful hush. Eventually, Charles broke out in a laugh and said, 'Ken, you're absolutely right.' And from then on it was wonderful and I did lots of pictures with him after that, in fact he asked me to spend a weekend in his house in Vevey, which I did and had the happiest of times. And I still have six or seven lovely Christmas cards, all signed by Charlie and Oona and I've got a lovely signed photograph upstairs, 'To Ken, with best wishes from Charlie', which I treasure. And we were great friends after that. But it was a very tense moment, I can tell you, because, you know, he was a very important man. I remember when we did the end title music of this film, this da

da da, da da da, dumm dum, dum da da, da da da ... it went on and on, and we were shooting to the picture and the picture came to an end and the orchestra, ya bub bub, and it went on for about three minutes longer than the end of the picture. And Gordon Hales said, 'You know, Mr Chaplin, it's very nice but it's a little bit long.' 'Never mind, never mind. We'll extent the picture.' (Laugh) This dreary old waltz went on - oh, he was quite a character. I had a lovely weekend with them.

Int - Were all the other members of the family there?

KC - Oona was there and Geraldine was there.

Int - That was in Switzerland?

KC - In Vevey, yes. Oh, yes, it was a great time. The first day I was there was a Saturday, I think. We had dinner in Charlie's house with the whole great ? family there - dreadful dinner I remember. Anyway, afterwards we had to go.. there was a circus going on in the town of Vevey and apparently Charlie had promised to go down there. Any rate, we went down in several great big enormous Rolls Royces and went down into the circus and there in the sort of front row of things there were about ten seats reserved, and Charlie sat in the middle and he told me to come and sit beside him, which I did, and I was very happy to. But half way through the thing, a big searchlight came on, onto Charlie and the ring master was saying how honoured they were to have Mr Chaplin there and so on. And Charlie stood up, got me up with him, and I stood up with him.. and the newspapers the following day, who's this mysterious stranger. (Laugh)

But, he was good fun. I liked him. I think the film was terrible but that's not the point, is it.

Int 2 - No. Sad that it was because everybody expected too much, I suppose.

KC - Yes, but, after all, when I got to know him in a little while after that, I really thought that, when you think of it, he's a British citizen and I don't think that any person has given more pleasure to more people in this world than Chaplin, and he's never been honoured at all. And I was talking to my brother, Jim, about this and he agreed about this. And he did a piece in the News Chronicle about it and the following Honours List, Charles was knighted. And I went along to the Film Academy when the Queen opened the new building ...

Int - Yes, I was there - nice occasion.

KC - ... and Charlie was wheeled in a chair, and Charlie was very old then and I had a word afterwards with Oona and said, 'Can I say hello?' She said, 'He won't know you now.' He was comatose then and he died a week or two later. And then they had the awful temerity to dig him up, which was dreadful.

Int 2 - And, he's still giving pleasure to people, too.

KC - Oh, indeed. I see that Dickie Attenborough's making a biography film of him.

Int 2 - I think Thames Television have already done something about that.

Int - They're going to make it next year, aren't they? End of next year they hope to start. This is going to be a Dickie Attenborough feature, with somebody playing Charles.

KC - Oh, yes. A major biography. But Gerry ~~Apsey~~ Epstein, that's the producer I tried to remember his name, Gerry ~~Apsey~~ Epstein has bought a book out that's coming out on December 10th, called 'Charlie', which I shall look forward to reading because.. I've still kept these Christmas cards, I've got six of them and they were all signed by Charlie and Oona and you keep these, it's important. Because I still think he was a very great man.

Int - Kevin Brownlow did a good job, didn't he, compiling all the sort of out-takes of his work. Sort of rehearsal takes and so on, and out-takes - very cleverly put together, about three episodes. Anyway ...

Int 2 - So, coming back to the Anvil story again, that recording of the music for Chaplin's 'Countess of Hong Kong', that was your first recording job in the actual Denham environment then.

KC - I think so, I'm not quite sure. There might have been some smaller ones before that. That was the first major one.

Int 2 - And so this was before Anvil had gone to Denham? That was when Denham was still in the hands of Pinewood.

Int - Well, Muir Matheson, of course, he had that stage, didn't he?

KC - No, Muir didn't do that, Bill Williamson conducted that.

Int - No, I was thinking that Muir Matheson used that music stage which you eventually took over as Anvil and ... wasn't it exclusively his for many years before you left Beaconsfield?

KC - Oh, yes, it was used for many years before we came over. You see, it was a curious coincidence, Beaconsfield's lease ran out, or they sold it or whatever happened, threw us out, at a time when Pinewood or Rank - D & P Studios - wanted to get rid of the stage at Denham because it was a liability. I mean, they used it once every two months or something ridiculous. They had to keep Geoff ~~Labraham~~ LABRAM there and two or three assistants and Ted Drake, doing nothing, sitting on their bottoms for week after week after week and it was a dead loss to them. We needed somewhere, they wanted somewhere to take over, and it worked beautifully. We pulled down the old sound offices and so on, or most of them, and we built a dubbing theatre there and changed the offices and the cutting rooms and made it quite a presentable place. We made the sound stage look a little less like a cow barn, we built a new control room and spent a great deal of money on it - put a new 48-~~knee~~ WAY desk in there. And then we were very lucky in getting big pictures like 'Fiddler on the Roof' and 'Oh, What a Lovely War' and 'Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang' and quite big things in. We were very lucky getting them and they worked very well. And the dubbing theatre got quite a lot of work in too, so we managed to survive.

Int - In fact, if you hadn't moved to Denham you presumably wouldn't have been able to take on those production, would you, because there was absolutely no question of it..

KC - No, we couldn't possibly have done it. The most important one, of course, I suppose was 'Fiddler on the Roof' and I remember very clearly that Larry Duway, who was Production Manager/boss man with Pat Palmer on 'Fiddler', came over to me one day and booked almost a year for the studio - because it was a very, very big job, you know, a tremendous amount of work - he booked it, and we were really cock-a-hoop. And a few weeks later, before the thing started, he came over to me again and said, 'I'm very sorry but Pat Palmer has decided that we'll go to CTS instead,' which was.. there was nothing to do about it but it was a terrible loss to us. And then, it was largely Dick Ruth, who's the music editor on the film he's in now, but I don't know whether he did it or not but Larry Duway rang me one day and said, 'Are those days still free?' I said, 'Most of them, yes.' He said, 'Well book them again, we're coming to you.' I mean, Eric and I and everybody else wept ...

Int 2 - Eric Tomlinson had joined you by then.

KC - Yes, Eric I took on, I don't know when it was, but he was with us then. But it made a colossal difference to us because it wasn't a booking of a couple of days, it was booking about seven months and we had 189 sessions on the film. It was a colossal amount of work and Johnny Williams, of course, was an absolute perfectionist. Every single demi-semi-quaver had to be

right but we also had a tremendous amount of work with ?Maurice Jarre ~~Shah,~~ like 'Ryan's Daughter' and, I can't remember, there were so many big, big films with orchestras of a hundred plus. And of course we had the space. It was the biggest stage in the country, it was bigger than Abbey Road. Then after about three years we took over Abbey Road - you probably didn't know that. **(No.)** Well, when we were thrown out of Denham, when Xerox decided to sell the place and close it down, we had to go somewhere else so we made approaches to Abbey Road. Now, Abbey Road, as you know, is a beautiful place but they had no projection there, no perforated film facilities at all and they were anxious for somebody, so we did a deal with Abbey Road and we took over Number 1 in Abbey Road on a sort of partial deal, we put in a huge, enormous, expensive screen, we put in 35mm projectors, we put in perforated film recording and all the trimmings, and we did a great many big pictures there - 'Star Wars', lots of films there. But the snag with Abbey Road was that EMI would, in September, they'd booked the following August for a month with the London Symphony Orchestra to do a recording for Deutsche Grammophon or something, so if we wanted to record something four weeks ahead, Sorry, it's booked, and we couldn't get in. And then, of course, their session was cancelled for some reason or other so the place was empty all the time, although we were screaming to get in. It became absolutely unworkable, so eventually we had to abandon the idea.

Int - How long ago was that, Ken?

KC - Not so very long. Five.. ('78 was 'Star Wars') 'Star Wars' I'm wrong, 'Star Wars' we did at Denham but 'Indiana Jones' and things like that we did at Abbey Road.

Int - So you left Denham about sort of that time ... Left Denham Studios as opposed to Denham Laboratories about 1978, did you? And so then you had your second transition from Denham Studios to the old Movietone News premises.

KC - Yes. And then, of course, you see when Denham was knocked down, then we moved up to Denham Labs and built a couple of theatres there.

Int 2 - And that still operates today?

KC - Oh, yes.

Int - But as far as a music stage, presumably now you've given up EMI you no longer do music recording, Anvil.

KC - No music at all. We can't. Nowhere to do it. In fact, nobody's recording music in this country because the MU have killed it. Two of my music mixers, Eric and Alan ?Snelling practically commute to Budapest, probably every week, every 10 days. Or, Eric goes to Vancouver quite a lot but they don't record in this country at all. The MU's killed it, they can't afford it.

Int - What I was going to ask you, did you continue.. when you moved to Denham from Beaconsfield, did the production side carry

on more or less the same? - I mean Rich Warren - you were still busily in production? And presumably that still carries on. Are Andrew and..

KC - Yes, I don't think it's very active now. We've got about 12 cutting rooms there, I think, and a nice dubbing theatre and a nice what's called a foley theatre. ...KC I only worked with Ben (Britten) once.

Int - He didn't do many films, did he really?

KC - Well, he did going right back to 'Night Mail' ...

Int - 'Coal Face'.

KC - ... that was derubididum, derubididum, that's all it was. The only film he seriously did was 'Instruments of the Orchestra'.

Int - Have you got that print, incidentally? Have you got that 16mm print? You used to have a super 16mm print of 'Instruments of the Orchestra', have you still got it?

KC - Yes, I think I have.

Int - Because I'm wondering whether I can borrow it.

KC - I think I have, John. I have it up in the loft, you see.

Int - I'm supposed to be showing some films in about three weeks' time.

KC - I'm pretty sure I have. Pretty crummy old print if it is but I'm pretty sure I've got that.

Int - It used to be very sort of immaculate, you know. It was the only good print left.

KC - I'll have a look, it must be up in the loft somewhere. I've got two or three 16 prints but not many. It's a bloody good picture.

Int - Do you know it? It's 'The Young Person's Guide', you know, the original film. Lovely picture.

KC - I thought I first worked with Muir (Mathieson) during the war sometime but I can't remember the first thing I did with him. I remember going into Denham Number 1 and watching him conducting, I think it was 'Henry V', with Willy Walton or something like that. But I can't remember the first session I did with Muir but we certainly worked together early during the War and became very, very close indeed. Very close. We made this music series, you know.

Int - Yes, because he was part of your.. Anvil, when Anvil set up...

KC - He was very closely associated. In fact, I just only last week got a complete set of video tapes of the 'We Make Music' series.

Int - How many films were there in that series?

KC - Twenty-four.

Int - Muir and Ken did between them 24.

KC - Twenty-four, and they were all about 25 minutes each. It's a lot of them. I've got video tapes of the lot now.

Int 2 - They were produced by Anvil Films?

KC - No, they were produced by me and directed by Muir. Anvil were closely associated with them.

Int - They provided the facilities, as it were, yes. And how were they used? They were presumably educational, were they?

KC - Purely educational - they were absolutely, factually educational and no nonsense. Each single film had exactly the same message. It was the history of the instrument; how it was played; and then virtuoso performance. And we chose the instrumentalists with very great care, who was a good speaker, who was a fine performer and he knew his history. And we chose perhaps the finest player, I mean, Paul Tortelier, ~~20.~~ Alfred Flaszynski, (trombone) ~~F.....~~, Jack Brymer and so on, and Simon Preston. And we ran through the whole gamut. We missed out the viola because it

clashed between the violin and the 'cello and we missed out the double bass because you couldn't say anything about a double bass you hadn't already said about the 'cello. But we did flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, percussion, trumpet, trombone, organ, bagpipe, the orchestra, with the National Youth Orchestra, guitar, and so on. The whole 24 of them.

Int - Were they recorded on mag, I mean, was this sort of after..

KC - They were recorded on mag. Alas, the mags have all gone, disappeared, and the original negs have all gone, disappeared. I've had to make these things from dupes, which is a tragedy. Unfortunately, you see, in those days Technicolour was shot on.. if you shot on Monopack 16, then they transferred it to a three-strip.

Int - Right, separation negatives.

KC - They can't do that now. They can't make prints.. whatever's happened has gone so we've had to make them from dupes, which I'm not very happy with, but still.

Int 2 - They sold the ?in. [imbibition] .... printer and processors to China.

KC - Is that what happened? I know they can't do it, anyway. I've still got prints which are, you know, acceptable, that please me. They please me to see them again. As I say, it's funny we couldn't find a single set of the copies. We hadn't got a set at all but we found that the University of North Wales

in Bangor had a complete set and we rang them and they arranged with some funny little company in Lancaster or Liverpool or somewhere or other to make prints. They did the whole lot for me for 153 quid (pounds), which was very good going, I think. It's all on four cassettes, but I've got the whole lot now - a bit tatty, bit full of jumps and jerks and so on, but they please me.

Int - You and Muir Matheson between you must have worked on, my goodness, hundreds of films, I would think, right from the early Crown days. Because when I joined Crown in 1943, Muir was.. I remember him being described as the Musical Director for Crown.

KC - And then John Hollingsworth took over.

Int - And then when I joined British Transport Films, Muir was still doing scores there. And obviously all the other films in documentary, apart from the feature ones that you were working on, you must have been with him..

KC - Muir and I ... worked on hundreds of films, yes.

Int - He would have had a very interesting story to tell for the archive, wouldn't he? To my mind, Muir was the only music man.. I mean, he was the maestro of film music because he was not only a brilliant musician but also a brilliant film-maker.

KC - Yes, but there was more to that than that. Muir had the enormous skill and intelligence to bring the great composers into films. It was Muir who brought VW (Vaughan Williams) into films on 'The Forty-ninth Parallel', it was Muir who brought Willie Walton

into films on 'Henry V', it was Muir who brought Arthur Bliss on 'Things to Come'. The great composers would never have thought of doing film music if it hadn't been for Muir. And they were great people, Arthur Bliss and Willie Walton, Arnold Bax and Vaughan Williams and so on. That was the important.. the biggest thing that Muir ever did. I don't think Muir was a good conductor, he was a brilliant conductor of film music but he wasn't a good conductor and I think Muir made the mistake occasionally of going to the Albert Hall and the Festival Hall, where frankly he wasn't a good conductor. Benny Herrmann was an appalling conductor. I mean, I remember going to the Albert Hall once to hear Benny Herrmann conducting one of the big orchestras on the Fantastic Symphony of Berlioz, and he came out afterwards and said, 'I bet you've never heard a performance like that.' I said, 'You're quite right, I haven't.' He was dreadful but a brilliant composer. The trouble is, the two are not the same. Willie Walton's an appalling conductor. Vaughan Williams never attempted to conduct, wouldn't dream of it, but as a composer VW is out of this world, I think.

Int - But Muir had this wonderful ability of, if a film score wasn't working and you didn't have time to hear it in advance or there was no opportunity - you didn't have an orchestra, you might be lucky to have a piano version of it but he would mould it, fit it ...

KC - Take out the last 12 bars there, put in 14 bars - Oh, he was brilliant.

Int - He was a brilliant technician, wasn't he?

KC - Brilliant. And in his own way, so was John, John Hollingsworth followed him; ? ? ? John had a curious ? ... John sort of took over from Muir in a sort of way, John Hollingsworth was his principally assistant, but he was principally assistant of Malcolm Sargeant and there was one terrible year, some years ago, when the Proms started and Malcolm was taken ill and John had to take the whole burden of the Proms, the whole thing, until the last night, when Malcolm came and took over the last night. But that was the year when John was coming out here to this very room to have Christmas dinner with my aunt and myself and he never turned up. And I rang up and there was no reply at all and I saw the papers the following day and he'd been found dead in his flat.

Int - He had a bad asthmatic condition, didn't he? Emphysema or something he had, didn't he? It was very sad.

KC - But John and I used to ring each other up almost every morning about quarter past seven because we were fixing up the day's work or the following day's work or something else. I was very, very fond of John and I was devoted to Muir. And I was so fortunate in my life, and I hope this is on the record, that I have been friends with so many lovely people. I can't tell you. Right back from Charles Oakley, who's still alive, right up through Grierson and Basil, Alex Shaw.

Int - I seem to have heard of Charles Oakely over the years but you say he was originally the Glasgow Film Society.

KC - I spoke to him yesterday.

Int - How is he now, where does he..

KC - He's 86 and he's feeling fine but he's not able to travel round very much now. I'm hoping to get up to Glasgow to see him in the next few weeks. He was a lecturer of mine at Glasgow University in Industrial Psychology.

Int - I've heard you mention him over the years, from time to time.

KC - Charming fellow. He's known as Mr Glasgow. He's written several books about Glasgow.

Int - So, we certainly seem to have covered a long era.

KC - I feel stupidly sentimental about this but now I've reached the ripe old age of 73, how fortunate I am.

Int 2 - Yes. One can agree with you on that because of the talents that you've been in touch with through your career and..

KC - I'm probably a crummy old sound engineer now in old age, but I don't suppose any sound engineer, or ex-sound engineer living, has met and worked with all these people. Vaughan Williams I knew intimately and well. Do you remember Solomon, the pianist? Well, I once went to his flat for some reason and he played over the whole Brahms Handel Variations on the piano for me alone. That was something you never forget, you know. Isaac Stern, whom I spoke to only a few weeks ago on the 'phone.

I've been so lucky meeting these people and working with them and I don't think anybody else has been as fortunate as I have in doing that.

Int 2 - No, I suppose it's partly because the.. we were saying the technological advances whereby people go into a studio, there's a mass of microphones standing there, it's become much more impersonal. Still in the music recording business there's a record producer who may have the same sort of rapport with the artists as you managed to have, but the technical side of it is just another service that's going on..

KC - It's a different thing altogether - oh, yes, it doesn't matter who's twiddling the knobs. I mean, I remember the sessions I've had with John Hollingsworth and Liz Lutyens and the fun we had. And Liz was a wonderful woman, a brilliant composer in her way, you know. But the fun we had and the rows. She'd come and say, 'How are you, you old bastard.' And I'd say, 'You stupid old bitch.' And there was a rapport between us which somehow worked out and we got a result. Liz once, I think her first score for films probably was 'Eldorado' and she wrote a tiny little section in the very unusual rhythm of 7/8, which appealed to me enormously and I liked it and I talked about it afterwards and she said, 'You like it?' I said, 'I love it.' And every single score she wrote afterwards which I recorded, she put a little bit of 7/8, just maybe two or three bars in it. Once we were recording a film for Hammer for Tony Hines and she put a little bit of 7/8 in and she put at the top, Dedicated to Ken Cameron. Tony Hines was furious, 'What do you mean by this? This is my film, I paid for it, you don't dare..' (Laugh) She

said, 'It's only a gag, Tony,' which it was, only a gag. But she was curious sort of rumpapa papatata, rumpatata papapa.

Int - She did that for a film that she did for us called 'Any Man's Kingdom', a film about Northumberland, which Tony Thomson directed and she did dada dadada dada da..

KC - Yes, it was a little personal gag between Liz and myself, and what's wrong with that?

Int - I didn't realise it became a sort of Hitchcock thing..

KC - Definitely, she always did that, even if it was only one bar, it was always sort of stuck in and we'd look at each other. I'd say, 'You old cow,' and she'd say, 'You old bastard.'

Int - She was a rather intimidating person to work with for film editors because she was always very sort of demanding on music lengths and so on and if you made any alterations to the picture before the session, she used to appear to get into a terrible state and tell us that she couldn't manage that sort of thing. But when the session took place, it was always.. well, generally speaking, it worked very well.

KC - She was a great character, she was a fine creature.

Int - She didn't work with Muir quite so much and she generally had Marcus (Dods) conducting.

KC - Marcus or John. Muir and Liz didn't get on. I think it's because Muir never gave her a feature. She always used to grumble, 'I always get these two-bit documentaries and they pay me four and sixpence. I want a feature, Muir won't give me a feature.' And he didn't, I don't know why. Probably she wasn't up to it, I don't know.

Int - I should think probably it was due to the fact.. I mean she was rather a difficult person to work with at times and if people didn't know her well and didn't understand her, then it could cause a bit of friction and he may have been being diplomatic in a sense to the film makers rather than, you know.

KC - I liked Liz, I liked her enormously.

Int - But I enjoyed working with her very much. I was involved in three or four films which she had composed ? for.

KC - She was good fun. But you can imagine what a session, a lunch with Benny Herrmann and Liz was like, it was quite something.

Int - In fact, the first film that I worked on with Liz, I was only the assistant in those days. Terry Trench was the editor and it was a film called 'Away From Germany' and it was about Displaced Persons just after the War, it was a compilation film mainly. And we recorded it for some reason in Watford Town Hall.

KC - Yes, we did a lot there.

Int - I remember we had a portable 35mm projector.

KC - That's the first town hall I used was Watford because with an orchestra that reached beyond 30 you couldn't get them into our place. That was a job, you know, in those days you had to take out the music stands, take out the chairs, take out a portable 35 projector, the small back projection screen and then take and old sound~~track~~ track and our little ~~T-way~~ TEAWAGON mixer. It was quite a business with a session starting at 9.30, we had to be there at 6.

Int - Well I suppose that's the only.. if you didn't record.. if you had a big orchestra.. at Pinewood we didn't have anywhere else, did we? I mean you recorded in Theatre 1, I suppose.

KC - Theatre 1 you could record with about 25, 30 but that was the maximum - occasionally squeeze in more but it was uncomfortable. In those days, you had sort of 25ish or you had 90. Not many people wanted 50 or so, you either had a full symphony orchestra or you had a scratch, small combination.

Int - Actually, I think you did sometimes record, have music sessions on the stage.

KC - No, I never did. The only time I ever recorded on the stage was when we recorded Trooping the Colour and we did it at Beaconsfield, the first version of Trooping the Colour and we

had the whole massed bands of the Brigade of Guards there. It was quite a business that was.

Int - Funny, one has these ideas and.. I seem to remember a recording session at Pinewood on one of the stages and I think you used the portable projector and it was a score by ~~Tim~~ Temple Abadie, do you remember Tim (sic) Abadie? (Very well.) **I can't remember what the film was.**

KC - You may be right. I know they recorded the music for the first version of 'Mikado' on Number 2 stage at Pinewood, that was just when Pinewood opened before the War.

Int 2 - That was Kenny Baker.

KC - But you can't have a good stage for dialogue recording for music, it doesn't work. And we found that Watford and Wembley and occasionally we went to Hammersmith Town Hall and one or two other places. Hammersmith wasn't bad but Watford and what's now Brent, was Wembley, were very good and lots of people used to use them.

Int 2 - I remember going, when I worked at Pathe on maintenance, going with Bill Bland to Watford Town Hall for some very small sessions with the rigmarole with all the gear.

KC - It's an awful sweat getting set up and everything. I had to record in Huddersfield Town Hall once with Malcolm doing the Hallelujah Chorus with the Huddersfield Choral Society and in that old truck. The ~~outward~~ output transformer on the recording

amplifier developed a fault. Now what the hell do you do on a Sunday night in Huddersfield when your transformer packs up? There was only one thing I could do, I took out the transformer from the monitoring amplifier - do you remember they were all on racks, for some odd reason there were about 14 connections for each one, I don't know why - and changed over one to the other. Meanwhile, Malcolm and the Choir and everything were waiting and Malcolm would come out every five minutes and ... quickly, quickly ... and I was doing my best, lining up. LYING ON THE FLAT OF MY BACK with a soldering iron. TRYING And eventually had to shoot the thing with the ~~outward~~ OUTPUT transformer, ? ? ? of the recording amplifier, with the monitoring amplifier going chhhk every few moments. It was a dreadful day, in Huddersfield in the pouring rain in the War, with all the Choir singing 'Hallelujah'.

Int - That was that film, was it 'Britain at Bay' or something?

KC - 'Christmas Under Fire'.

Int - 'Christmas Under Fire', that was King's College, Cambridge, as well, wasn't it?

KC - We did that as well in King's College. It was shot in King's College, Cambridge, during the War at the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols and Humphrey (Jennings) had arranged for all the flying aircraft, the fighters who were all round Cambridge, to stop flying over King's from three till five - stopped the War from three till five. But we hadn't finished at five and at 5 o'clock we all said, 'What's going on?' Cccweee, ccweee, and a little boy about a hundred yards away, Once in Royal David's

City, you know. -? ? the acoustics in that place and it wasn't a question of putting a lot of mikes up, I had one mike. It worked, God knows how it worked but it worked.

Int - And, I think it was 16 years later, you were recording in King's College again, do you remember, for 'The England of Elizabeth'. Do you remember we went and you recorded the choir, you set them just below the choir stalls there and recorded and then we shot the playback the same morning, in fact. We recorded at 9 o'clock or half past nine or something early and then shot everything to playback.

Int 2 - How did you shoot to playback then?

Int - That was tape, that was mag then because this was about 1957, '56.

KC - This was going back to modern times.

Int 2 - Still, even then, magnetic playback was a fairly complicated procedure.

KC - Yes, there was this great big c... caley. Horizontal thing.

Int - Marvellous sound that day, it was wonderful.

KC - Oh, they were fun though, they were great fun. So, I'm quite glad it's all over now.

Int - Well now what about Anvil, I mean the future of Anvil is very good, isn't it? They're going to continue on at.. have they got a long..

KC - At the moment the recording side are so busy they can't cope. They're working there.. last time I spoke to them about a week ago, they're working a double shift now. They're working an 8.30 till 5.30, and a 6.30 till 7.30, something like that.

Int - And how many of the original group from Crown days are left? None, I suppose, because Richard's retired, hasn't he.

KC - Doug Hurring is there.

Int - And Mary is there. Richard's retired, Ken Scrivener's retired. And Bob Keane.

KC - Bob Keane, he was a new boy.

Int - He was an editor originally, I believe.

KC - That's all - just Doug Hurring and Mary. And Mary had her sixtieth birthday about a few weeks ago and Doug will be retiring in a short time, he's about 62 now. But it's still working and it's still going on, they're still busy and they've just put in Dolby SR which has cost them £28,000. God knows what it does, I don't understand these things now. I know Dolby, I understand that, but Dolby SR is a mystery to me.

Int 2 - It's Dolby's answer to digital, I think.

KC - Yes, I think it is. But it seems to work.

Int 2 - I went to a demonstration earlier this year in the Warner Theatre and they played a sequence from 'Robocop' which is a terrible, not my sort of movie anyhow, but they played in SR and then they played it in just straight Dolby and I found the straight Dolby was far better. I mean the middle almost hurt your ears with Dolby and the SR. Anyhow, another selling point.

KC - I do remember, though, meeting Ray Dolby himself, long before he was well-known at all. He came along - we did some music session with Dolby.

Int 2 - In the music studio?

KC - Yes. Donkey's years before he was well-known. He's a name in the world now, a multi-millionaire.

Int - He's as much of a name as Natalie Calmus from Technicolour.

Int 2 - Recently I did a bit of a lecture for BKS the other weekend on a seminar they held for stereo sound with TV, which is something new coming in - I can't see the necessity for it but however - and I was doing some research on the history of stereo as far as.. mainly for the seminar, but I overlooked one that John Frame had developed in America, a two-track optical

system, which sounds to me that it might even have been better than the Dolby stereo system.

KC - You must go to these details now - look, you're beyond it and I'm certainly beyond it. Never mind, it's good fun looking back on it.

Int - I think we've covered everything actually. Obviously I know Ken will go on enthralling us with amusing and interesting stories but I think we have sort of covered the whole period of 1933 to 19 whatever it is...

END