

IMPORTANT

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of this transcript, however no transcript is an exact translation of the spoken word, and this document is intended to be a guide to the original recording, not replace it.

MARIT ASCHAN INTERVIEWED BY CATHY COURTNEY

F6743 Side A

This is the second microphone to see if I can make it record.

[BREAK IN RECORDING]

This is the new microphone on the first channel, turned up to top volume, and it looks like it's a total right-off.

[BREAK IN RECORDING]

I wondered why there was interference on the microphone and what it might be about, and what this dreadful flickering.....

[BREAK IN RECORDING]

Just testing the left-hand microphone, and the right one.

[BREAK IN RECORDING]

If I could just ask you so I can test the sound levels.

Of course. Yes yes you need to do that, don't you.

Just tell me your name and today's date and where we are.

Right. I know what today's date is. My name is Marit Victoria Aschan, born Guinness, and today's date I should think is the 4th of January, is it?

It's actually the 5th.

Oh is it? I've lost a day.

Do you know what the year is?

Yes, 1999.

[BREAK IN RECORDING]

And just to establish the groundwork, could you tell me where and when you were born, and what your relationship was with Philip de László?

Yes. I was born in Tite Street, 13 Tite Street, and my father was Aunt Lucy's nephew. And my Norwegian mother was the... Uncle Philip, Great-Uncle Philip was the first foreigner to marry into the Guinness family, and my mother was the second, and therefore there was a special bond between them, because he did rather quite often, we all adored him, but he did rather easily take offence, and so he would sort of recount these things to my mother, I mean, sort of little things like, if they would have, he and Aunt Lucy had been invited to, for a weekend and they were all playing tennis, they didn't come out straight away to greet them, they finished the game, and he felt that he should be greeted, and on more than one occasion he simply left, said, Lucy, either they both left or he left. And so he took my mother under his wing as you might say, so he loved to sort of pour out these things to her. And he was a very very charming man, and he had a beautiful singing voice, and my mother was a wonderful singer, she sang for charity, for hospitals, because at that time a banker's wife wouldn't do it professionally but she had a wonderful voice. And she told me that Uncle Philip produced a song in Hungarian about a cock who was the cock of all the hens, and he taught it to her in Hungarian, and they sang it together, but she never told me what his voice was, but somebody else might, knowing the family. And, the

end of that song was that, it ended up by being, the feathers, by being killed and the feathers were in the young man's hat, and that was the end of this wonderful cock, which is rather a sad song. And then, so they often came to Cheyne Walk to...but that was Tite Street where I was born. And then later on, a few years later, we moved to 6 Cheyne Walk, and we all were there until my parents died and until I moved a short time ago, and I stayed on. And then I remember him from a young age of coming, mostly for lunch, because I wouldn't be up in the evening, and it was always great to know they were coming for lunch. And he very much sort of held, I mean, one was too young to be sitting at the table, one came in afterwards to make a curtsy and be kissed. And then he liked me, and he liked us all I'm sure, we were three girls, and my brother, who he painted. [TELEPHONE] Oh hell's bells, shall we just leave that? Do you think we can? I won't worry about that. He painted my brother and sister when George was six and Helga was five, they were the eldest, and then I was born later, and then a younger one. He didn't paint either the youngest or me. And Helga came back one day and said to the Norwegian nanny, 'Uncle Philip is a very silly man.' And she said, 'Why is that Helga?' She said, 'Well you see, he said, "I've been told that you are half Irish and half Norwegian. I would like you to show me your Norwegian side."' So she said, 'Wasn't that silly of him?' So... Anyway, I've got the picture of George upstairs, and they hung as a pair in Cheyne Walk all my life, until we three sisters divided the things, and my elder sister had already got the portrait he did of her when she was marrying aged eighteen, and the one of her at five, and I've got the one of George. And then there was one of my mother, which a nephew has got, which wasn't so successful because it was painted in a fog. And part of her beauty was a very wonderful skin, and with the London fog coming in through the windows it didn't show that. And then, Mummy did say that he would insist upon talking about his wrongs from the Guinness family, and he hadn't been given his due or something. And so she said it wasn't really her normal expression. But he also painted my mother's older sister, and that used to hang in Cheyne Walk because they hadn't then a place for it, and she was considered a great beauty in Norway, she was dark and that's very, considered very beautiful where most people are fair. And so then, and he loved, as we know he always sort of dressed them in a sort of bit of tulle, and thing, and then I think my mother sort of had a shock, because he suddenly said, 'Oh!' sort of, and she thought her tulle had fallen down. But it hadn't, so that was all

right. And then, what... Aunt Lucy was always very sweet, and she didn't sort of mind at all that he ate off his knife, cheese, and he said, 'Lucille, put your tootsies there,' and things like that, I mean she never ever attempted to change him, she just loved him as he was. And then they gave big parties at Fitzjohn's Avenue in my time, and I was taken to at least one of them, but my parents were always included, because of the favouritism of my mother, because they didn't invite all the family, and that was when Uncle Philip would put, have huge easels all around the big studio and show his latest paintings, and then he would also show some of the little sketches he did which he didn't sell, but they are amongst the family; I unfortunately haven't got one, but other members have, and little sort of intimate pictures in the garden of Lucy sitting or doing something. But one of his favourite themes, as you probably know, is that he loved painting her playing the violin, and she had a very special violin. It wasn't a Strad, but it could have been an Amati, but I don't think there's anybody left alive now who would know that, but I did ask Paul about it, where that – not Paul, I asked Patrick, where that violin had gone, and he said it had disappeared. But, well they went for a weekend party, and then Uncle Philip got huffed, so he left Aunt Lucy there at the weekend party in the country and he came back and found the violin was missing. Well she had gone to great lengths never to let anybody know that it was a very valuable violin, so nobody in the house, except the family, had the slightest idea. He made such a rumpus that they were all hunting for it, and everything, so everybody knew. Well what happened was that she had one of these big chests of drawers which, we had one too from Clandon Regis, and at the top, there's a top which, you can't see what's over there, and that's where she had hidden the violin. But what's happened to that, I don't know. And then, he was terribly proud of his boys, and they were all very very clever. Of course, I think possibly that Henry was the most brilliant of them all, the eldest. He invented the Pill before...but he didn't put it on the market, but he was one of the inventors of it. He was a brilliant chemist. Then of course Stephen was killed in that car accident with his wife, Diana, they both died, he died afterwards but as a result, shortly. And then of course there was Paul, who was my favourite, who I was, apart from John, I was terribly fond of Paul, we all were, and he collected Uncle Philip's pictures and made this sort of museum, made this gallery in his house in the country, to house pictures. I remember seeing a painting of aunt Lucy with the violin there. And then of course was Patrick, who

broke all hearts, I mean he...and his eldest, his wife became my daughter's godmother, because we were so fond of him, and became so fond of her. And she is of course the mother of Damien, she was the mother of Damien. And we saw a lot of Patrick, and we thought the world of him; he was very very clever too. He invented the glass-bottomed boat, oh dear, I expect you know that do you? Do you know that?

I'd love it in your words.

What?

I'd love it in your words.

Oh do you? Anyway, and, but... And he was very very, well, we all thought the world of him. And then, of course, John was absolutely it, I mean, girls sort of, even... I only knew John at Balliol when he was, when I was about fifteen and he was at Balliol at the time when Uncle Philip went and said, 'I want my son to have a number one' to the Master of Balliol, instead of a First.

When you said that before, we didn't have the tape on. What was the reaction?

Well, I think it's... I don't know, because I think they were alone, but I know Sandy Glen brought it up in the church when he talked about John. And, I believe, but I could be wrong, at least my mother told me, that there was a girl. Have you heard that? That there was a girl, and that she died in Hungary through the bad milk. Now, this could be, it's not that my memory's faulty, but my mother could have been wrong.

I think in Sandra's biographical notes of him there is mention of a daughter called Eve.

Well that's the one.

Yes.

Because I was looking at this photograph which belonged to my parents, and of course Eve, that child is not in it.

Could you just for the sake of the tape recorder describe what the photograph is?

Yes of course. Well, it's sent Christmas 1914, to my parents, saying 'With love and best wishes from us all!' exclamation mark, and it starts off with Aunt Lucy, Great-Aunt Lucy; Henry, looking rather handsome, tall; and then comes, how do they come in order? Stephen, and then came Paul, and Patrick. Yes, that's right. And then little John being held by the hand by Uncle Philip. The picture's rather faded, and there isn't really anything else to tell about it except that I am lucky enough to have it.

When you look at it, it's quite a formal picture in a way, but it's also quite intimate in the way they're all standing. Is that typical of how you think of the family?

Well I wasn't born when the family were this age, because I am younger than any of them, and so I would have never have seen them. As a family, the only ones I saw together were Aunt Lucy and Uncle Philip with Paul, and I remember Paul getting his peruke, what do you call it, when you became a barrister, and he was at Fitzjohn's Avenue so he may have been living there then, I don't know, and I remember him putting it on to show my elder sister and me, Helga and me, and he was very proud of it. And so I think of them as a family. But I never really, I mean, saw them as a family, because I was so much younger. I mean John came into our lives because he loved parties and was very gay, and one met him later on at dances, just after I had 'come out', with his first wife, and so John was very much around. And the others were really, except for Patrick, were married and that much older than me, and older than my elder sister; I mean we were quite a younger family. And then Uncle Philip was told that I was very keen on drawing and painting, and he never asked to see anything that I did, but he always came out with the same advice, which was, 'She must learn to draw'. And I had that told to me so often by my father, 'Uncle Philip says you must learn to draw,' that I got rather bored with this, but anyway. But when the time came and I had left home to learn languages and painting abroad, he was

asked his advice, and he sent a letter to my mother, and she took it with her to the Uffizi, to the director of the Uffizi, to say that I was his great-niece, and he would be grateful for... I never read the letter, but I know what was in it, and then one of the people at the Uffizi in Florence, he said, 'I will teach the *signorina*,' which he did. And, I remember going along the passage between the Uffizi and the other museum, what's that called, can you remember? The Pitti, Pitti Palace. And then, they're all self-portraits between, there's this connection over the Arno, and there are portraits which, either from bygone days, or given by famous artists on request, and one was of Uncle Philip, and I remember being very proud looking at that, of seeing that he was there too.

Can you remember the painting very well?

Not all that well. You see I was the age of fifteen to sixteen, I just, it was very much an Uncle Philip picture. But I have, my daughter has a self-portrait of Uncle Philip which I bought when I was having the exhibition at the Beaux Arts in London, my first one-man show over here, and Major Lasore[ph], who was Sickert's brother-in-law, said to me, 'Marit, a picture of your great-uncle is coming up for sale'. And I put a bid in, and I wasn't very used to all this, but I thought I had better go to the sale. And I was very lucky because the man I had put the bid in with was bidding for somebody else, so I went one higher and got it. And Juliet's got that, my daughter, and we love that picture. And he did my sister's...

Sorry, what was that picture like?

Well, we'll have to perhaps arrange to see it. I'm wondering, I think he's got a hat on in it, it's a very nice one. And Paul was rather, Patrick was rather annoyed, years later he said, 'Oh I collect all the pictures of my father, what a pity I didn't get that.' But I mean there was no question of me letting him know or anything, I mean it was very kind of Mr Lasore[ph].

Is it a pencil drawing?

No, it's an oil painting. A proper self-portrait. No, it's about that size.

For the tape, about two-and-a-half feet? No, two feet.

It's a life-size head, life-size head. Yes, about that.

And what sort of age would he be in it?

Do you know, you know, I used to live with it until I gave it to Juliet for her first house, when I thought she ought to have it, and of course she's got it now. So, I don't know, I think we must look into that.

And did it come with any information about who had owned it?

Absolutely nothing, nothing at all, no. No, it just came up. And then, Uncle Philip, he, as he was particularly fond of my mother, he was fond of my father too but particularly fond of my mother, he wanted, he did, and painted my elder sister just before, a couple of days before she married.

And whose idea would that have been?

Uncle Philip's.

So it was a present to her?

Yes. And he was going to paint me. At that time I had pigtails, and, or it was loose down my back, either, and he said, 'When your hair reaches your waist I'm going to paint you.' He was quite flirtatious with little girls.

In a pleasant way?

In a very sweet way, a very loving and sweet way. So I sort of inherited the same sort of adoration that older women had for him, because he was terribly nice about it but

he brought the best out in people. And my grandmother wouldn't be painted by him, she said that he could see right through her. Well she was very beautiful, so I don't think, and a lovely character, so I don't see why she should worry about him seeing through her.

Was this your mother's mother?

No, it was all the Guinness side. No, my mother's would be in Norway. No, this was Granny Guinness, the one whose picture you see there.

Could you just describe that picture for the tape?

Well that one, I can't remember the name of the person who painted it, but it was painted in Ireland, and it's by a woman, and it's a painting of my grandmother holding my father in her arms looking over her shoulder, so you don't... And you just see her side face. And then, the family very much did things together; they would buy a dinner service and two or three members of the family would buy part of it and have the same dinner service, or they would do the same with silver. But Juliet, my daughter, was in Ireland visiting cousins we're very fond of, and suddenly she saw a picture, and she said, 'But that's by the same person as the one of Granny, of my great-grandmother.' And sure enough, it was. And in the same sort of frame and had obviously been painted at the same time. This would have been a sister-in-law or a cousin-in-law. So they rather sort of did things together, and discussed things. But Aunt Lucy wasn't brought up to understand money; she was a banker's daughter, and one day she said to one of her sisters, or her sister said to her, which one I don't know, 'You know I have no money left. I'm waiting for my allowance.' And the other one said, 'Oh that's perfectly all right, there are still a couple of cheques left in your cheque-book.' And we all thought that was rather funny. And of course, what they say in, I've been looking through some of these cuttings that my father had about Uncle Philip, and I don't think, I think we always understood that Aunt Lucy was in Munich, in a *Hofbräuhaus*, went there with a young German, and she herself was Irish, he was German, and Uncle Philip was painting, and he said, 'Stop, you are exactly what I want. I want to paint you as the English couple visiting the

Hofbräuhaus. Now, in one of those things about his life, they said that they met at a dance somewhere, and I think that I've got the right story of it.

Do you know why Lucy would have been in Munich in the first place?

Well, as she did play the violin, maybe it had something to do with her music. I simply don't know. But she, I mean, she wasn't all that young, I mean she wasn't a young, young girl in that picture, and, it's quite a known picture isn't it? Have you ever seen it?

No.

Well anyway, he was doing this, and then they fell in love, and of course it wasn't very well thought of that she had met a young artist who hadn't sort of reached anywhere at that time and had no money, and all that. And then...

Do you know anything about their falling in love and their time in Munich?

No, I don't. I don't know that.

Did she strike you as a romantic person?

Yes, very. Very loving, a very kind person. And, yes, I would say she was. I mean, and from her playing the violin all her life, and all that, yes, I think that was a very strong streak in her.

Did you hear her play?

Never. No. I wish I had.

And do you know anything about her growing up before Munich, do you know what her life was like as a child?

No, I don't really. She was a twin, she was I think the youngest of my grandfather's brothers and sisters, and she was a twin with Uncle Noel, they were the two youngest; Uncle Harry, as I said, Henry Guinness, Henry Seymour Guinness, he was the eldest and would have taken on the bank, which my grandfather did, and Lucy came after that. And my mother said that she had to wait so long for Uncle Philip that it really was a bit touch-and-go that they did marry, because she got rather tired of waiting.

And was that because of Philip, or because of the family opposition?

It was because he had to earn a living. In those days you had to earn a living, and you had to have enough to support your children, and my father and mother met when he was nineteen and she was seventeen, at Oxford when he was at Balliol, and they had to wait four-and-a-half years, because, not only did he have to learn to earn his living, but he also had to give her a marriage settlement, which was the thing at that time. So you see this possibly came in with the older generation. But my mother said that really Aunt Lucy was kept waiting a very very long time. But the wedding was very splendid, because I've seen pictures of it, and you probably have, and when he really, almost stole the show in his nobleman's outfit.

It has to be said in the photograph I've seen, the Guinness family don't look terribly happy.

Don't they? You know, I only saw one the other day at, my uncle's son had an album which I hadn't seen before, one of my first cousins, and there was a picture with Granny, my grandmother, the one in the portrait, our portrait, in a big, wonderful feathered hat, and they are all sort of standing around, and Great-Uncle Philip in his marvellous nobleman's costume, and, didn't they look happy?

Well I understood, I mean they certainly don't look happy but they also, I understand weren't very happy even by that stage that she was going to marry him. Is that not what you have understood?

Yes, I think that could be true. He was very, his family were rather dependent on him, his mother and father, and that sort of, for him to suddenly marry abroad and all that, it's much more difficult isn't it. And I think he helped his mother certainly all his life. And this thing about him going to prison in one of these things, it said it was because he had been indiscreet in a letter. I don't think that is true at all. What happened was that he wanted to send money, either to his mother and certainly to his sister, and he managed to get somebody to put it in a diplomatic bag, and which of course was breaking the regulations. And somebody who my mother knew disowned him, and my mother sort of always felt terrible towards this woman, who was Norwegian born, so my mother took it very much to heart that a Norwegian should have done this to Uncle Philip. And Uncle Philip was in prison for a while, and my mother went and visited him, and she took him flowers. And we had at home, and I don't know where it is, a little painting, a water-colour painting, of roses in a cup, but the cup looked very much like a pewter cup or a silver cup, a very very lovely one, and he gave it to my mother, and I always had the impression that he had painted that in the prison. But, that, one of the family has got it but I don't know who, but it was always at home on our sideboard in Cheyne Walk in what was called the morning room in an old Irish sideboard. And I used to look at that a lot, that painting, because it was very lovely. And, then the other thing was...

I'm just going to.....

End of F6743 Side A

F6743 Side B

Now the other thing was that, since we've, since I went and fetched that book and looked at these cuttings, I've been reading these obituaries which my father had kept, and they aren't all that correct. Now, what he made his great success on was that he had the job to paint the Pope of the day, and then, the Pope said to him, 'I'd like to see what you are doing'. And that is not written amongst any of this. And so he showed him, and then the Pope got furious and said, 'My son, you've made me look like Voltaire; that is a man I detest.' So, he got up to leave in umbrage. And Uncle Philip was very quick, and he always had a second canvas, or to my belief, when he was painting, and he had another one, an empty one, and painted on, and he quickly seized that and he quickly drew in, in oils, the Pope's head looking in a very very different way, a sort of benign old man. And the Pope sort of calmed down, and the portrait was done. And that picture I believe a whole of lot of religious people, I think they were nuns but I couldn't be sure, were supposed to have gone each with a lily and put it under this painting in sort of homage of this painting, and that really is what started him off. One of these obituaries say it was somebody else's picture but at least that's the story my mother and I was brought up on.

And would he ever have talked about painting the Pope?

He never did. That was the very sad thing. Well I mean I left home at fifteen, and except that he would always say, 'You must learn to draw,' and he was awfully sweet and one loved him, but one never, he never said, 'Can I see anything she's done?' at any time that I know of, and, or said, 'Let me know,' or 'How are you getting on?' or anything like that. But, of course, when I was young he did that book, 'How to Paint a Portrait' with Gwen Ffranco-Davis, so we, one went through all that, you read it step by step.

Had you read it with awe? I mean what was your...?

I thought it was marvellous, yes absolutely. And he... There's something in connection with that, I was trying to remember what it was, with that book but, I don't quite remember now, I've lost the thread.

Did you ever go into his studio?

No, only when he opened it to a huge gathering of friends and family.

What were those occasions like?

Well they were...well I was very young, I mean, I was under fifteen, and as I say we were privileged because my mother and therefore, perhaps I was taken because I loved painting, but I do remember it very vividly, just sort of rather wandering around. I don't remember sort of eats and all those sort of things, but I think somebody of under fifteen wouldn't have even taken that in.

But would it, presumably it would have been very smart, and people would have dressed up to go and it would have been a social event.

Oh yes, very, very much. Oh no no no, it was absolutely 'it' to be invited. I mean people who were not invited had their nose totally out of joint. But you see, I mean there's always a limit to how many people you can have, and that was a very big house, Fitzjohn's Avenue, which is where I saw John – no, not John, Paul, Paul with his wig. But Great-Aunt Lucy was very quiet, and she didn't mind, I mean, when he sort of talked about tootsies, and eating off a knife, which, I mean, it didn't worry her this in the very least. But she was terribly put out when the Hungarian Ambassador said to her once, I imagine they were ambassadors then, because sometimes they were ministers and have become ambassadors since, but I understood he was the ambassador, and he said, 'Mrs de László, who is your husband's mistress at this moment?' And she took terrible umbrage at that, and she said, 'Absolutely wrong. He doesn't have a mistress,' she said. And she did not like that. Which I quite understand. But she was always terribly good-humoured, and he was very fond of one of her nieces, and particularly fond of her, who had a bad time. She didn't marry

a Hungarian but there was another country where there was lots of trouble very near Hungary and they were always befriending her and doing what they could. And then of course, having all boys, the girl having died, there must have been lots of girlfriends around and things, and they all seemed to marry on the whole young, which was nice, and...

Do you think of him as a family man?

Very much. Oh very very much so, oh totally. And I don't think his eye wandered at all, I think he was utterly devoted to Aunt Lucy, and he was terribly proud of his boys. But Henry was a bit of a thorn in the side. The Great War was on, my mother said, and there was an air raid, and they were all sort of hiding in some place against being bombed or something, and then Henry rushed downstairs, and there was a big gong, so Henry hit the gong with an enormous noise and frightened them all. They were terribly annoyed by Henry doing this. And then he was, very slightly... Of course I think Uncle Philip was dead by the time Deborah married Patrick, so that never came into it, but they rather favouritised Diana, who was married to Stephen, the one who was killed, and they hadn't been all that nice to Stephen's first wife. I don't say they were nasty but they were more thrilled with Diana. And my mother went to the wedding, and she said that they had bought a beautiful necklace, a gold necklace, and they gave it to their eldest daughter-in-law as a sort of loving gift, and my mother thought that was terribly nice, because they had just taken on this new daughter-in-law that they were doting on you see. So that, my mother recounted that to me.

And do you think that would have been Lucy really, or would it have been joint?

I just couldn't answer that question at all, that's never occurred to me. I always thought of them as a pair. And then, when he was painting my sister, the day before, or two days before she married, he wanted her to come back on her wedding day or the day before to finish it, but she said no, she couldn't do that, and he was definitely going to paint me as a wedding present, because I too married aged eighteen, but that was... Then, Queen Marie[ph], I think of Romania, I think it was her, summoned him

to do yet another painting of herself, she was very vain, and I think he painted her quite often, and that was where he sort of got his heart attack which brought on his death. The obituaries say that he died in England, so he obviously got back, but he was quite young when he died wasn't he, 60-something.

Did he seem to you to be living a life of strain? Because that's one of the things that's been said of him, that his heart attack was brought on by the kind of pace of living.

Yes, I think that was the general opinion of my parents, I think that is so. I think, he took on an enormous job, I mean, he had after all five living sons didn't he, without the daughter, that's five isn't it? And he had to educate them all. I think he... And then he helped his mother and possibly his father before he died, and there was the sister he helped according to those letters, those obituaries. And, I think he had an enormous drain on his resources.

Were Lucy's family not helpful to him financially then?

People didn't in those days. If you were a girl, it was up to the husband to do it. That wasn't the way, as it is today, it's totally changed. I mean in the case of my mother and father, my Norwegian grandparents were more than willing to help my mother and father not to have to wait four-and-a-half years to marry, but although my grandfather and grandmother were kindness itself, it never occurred to them to help out, as they do today. So I would have thought that would go for Great-Aunt Lucy.

And do you think that change has been a good thing?

Well that's a difficult question. I think my mother thought it was very cruel to have to wait four-and-a-half years, and she wasn't in England of course, and he was, he was learning to bank, he was in America and Germany learning banking. But she still said their wedding day was the happiest day of her life, at her silver wedding party, so, and she was very truthful and it was a very very happy marriage, but she did think it was awfully cruel to have to wait. There was no question in those days of people

having, living a bit together or having a holiday or anything, I mean it just simply was not done. I shouldn't think Great-Aunt Lucy had any chances, or Uncle Philip, I mean it would have been unheard of.

And do you think money was a source of anxiety to Lucy, would she have been worried about it?

I never knew her well enough to understand this. I think Uncle Philip took on the responsibility right from the beginning, and they all expected to have a baby straight away, which they all did, and then another one a year later and so on, or more or less. And, I think he shouldered it all, that's my belief, but that never came up in talk with my parents' family.

And what was the atmosphere in Fitzjohn's Avenue?

Very happy. Very very happy.

What do you remember of the house?

Very little. I mean I was so much younger, I mean... I mean I was under, not older than fifteen at the most.

Do you think of it in retrospect as a house with lots of light in it, or was it rather a dark house?

I don't remember that.

Do you remember it being a house where you felt at ease?

I only remember my younger sister and I going up to see Paul, and he must have had his own room upstairs or something, because he was so thrilled he had just become a barrister, that's really, except for these big receptions to show the latest paintings, I really don't remember. We didn't, we didn't visit, we, us children, didn't visit

Fitzjohn's Avenue. My parents maybe, but they visited us. They would either come for lunch, and then we came in after lunch and made a curtsey and were kissed, or they came to dinner and one didn't see them.

And it must have been a great disappointment for you not to have your portrait done?

Oh it was an enormous disappointment, because I had been expecting from the time my hair reached my waist, which of course it did, to be painted, but really, he was always so busy, and I knew he intended to paint me, and so I was looking forward to this, and when he painted my elder sister two years before me, I was quite sure, I knew my turn was coming, which it didn't. So that was very sad.

Did anybody else paint you instead?

I was painted, newly married by Barrie Craig[ph], twice, once as a commission and once for himself, my parents bought that from him, and they are two lovely pictures. But I would like to have been painted by Uncle Philip very much.

And do you think there is still a role for a portrait painter, or do you think it's changed completely?

Oh I think there is a role. I mean I know one or two who earn their living as portrait painters, and then they paint a little like Uncle Philip did, sort of landscapes, and the odd interior or garden scene or something, well that's landscape isn't it, the odd thing, and show them as well, but they are known as portrait painters and that is their living. I think there is very much a place for portrait painters.

And with Uncle Philip, you describe him as a man who was very perceptive about you and about young people in general maybe.

Yes, he loved young people.

But there's also this side of him that was rather insecure and perhaps looking for social slights. Could you sense that as well, did the two become mixed?

No, never, never never. No, I don't think he sensed social slights in any form except in the family.

And do you think they were there, or did he imagine them?

No, what he didn't like was that they wouldn't stop playing tennis in the middle of a game to come out and greet him.

But would they have stopped for somebody else?

I shouldn't think for a moment.

So it really wasn't intended?

No no, no no, nobody ever intended to slight him. I mean he was such a favourite in the family. No, I think this was just him, and we all laughed when we heard about it.

And what would Lucy have felt, would she have hated leaving?

Well she didn't always leave, she didn't leave the time that he looked for the violin, did she. She didn't always leave, no. No, I...she was a very serene person.

So the fact that her parents might have gone on rather disapproving of him wouldn't have been a source of terrible misery to her?

I don't think so, I don't think it was anything like that. I think people became very proud of him very early on. And, I mean, he had enormous charm.

And given that your forebears sound as though all of them were rather distinguished and successful, how did Philip take his place in that? I mean he was a much more

famous person perhaps. Was that an element in the family tradition really, or was he just one of several rather distinguished relatives?

Well I think he had a very special niche, because he was a painter, he wasn't in business, he wasn't a banker, which was principally, on my grandfather's side, was the banking, and so... I don't think this mattered. But of course, to marry a foreigner at that time was a much bigger step than it is today, and that is why he so adored my mother; I mean she was the apple of his eye without...he just thought her marvellous, and she was marvellous. And when she died, when my father died, one of the letters said, that she got, was that, 'You were the best thing that ever happened to the Guinness family.' And she was natural and lovely and beautiful colouring, beautiful skin, and all those things, and very gay and laughed, and all those things would have appealed to Uncle Philip very much.

And do you think she appreciated his taking care of her as an outsider, or do you think she didn't feel that too much as a pressure that she was an outsider? Was it different for her?

Mummy? My mother? No, she didn't feel that at all. She just felt it was a bond. No no, she...she was very much liked by the Guinness family, so it was all right.

And your father wasn't jealous in any way that there was this bond?

Oh not at all. No no, no no, he was absolutely secure in his, their feelings towards each other, so there was never never anything like that. What was nice was that they could sing together, and of course you see, my mother would sing after dinner, after a dinner party, not always but if the other guests were right we would go up to the drawing-room, the men would join, and then my mother would sit at the piano and sing, very often.

What do you remember her singing?

Well she sang mostly Norwegian songs, and then she sang, I mean, I have tremendous memories of her singing. I mean she had a trained voice, she was in the Bach Choir, and then, as I said she sang for charity, but she sang songs in many languages, she was a very good linguist. She was good at accompanying herself. But I never heard Uncle Philip sing unfortunately; that would have been lovely.

And what was Aunt Lucy like to you?

Well, I thought her of course quite old, but, I always liked her very much.

Do you remember what she wore for example and what she looked like?

My best memory of her is after Uncle Philip died, seeing her in Queen's Gate outside a girls' school where one of her grandchildren was, waiting for the grandchild to come out, which was one of Patrick's children, so it was either Damien or one of the girls, it was Damien and three or four girls wasn't it. And I think it was one of the girls she was waiting for, it was a girls' school, and I remember her sitting with a little bunch of flowers in the porch, and then I stopped and saw her, I must have been walking, and said, 'Oh Aunt Lucy, what are you doing?' And she said... She went and lived in that hotel, did anybody tell you that, after Fitzjohn's Avenue was got rid of, where that man sort of killed people. Did anybody tell you that?

I think Alexander Glen mentioned it, yes.

Did he? Well she had a lucky escape, because he set his sights on her. The acid bath.

And was she the sort of woman you would expect to be quite formidable with somebody who was a threat, or was she rather innocent and would have slipped by it?

I think she would have been very innocent, but thank God she didn't. So Sandy remembers that does he?

I think it was he. It's certainly come up in one of the recordings. When did he come into your life?

The same time as John, when John was at Balliol.

And what do you remember of John at that stage, what was he like?

I remember him sort of, he sort of bowled all the girls off their feet. And then he had lovely rooms which were hung with de László paintings, which of course nobody else had anything like that. And he was very affectionate in his speech, he called you 'beloved' and that sort of thing. And he was quite a heart-breaker. But, I was that much younger, I mean, I wouldn't have been more than fifteen, and then there was always the odd girl around of sixteen or seventeen, just 'come out', so of course they all, you know, he set his sights on them.

But did he break your heart a little?

A little bit, yes. Not to the extent that it mattered, but I did think him absolutely marvellous.

How did you come to be at Balliol?

Well my father was at Balliol, and then my father gave a scholarship, four scholarships for, my brother was killed in an accident at the age of, he was fifteen or nearly sixteen, and so my father gave a George Guinness Scholarship to Balliol, and so we used to go down to Balliol, and that was when John was there, as John would have been younger than George. And so we went to Balliol quite a bit and knew Balliol people.

Who else was there, who else was part of the circle?

Well I can't really remember, because, I was very keen on somebody, an American, a Rhodes Scholar, in another college, who was killed in the war fighting on our side, so, I don't think I was really all that interested in Balliol except for John.

And I always understood that Philip gave John quite a hard time really, and that there was quite a lot of friction between them.

That wouldn't surprise me, because John gave the impression of being rather gentle and soft; I don't mean anything bad by that at all, but with him, you know, saying you know, endearingly to you, oh, well whatever I said he did, right, left and centre, to girls, and things, probably Uncle Philip felt, well you're going to have to be a man one day and support a family, and you'd better start thinking about that instead of having a good time. I don't think there was anything terribly serious in it. But you think that he was hard on John, do you?

Well that's the impression I've got, and that Philip was extremely glad when he was part of the Arctic expeditions and that he felt that that was an important transition for him.

Yes. I wouldn't know anything about that, except what Sandy said in the church. And that of course is when one did meet Sandy, and then later on one came together with Sandy and his wife in the war, without John. And then John had such a difficult life really with his first wife falling in love with somebody else, and I remember I was...I was not a deb any more, I was a deb at seventeen so that would have been just before I married, and I went to a dance, and we had a family car and was driven there and dropped. And I had a very strict allowance, which had to cover taxis and stamps, and I had used up my allowance, and when I got there the first person I saw was John with his first wife, who we all liked very much, and I said, 'Oh John, could you...how are you going home?' He said, 'Why do you ask?' I said, 'was there a chance of dropping me home?' He said, 'Well of course, no problem at all.' Well I told my father this at breakfast at Cheyne Walk, and laughing, and my father's face became very long. And I said, 'I was going to walk across the park home if I hadn't found somebody to give me a lift.' And he said, 'This is never to happen again. If you've

used up your allowance and haven't got enough money for a taxi,' he said, 'you are to come to me.' But it was John who saved the day. And we were all very sad when his wife fell in love with somebody else and who she married, a Hennessey. And I can't remember John's children. And then I was very fond of, I was very...it was a disaster when Diana, which was the one who was killed, Stephen and Diana. I remember Diana coming here just before, saying that a child had been so naughty, she'd had a dress on approval from Harrods and it was all in stripes and colours, and he had found a pair of scissors and he had cut along all the stripes. And that's the last time I saw Diana. But we were always asked to all the family gatherings because of my mother being so popular.

I'm just going.....

End of F6743 Side B

F6744 Side A

He was very encouraging to my mother.

This is Philip.

Uncle Philip. And he, there was an exhibition in aid of a charity in Bond Street, and he was judging it, and my mother put in a painting, it was amateurs, and I remember being there, and my Uncle Philip said my mother showed great talent. Actually she became a very good painter after she gave up singing, excellent, and showed in the Paris Salon. Both my daughter, myself with my mother all showed in the Paris Salon, which they said was a record. Of course we sent our work in quite separately, so we were rather proud of that. But that was long, years after Uncle Philip had died.

Which year would that have been?

Well, that would have been, sort of, twenty years ago, something like that.

And presumably all three works were totally different, were they?

Totally different. We just, my mother had already shown once or twice there, and it was suggested that we should send in too, and we were all accepted. So I went over for it, and I was told it was unique that three generations had been in the yearly Paris Salon.

I would very much like to talk to you about your mother in a bit, but just before we stopped just now you were remembering Diana, and I wondered if you could remember anything else about her, what sort of personality she was.

That was Stephen's wife.

Mm.

Well she was very good-looking, Diana, what was it, Dehorsu[ph], a very well-known name. [TELEPHONE] I won't take that. Oh wait a minute, I am expecting one call. Would you mind if I took that?

[BREAK IN RECORDING]

Very good-looking. And she had a sweet sister who... Diana was very good-looking, I remember that very well, and a very sweet sister [INAUDIBLE], who brought up their child, and... No, I really, I just remember her telling me about him cutting the dress, very very well, along all the seams; he hadn't made a mess of it.

And, presumably that death would have been devastating to both parents. I mean do you remember it?

Well I was in the Philippines when they were killed, because it was in the early new year wasn't it, so I wasn't here. I remember my parents writing and saying that they had been killed, because it wasn't the time one did telephoning like one does now. So I really don't know what the effect was on the family. And of course, Henry had rather a stormy voyage with his first, with his wife, who went with the, over to America and looked after their child, and he was the very very brilliant one, as a scientist. And they had a child who, she was Swiss. We all liked her very much, she was the one who was given the necklace at the time of Diana's marriage. And, we all loved Patrick's, we all loved Paul's wife, she was awfully sweet, and lived, they bought a house in Tite Street very near where I was born, one of the modern ones, and they had a very very happy family life. Jo. And he outlived Jo, he came to my mother's funeral and was so sweet, although he was very crippled and old then. And then of course we, Patrick, one saw him through one or two marriages, but he was very very attractive, Patrick.

But do you think it was hard for them being sons of such a famous father?

I think it could well have been quite hard. But I think, except for Paul, they all rather inherited the Continental side. I would have said Paul was the most conventional, marriage-wise. And so, well of course the other two were killed, I mean they hadn't been married long enough to have steered the course, but, I mean John was the

sweetest of people, we all felt it terribly when he had his divorce. John was not the sort of person who played fast and loose at all.

But from what you say, Stephen and Diana weren't much talked of after their deaths. Was it something that became covered up almost?

Well you see the war came immediately afterwards, they were...they died, they were killed or, she was killed and he died just afterwards, in hospital, they died sort of early in the year, the year that war broke out. And you know, everybody became so engrossed in the war, and, although it was the phoney war, one was still engrossed, and we were all enrolling in jobs, either nursing or, in my case I was doing canteen, learning canteen management and things like that, in fact a lot of us started doing it before war was declared. My parents enrolled as air raid wardens and learned about that, and they were out in every air raid in Chelsea for the whole of the war. And my mother ran the Norwegian Red Cross, and she was number two of the Norwegian Red Cross, and my father ran the bank, and every night they went out when they had to. So you know, people didn't, families got very divided in the war; unless you lived within walking distance or bicycling distance or that sort of thing you weren't sort of... I mean, there wasn't visiting people. Rationing made an awful difference to people too. And I mean people like Paul, he was so thrilled that Jo decided, instead of having a war job, because he told me this himself, you know, she had the choice, to take a war job or look after the children, and she decided she wanted to be with the children, and he was so pleased about that. And, I didn't have any children so I had a war job, and then I, when I did have my child I went back to it, and between the two children. And so, we were all frightfully engrossed in what we had to do, or thought we should do, and life was very very different. But people like Paul kept very much in touch with us. It wasn't really until after the war when Juliet... Patrick, Patrick married and her parents weren't very nice about, well, they had wanted her to marry somebody else they had set their sights on, and we all rallied round Patrick, and that's when I asked Deborah to be godmother to Juliet. And you know, and I remember, and they didn't come to the wedding, the parents, which was a horrible thing to do, and Bishop Bell, George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, he gave, he married them and

gave the address, and I remember very well him saying, 'God, your heavenly Father is here present,' very pointedly.

Did you know him quite well?

Very well. He was married to my cousin, a relation, whose sister was my godmother, so I knew them very well.

What was he like?

Oh he was a darling. He was awfully sweet. And, the great disappointment was, they didn't get children, my godmother told me that. I think he was...the Archbishop who lives over the bridge in London, they were, he was an under-priest there, she said that was where they then knew they weren't getting children, and so it was very sad. And he actually went so far, he was going to become Archbishop, and it went so far that she actually measured the curtains for this thing, and then he made this famous speech against the bombing in Germany of certain towns or something or other, and so he didn't get the job. But it has come out since that he was the most, well everybody knew he was a very very good man, and how many people he had helped. He had helped a lot of Jews to escape and things, but all that was not known in his lifetime. And my godmother was sister-in-law to him, and devoted to him. And we stayed once in Chichester with them, and he was an awfully sweet man, and very very highly thought of. So he married, he married Patrick and Deborah.

And did Deborah's parents ever come round to it?

Well Deborah... You're asking me rather private things. Deborah told me that they did come to see Damien, the eldest child; whether they came because they didn't like to say they hadn't seen that grandchild, but I think she was very very hurt by this. But they had sort of alienated themselves from her older sister, who had married, again not the man of their choice.

Was there ever any pressure on you to marry somebody you didn't want to marry?

Oh, yes, I think so. A great deal of pressure not to marry somebody I did want to marry, and... Never never from my father; my mother was much more concerned that one made a happy marriage and thought that she sort of knew best more.

And did you feel that in retrospect you got some good guidance, or did you feel actually you were thwarted?

No, I think I got very bad guidance. But, I think my mother was very innocent; having been so very happily married herself and being engaged at seventeen, and never looked at anybody else from the moment she was engaged to my father, I think she was extremely innocent. And I don't think either my elder sister... My elder sister was determined to marry Hugh Greene, she played rather a funny trick on him. They had just installed a telephone to ring her occasionally; I mean they had a telephone obviously, but, she had 'come out' and she had gone to Munich before me, a couple of years before, or a year before actually, and she rang, they did their weekly, my father had a thing saying how long the call took. And she said, 'Daddy, there's a young man who wants to ask for my hand in marriage.' And my father thought the whole thing was a joke, so he, my father was very Irish in that sort of way, and so he said, 'Oh put him on to me.' So, Hugh Greene, the press loved to call him Hugh Carleton Greene, who became, you know, the B.B.C., you know the one I mean, Governor-General of the B.B.C., he was a young man then, and he said...and my father said, 'Do you speak German?' And he said, 'Yes.' So he said, 'Well, if you speak German to my daughter, that's all right, you can be engaged to her,' thinking the whole thing was a joke. And then my sister came back and said she was engaged to him. And she married him just after she was eighteen, and there are two lovely boys, Hugh Greene and Graham Greene, who is now the sort of, the head of the people that run the British Museum and has been a publisher, and then a younger boy who translates Russian poetry and that sort of thing. But certainly my parents didn't expect her to marry at eighteen.

And did they then try and prevent it, or was it a fait accompli?

Well, it was, my sister was adamant, and, I don't think they were the sort of people who would try to prevent anything. Well they did in my case, but that's another story, I don't think...

And how did you react when you were under those pressures? Did you try to rebel or did you really accept that was the way that it was?

Well they overcame it by sending me abroad aged fifteen to learn languages and painting, art in whatever form it was. And of course what happened was, what they hoped was, that the man concerned got engaged and married somebody else. So they achieved that. And it was a pity but as life has turned out I've been much happier since with what would have been a marriage but he died very suddenly, and so it was, in the end it all turned out all right. But it would have been a happy marriage. I don't think my mother was quite right about that, I think she interfered unnecessarily. But my elder sister definitely wasn't going to listen to anything, she said she had got their consent and that was it.

And did they come to approve of him?

Well I wouldn't say terribly, because he wasn't... I mean he was very very brilliant, and the father of her two children, but... He only talked to my godmother, the one I mentioned, and to my younger sister, he sort of was very arrogant. And, I mean he made a great name for himself as the first Director-General of the B.B.C. didn't he, but I wouldn't say that he endeared himself to any of us. And eventually they divorced and he was married twice if not three times after her. His widow's still alive, who I've never met. No, I think families did like to, I mean, my mother and father met over a cup of tea. There was a family who took in Norwegian girls to teach, so they could learn English, and they just lived with the family, and my mother was one of them, and they asked nice young men from Balliol particularly, and my father was at Balliol, and he was asked to tea and met my mother like that. But he didn't actually meet her like that, he met Elsa Mountevans[ph] who married Teddy of

the book, you know, the famous admiral, Evans of the Brook. And, my father was rather smitten by this Norwegian girl with beautiful gold hair, so he went a week later to get her address because he would like to write to her, and the girl opened the door with ash blond hair which was my mother, and fell in love instantly, and that was it.

And they both fell in love instantly?

They both fell in love with each other, and it lasted all their lives.

And can you tell me a little bit about your mother's background? Who were her parents and where did she grow up?

She was born in Norway, and her mother came from a very brilliant family with very little money, but there's the odd ambassador here and there in the last, in my mother's generation and that sort of thing, and all very clever and very nice people. And then my grandfather came a bit from, more, a family that had money, and there were lots of them, and he was very much in love with somebody, or was more or less in love with somebody, and he was told that he wasn't allowed to declare himself to her, because he was going to England to learn business, and when he came back he found her either engaged or married to somebody else, which was very unhappy, and had no children. And then they... But he married my grandmother, who also had had an unhappy, whatever, and, I mean in those days they didn't have affairs, not that one knows of. And that had come to an end, so they were both sort of on the rebound. And, then when my mother was seventeen and couldn't marry my father until he could earn a living and all that, she was in Norway, she went to Paris as well to learn French, but she was in Norway a lot of the time, so my grandmother said, 'Well you're very good at art, so I think you had better take up art'. Because in Norway they did do things, at that time, much more than we did in England, when one was young; we did charity work, a lot for hospitals and that sort of thing, and that's what my mother did, singing for hospitals and raising money for hospitals, for one hospital, in Chelsea, a children's hospital. And so then, my mother said, 'No, I don't want to paint, I want to sing.' Now the person who was the best person to teach singing in Norway was the one who had been in love with my grandfather, and so my

grandmother was very big, and she said, 'Well if you are going to sing, you will have to learn with the best person there is.' And she never had any children, and it must have been terribly hard on her, teaching the daughter of the man she had been in love with, don't you think so?

Unless it was a bond, unless it was a contact.

Well that's a nice way of thinking of it. But I believe she was very unhappy, and there are doubts on how, why she died. So anyway, but she taught my mother, so my mother was properly taught. And then when she came to England and married my father, she went to the Bach Choir and had an audience with a very famous man whose name I can't remember, and he said, 'You have a very beautiful voice,' and she said from him that really was something. And so, she trained and sang in the Bach Choir, which she was very pleased about.

Was there a part of her that would have liked a career in singing?

No, I don't think that ever occurred to her generation. I mean her career was making my father happy, having us four, and doing a great deal of charitable work, which in that case, in her case was the Victoria Hospital for Children, which my father was on the board, and my mother was the chairman of the Ladies Association, which had to raise funds every year for the hospital. And she was very proud that they voted her to be chairman, because she said that is very unusual in England for them to accept a foreigner, so that made her very pleased.

Did she seem English by the time she had four children here?

She spoke totally without an accent, totally. A lot of her friends did, and would say, 'Oh of course I speak without an accent,' and we all knew they did. But she didn't, she had perfect pitch and air thing. But, she was full of laughter, she made my father very very happy, and on the day of their, well they had a diamond wedding as well as a golden wedding and I think it was the golden wedding, he locked the door... He had two daughters, three daughters there, and one son-in-law, and one, two are divorced,

so anyway. And then he locked the door so the butler shouldn't come in, and then he raised his glass to her and he said, 'And I would do it a thousand times again,' he said. Which was nice, wasn't it?

Extremely.

It was a very happy marriage.

And, was Norway important to you as you grew up? Did you go there?

Well very. Well I do a lot of my painting and work there, and, I've kept up with the family.

But you would visit a lot as a child?

Well we went every summer, my younger sister and me, from the age when I was about fourteen, and then we went to...because my only brother having died in this accident, then my elder sister, who was a year younger, the one who had the Norwegian side to be painted, she went to friends in Norway, and we went with my parents, the youngest and me, and we sort of spent the summer in Norway.

Where in Norway, where did your mother grow up?

Well a place called, well my mother actually grew up in Oslo, but it was called something else in those days wasn't it, Oslo was. But, she was born there. But this was in the place that's painted there, the *Laerdal*, and a book's coming out about it, and quite a lot about my parents, which is nice. One or two of my paintings will possibly be in it.

So do you feel quite deeply that there is a part of you that's Norwegian?

Oh very much.

And how would you characterise that part?

Well I feel very much at home when I'm there, and, I mean, I wouldn't quite honestly want to live there, it's quite a different existence to here.

In what way?

Well, I'm very, brought up to be very English really. And, well, it is very different. It just wouldn't appeal to me to live all the year round. I was there now, and there was snow on the ground and it was lovely to see and all that, but I wouldn't really want... I mean I love skiing, or used to love skiing, and loved the snow in Switzerland and all that, but I'm not so keen on it in Norway. It's more a way of life in Norway. And, I'm very very close to a lot of my mother's family and my friends, but I just... I could marry half a Norwegian but not, I would find it difficult to be married to somebody who was totally Norwegian. The first person I was in love with was half Norwegian.

Oh right.

The one my parents didn't want me to marry, so I...

And had you met him through the family presumably?

Very much so. And he did want to marry me after my divorce. But anyway, it didn't work out that way. So, the man I would have married died very very suddenly, and that was the biggest happiness, so I mean, one's been very lucky. And then I've always painted, and his grandfather was rather a well-known painter, and knew Burne-Jones and all those people, so he encouraged enormously that side of me.

Sorry, this is the man you...?

This is the man, yes.

That you...

Called Michael Henley, Lord Henley. And his grandfather was the Earl of Carlisle, who was a great friend of, he was a painter who was a great friend of Rossetti and – not Rossetti, Burne-Jones, and all of those. He commissioned a whole room of Burne-Jones's for Number 1 Palace Green, which was their house in London. And so Michael always encouraged very much my painting or my enamelling, and it was just at the time when I got a couple of prizes at Goldsmiths' Hall for the most original work or the best enamel or something at that time, and so I gave them to him, and his son has got them now, and that's nice. And, I would have definitely married him, I mean he would have married me too, I mean, that was a, he wrote to my father and said we were getting married. So that would have been lovely.

And did you resent your parents for stopping it happening in the first place? Was it a shadow?

Well quite honestly I... No. I don't think I, I didn't really, aged fifteen, quite realise what they were up to by sending me abroad. I was fourteen and he was 26, and so I obviously wasn't very well up in how people were. And he always made out that he had always been in love with me, although he married and had four children, but... When I met Michael, when we didn't marry, we were both free at that time, I thought this was the most wonderful thing that ever happened in my life, and I was very grateful for what had gone before.

End of F6744 Side A

F6744 Side B

And, did he tell you any stories about Burne-Jones?

No. He told me... No, I never thought of asking him. His father had Castle Howard and all the treasures there, and he... No, his father, his grandfather, his grandfather, it's his grandfather I'm talking about, not his father, his grandfather, his mother's father, he never, after he became Lord Carlisle he never sold anything; Michael never knew, he might have sold something as a younger man. I have two of his paintings he's given me. Because he felt that a man in his position shouldn't, you know, when other people needed it. But Michael inherited a tremendous love of art, an interest in art, but he was a very prominent Liberal, the family was Liberal, and it was a very interesting family and he liked my parents very much, and my mother thought him marvellous, and so, it was a wonderful sort of end to what hadn't been too happy.

So presumably the only real worry of your parents was the fact you were very young.

They weren't... The man we're talking about, his mother was very very beautiful, and rather given to liking the worldly things, like a great friend of mine who got engaged to this man's brother and she took off a string of pearls and put them on the piano with a huge diamond clasp and said, 'This rope of pearls will be yours when you marry Alfred'. And as she, we are still friends, she's alive, and we see each other in Norway, and here, and she said, 'That's the last thing in the world that would interest me, would be ropes of pearls.' And I think my parents, although they thought her very beautiful, which she was, there's no doubt about that, that she was perhaps a little bit too worldly, and she was very worldly, and they really didn't want me to marry her son, that's really what it came to.

So you had to choose the right mother-in-law as well as the right son-in-law?

Well I did choose rather a horrifying mother-in-law, who loathed me until she was old. And then she loved me after I divorced him, but, because he was an only son. No, I didn't choose him because of her. But my father always said, 'You must look at

the parents before you get engaged to somebody,' and he learned that from his Irish parents, and that would have been of course Great-Aunt Lucy's brother, who was my grandfather, as you know. And Daddy didn't propose to my mother, apparently, until he had seen her parents, and that rather narked her, she didn't like that very much.

And was his own childhood a happy one?

I think he was rather solitary. He was an only, he was one of five brothers, there was never a girl, and he was older than his elder brother, his next brother. And he used to go off bicycling on his own on holidays and things, and he was rather away from the other brothers. And, he was very fond of them all, there was no question of anything like that, but being that much older, and he was very studious and clever, and then you see got engaged to Mummy when, at an age of nineteen and her seventeen, you can imagine, at that time. I mean it wasn't really a very usual thing to happen was it? So, but it was a very very happy marriage. So that was... I mean they had great sorrows, my only brother being killed in an accident and that sort of thing. I must show you his portrait before you go, it's up the stairs.

Lovely. And how much when you were growing up were you aware of the bank, was that part of life?

That was very much a part of life. There would be dinner parties for people to do with business, and then when I was fifteen I was taken abroad on business trips to America with my parents and that sort of thing, and met business friends. And, I was really... My older sister was very clever, and she is the one who insisted on getting married, and she was rather sort of separate. She became very devoted to my mother later on, after she had children, but when she was younger she took the line that my mother wasn't madly, not educated because my mother was very well read and spoke several languages and all that, but she hid her cleverness, if you know, how people did at that time. And there was never any question of a woman having a career. I mean they were friends with people like Flagstad, you know, the singer, and that sort of thing, and she came to Cheyne Walk and things like that, but I mean that was a different thing. And Helga, my elder sister, was very well read and she went to a very

conventional English school, and my mother hadn't done anything like that, and then she married so young, and Hugh was really not at all, as Helga said, 'Well you couldn't call Hugh a family man,' and he wasn't, he was very remote. And of course very very clever, but not a warm person, outwardly anyway. And so, my mother and father never had much pleasure out of that. But they doted on the two grandchildren, so that was all right. And, I think it's rather interesting to come from a mixed family.

Did... Sorry to go back a bit, but when Helga had her portrait done by Philip, did she talk about them at all, did she talk about sitting for him?

Well, you see she just came back and got her trousseau and married. She didn't really, no. She... No, she... I wish she had.

Because one of the other people I was recording was painted by him as a woman I think on the brink of her marriage, and was very put out that he dressed her in clothes that weren't her own, and when he asked her why she was looking so miserable, she said it was because she didn't feel at home in these clothes, so he painted her in her own clothes.

Oh well that was much more sensible. He looked through her jewel box to see what she should wear, use, and he chose sort of a coral necklace, rather an ornate thing that some distant relation had given her which suited her very well, because she had red hair. And I think she... Well he didn't consider it finished, the picture, he wanted another sitting, and... I don't really know what he talked to Helga about. We weren't, it wasn't until later on when she realised that I wasn't very happily married, she thought that I had the golden spoon because I did so much with my parents, and she never dreamt that things weren't quite the way they seemed, and when she found out that I too had my troubles and all that, then we became very close. But that wasn't really anything we discussed.

Do you remember if your parents were happy with the portrait?

They had it in the drawing-room, they had it there, until I think my father died or something and Helga didn't want to house it, she wasn't all that thrilled with it. The one she liked was the one when she was in the Norwegian costume, the pair to my brother, and that of course, she has got. Well, my nephew has got it. I don't know what she thought about Uncle Philip. I'm sure she was, like me, very fond of him. I don't think anybody who met him couldn't be fond of him. He was a terribly sort of loveable man. And he wasn't a man you'd forget. I mean when he came to dinner it was him, you know, that sort of thing. Did the other people tell you that sort of thing about him?

Oh yes, a definite presence.

Did they? Mm.

Do you remember what he would wear when he came to dinner?

You know, I really, last time... No, I don't think I would... I would imagine he wore a bow-tie, didn't he? I would have thought so. [I'm just going to turn the light on.]

Hold on, I've just got to take the microphone off.

Oh I'm so sorry. I'm connected.

Sorry. Thank you.

No, I would have thought that he, my vision of him is that he wore a bow-tie. My father had another, much better book than I've got, a big one, but I've got a big one too, and all these letters were in it, and it's quite surprising really because I mean why my father has his letters I can't imagine. There were people, these were written in 1919.

And what are the letters?

Well they're about commissions to paint, making rendezvous, arrangements for people to come to be painted. Isn't it strange that my father should have had them, don't you think?

It's rather lucky.

Well I think it's terribly nice. But, how is Sandra getting on with the book?

Oh I think it's all very exciting.

I think it's going to be wonderful. And then they are re-printing the book that was written about him aren't they.

Are they? I'm not sure, I haven't...

Yes, she mentioned that. I haven't got that.

Can I just ask you some more about your own childhood and how you began to become a painter. Were you sent away to school or were you educated at home?

I was educated at the P.N.E.U. for ten years, in another house in Tite Street, which had belonged to Laura Hope, who was the number one, she did pastels. And her daughter ran this little P.N.E.U. school to educate her children, and then her boy went to Eton, and so I had ten years there, until I was taken away to go to Munich so that I didn't marry this man.

And why was your sister sent to school and you weren't? Was that because you didn't want to, or...?

No, I don't think there was any choice. I just think my mother... My mother wasn't terribly interested in children's education, because in Norway, when she went to school it was boys and girls together, and there wasn't really, there weren't really private schools, and you just went to school with people the same age. And so my

mother wasn't in the last bit interested in all of that. And Helga , my sister, was very clever, and she later on was going to marry, what was he called, the man who wrote the famous whodunits, they're always doing films. Raymond...

Chandler.

Chandler. She was going to marry Raymond Chandler. And so she inherited what he had left to leave. And so she was always interested in books and reading, she never had, you never saw her except with a book in the hand. And, she thought my mother didn't sort of, wasn't interested in any of these things, but she was actually, but she did it in a way that one didn't see. And as I say, she and my mother came very much together after Helga had had two children, which was very happy and nice. And so she was given a conventional schooling, and...

Where did she go to school?

Well she went to Francis Holland Church of England School for Girls.

And in retrospect would you have liked to have gone to a school like that, or not?

No, I was extremely happy at Mrs Hope-Nicholson's, because we were allowed to draw as much as we liked, and, but we didn't learn very much. I can't count or anything like that.

I'm just going to.....

[BREAK IN RECORDING]

Have you been doing some very interesting talks?

[BREAK IN RECORDING]

Sorry, we were just talking when I was fiddling with the tapes about your work, and you were talking about how you began enamelling.

Well I was painting in the sky, and I wanted to produce the sky on earth, and I couldn't see any other way except to learn to enamel. And so that's what I did.

Why had you become interested in painting the sky?

Because I had been with my husband, the war had just ended, with paints, to visit business people, and there had been no chance to paint, and we were in an aeroplane, and the sky was so beautiful below, and we were in a different sort of plane as today, there was a menu card in front, and so I took the menu card and I painted the sky as I saw it, the moon, but you know, not just the bit of sky like a photograph, but the feeling of the journey, that's what interested me. And then, B.O.A.C. heard about me and they were having the Comet, the first Comet, and so they gave me a special seat to paint in, paint the sky, paint up, the stratosphere. And so I had an exhibition of these paintings in London when I came back, and I also painted landscapes all round Africa, and so I included those. And then a collector who lived near my parents called Hugo Pitman, his wife had inherited a great many Sargents, and he was a collector, and he went to the exhibition out of politeness to my father, and he bought five or six of them, of these sky paintings, skyscapes as I call them. And then, that was the beginning of that. And then, but I was showing landscapes of course, and then I had the luck to show in New York, in a gallery for four days only, landscapes, and that went very well, and Charles James, the dress designer, lent me a dress. And then I had seven shows with them altogether, and they started showing one or two enamels as well as the paintings, because the enamels... [TELEPHONE] I am expecting a call.

[BREAK IN RECORDING]

She said, 'He's become an art collector, an art dealer in New York, and I can't, I haven't got time to see him,' she said, 'but couldn't you have him to tea?' So I had him to tea. And I had one little painting in the dining-room where I gave him tea, and he said, 'Who did that?' And I said, 'I did.' He said, 'Oh I didn't know you painted.' I said, 'Well that's why I was in Munich, to learn to paint, as well as to learn

German.’ So he said, ‘Well have you any other paintings?’ Well they were all in a cupboard upstairs, hidden away, but we got them out, and he took two to the Leicester Galleries, because he had an appointment there to see Mr Brown and Mr Phillips[ph], and they offered me a show, to show my work. They didn’t offer me a show, they offered to show my work in an exhibition which came every winter called ‘Artists of Fame and of Promise’. And then I showed two or three winters with them. And then the Beaux Arts offered me a show as a result of that, of paintings, and then New York showed, I went over with my parents with some paintings and some were shown in this gallery. And then I wanted to show the odd enamel, and that went very difficult, because it wasn’t considered an art, because it went through the flames, went through fire. But they sold to collectors. And then the next show was enamels showing enamels and paintings rather than paintings and enamels. And then the Leicester Galleries got in touch with me – I mean I think the whole of life is luck – and they offered me my first show of only enamels. And that was when Louis Osman, the architect, had a commission for two crosses, one for Exeter Cathedral, for the high altar, and one for another cathedral, Ely or somewhere like that, I can’t tell you where. Anyway he commissioned me to do the centre of that from... I had just parted from my husband then, and, one thing sort of led to another.

What was Osman like?

He was awfully nice, I was very fond of him. I offered to do it for nothing because it was such a kudos thing to do it, and he said, ‘Oh no,’ he said, ‘that never works. If you work for nothing, you know, you don’t have the say. One must be paid.’ And, I did one or two things for him, but those I did for nothing, one or two of his trophies I did the enamels on for him. But, he was awfully nice. He always lived in some very grand house which was derelict or something, I really mean grand, you know, huge old country house of some marvellous name, and he put up a workshop there. I thought he was a wonderful artist.

So on those commissions, were you working very closely with him in this space, or...?

No, no.

How did it...?

He just said what he, his idea was. Well I remember the thing for Exeter, he said, 'Well, I want it to have a feeling of resurrection and death,' and this that and the other. I said, 'Well Louis, you are asking for an awful lot in one thing aren't you?' But it worked out all right.

Had you known him before, or did you meet him...?

Yes, he was working in Combined Operations with my husband. And he came to the exhibition, and I had just divorced, and he came, because everybody went to the Leicester Galleries, and he had this commission, and so he offered it to me.

And what did you do, what was your work there for that?

Well, it's in the Lady Chapel now, it's in enamel. And it's sort of in two bits, it's sort of three-dimensional. The back sort of represents Heaven and things, and then the, well it's...that's a study for it, but it's on the corner...

If you wouldn't mind, I would still like you to try and put it into words for the tape recorder.

Oh I see. Well, the back, there's a back piece which is enamelled, and that has got, well it's got blues and things so it's sort of, it represents sort of Heaven and things of that sort. And then there's a middle bit, a three-dimensional bit, which represents death or something. It's a long time ago since I did it. But it was a very nice, a wonderful thing to be asked to do. And, I was very thrilled that this man, Pitman, said that he would have... He was choosing work for the Contemporary Arts Society the year before, he said, 'Or I would have bought that painting you did in Africa for them if only it had been my year,' but of course it didn't happen to me. But still, a miss is sometimes almost as good as a mile.

Can I just fill in, because when you started talking about Mr Heinemann, we hadn't got the tape on.

Oh Heinemann. Oh yes. So you see, oh well, well Helga said, could I take him off her hands, and so I said, 'Oh all right, I'll have him to tea'.

And what was his name?

Paul Heinemann.

And he was a collector?

No, he was an art dealer.

Right.

And he was a young man in love with our cousin in Munich at that time, and he had gone over to America, and he looked up Helga and then she passed him on to me, not with any thoughts except to really get rid of him. And so, and then he said, 'Well who did that painting?' It was a little landscape hanging on the wall in the dining-room. I didn't have any other paintings of mine hanging up at that time. And so he fished everything out that I had in the house in a cupboard upstairs, and took two to the Leicester Galleries.

And until you went to the Uffizi to be taught formally, who had taught you about painting?

Well the best teacher I had was really a German woman called Frau Verdien in Munich, and, but I was only there for four months because the whole idea was to take me away from this man you see. So I mean my parents weren't in the least bit interested who was teaching me or what, so long as I learned a bit of German and was kept busy. But she did teach one quite a bit about form, and I did a bit of, some modelling with her. She made some figurines for the Nymphenburg factory, she, her

husband had won a prize, he was also a potter, and. But it wasn't long enough. And then the teacher, the next one was the Uffizi man, and my mother wasn't in the least bit interested that I was really going to learn properly. And so, when she turned up with great Uncle Philip's letter of introduction, he said, 'I will teach the *signorina*,' and then he went brilliant scarlet. And my mother thought, 'Oh my goodness, what am I doing with this girl of fifteen, in his hands?' And he was a darling man, but he wasn't really a good teacher at all. And he wrote an extraordinary letter, which is in this book, saying that if I would give up the hot spots of the life and this that and the other, and stick to the narrow path of art, I might get somewhere, something to my mother, a very funny letter, which is in Graham's book. And, anyway, but he was a very sweet man. But he painted terribly old-fashioned. And then that was...and then I went to Paris, again to finish, to learn French, and...

When were you in Paris?

Well that was just before the war. And I went to the conventional art school, as well as the French in the place, and then I was allowed to go to an American, he was called Morse Rumel[ph], he was the grandson of the famous Morse. And he was the most opinionated artist I've ever met in my life, and he wasn't in the least bit interested in teaching me, and all he did was just to say, 'My work is the most wonderful thing, so you had better copy how I do things,' which was very bad for me. And that was painted by him, in that corner there, do you see?

Oh right. I'm just going to.....

End of F6744 Side B

F6745 Side A

But you see then I thought, and I was rather horror-struck, how I was being taught, but, and the man had married so I thought, oh well that's that. And I had a very nice coming out and all that.

What was that like?

Oh it was lovely. My mother was so sweet, and my father too. It was lovely. And I had dresses, the famous Charles James clothes. But I didn't have, and they were considered too eye-catching, but my mother had the dresses, and I had them in with my trousseau as well as my wedding dress, as Helga's was. And I had a wonderful letter from him from America, from one of my shows, about my work, saying how he could see I had been through sad things in my life, but everything is sort of meant, and it's all part of you, and you will come through it, and a wonderful letter, something really special. And, these, some of the clothes I had were very famous.

What were they like?

Well, the V&A bought one for permanent showing, whether they...but I don't think they've opened up that bit yet. Well they were very tiny in the waist, and, they are still shown. He was a great friend of Cecil Beaton, then they fell out for a while, but he is considered the greatest dress designer that's been, him and Balenciaga, the two. And he made Helga's wedding dress and he made mine. And then he, he was always late with his things, but I never had anything, or very very little when I came out, they were considered too eye-catching and all that, but my mother had them. And then, she went out into the street one day and he was walking his dog, called Zampan, and he crossed over the street and said, 'Oh Acthea, did you like my dress?' Well he delivered it in time for the dance the night before, but she hadn't bothered, she said, 'Oh well I'll wear it next time,' tomorrow, 'I've already prepared something,' so she didn't even have the box opened. And she saw a very funny look on his face, and so she dashed back and opened the box, and it was a white dress, and he had had a beautiful corsage of white flowers put on it, all half dead by this time. Of course she

hadn't thanked him. And, so, he was a very interesting man. And he thought my mother the most beautiful woman, he wrote that to her, I've got the letter, and said she was the most beautiful woman he ever knew except for his own mother, and what a wonderful character she had. It was when my father died. It was the only letter she didn't show us, but it was sent care of me, and after she died I found it, and I've got it. And that was rather nice. But he brings up my brother's death in a letter to me, saying he felt that that had perhaps a bearing on how I was in my life.

And do you think that's true?

Well I think one learned the sorrow of life, and how one just, how my parents, how brave they were, and how they did things for others instead of wallowing in self pity. And I think that taught me that. And then, after painting in the sky, these sky paintings, then I thought I must, I can't be in aeroplanes all the time, because you would have a baby slung in front of you suddenly at the last minute or something and then you couldn't paint, so I decided I must do it from the earth, so I decided to learn to enamel, which is what I did.

So, sorry, after Paris, you had...

I then came home and married.

So you weren't particularly painting at that point?

No, not at all.

And, can we just go back a bit. When you were growing up in your parents' home, what paintings were on their walls, what was surrounding you?

Well, there were the de Lászlós. There were four de Lászlós, my sister and brother and my mother and my aunt, there were four in the drawing-room. And, my father wasn't keen on collecting pictures, my mother was, but they collected furniture, they loved furniture, and the house was full of lovely furniture, which they bought together

or separately or whatever. And so they never really were keen on buying pictures, which was very... My mother was, but my father, that's... He said, 'My wife, my daughter and my granddaughter paint the paintings I want; I don't want anything else.'

So were your mother's paintings on the walls?

Yes. Not in the drawing-room, but she'd have them around in the library, or in the hall or something, and, she didn't have...we've got a lot of them, and we're very proud of them.

What are they like? Are they landscapes?

She was very good on people, and she... She had a very very good line. And Paul Oppie[ph], who became a very very great help to me, and a support, moral support of my enamels, and my paintings, he said, 'Your mother draws like Modigliani.' So I told my mother this and, 'Oh,' she said, 'what does he paint like?' So I said, 'Well I'll take you to the Tate Gallery and show you.' 'Oh no no,' she said, 'I don't want to see them,' she said. 'I want to keep my vision pure.' But she was much more, like in reading, she was much more knowledgeable than she let on. She went to Paris a lot with my father on business and she would go to the exhibitions that were on. And of course when she was young, that time, her father's generation didn't appreciate Munch, but she was taught the piano by Munch's sister.

And what was she like?

Well she was the very sad one who he lived with. And then my grandmother realised that life was very difficult for her with a brother like Edvard Munch, so she gave her a key to their house and said, 'Miss Munch, we have a piano at home, and if ever you want to, you are just to let yourself in; don't ask, but just come and use our piano.' And then they would come back from a drive and they would hear the piano going. But, my mother remembered that the parents didn't like Munch's paintings, so they were going to have a little demonstration of the girls, for the end of term or whatever,

and my mother and my aunt were going to perform, and some parents went to see Miss Munch and said that they had a request to make that the parents didn't like his paintings, so would they please be put out of sight. So, Edvard Munch said, 'Well, in that case I'm afraid we won't have the performance.' But some sort of compromise took place, and the paintings were there, but they were put on a slant. And then, my mother remembers that during the performance when they each did their little bit, that Munch came and walked across the platform in full view, very obviously, that they should all see he was there, and then walked out again. But she wasn't allowed to look at his paintings in the woods where he painted the girl on the bridge, that place, he had a house. And they went by carriage for holidays, and they were told to close their eyes when they passed the house, because the paintings were all round, outside. But my mother said we always had admirers on bicycles coming also, I think she said, 'You may be quite sure that they had a good look.'

And what did she think about his paintings later on?

She adored them, adored them. I took her to the big exhibition here, and she was absolutely thrilled. But she was brought up with Tolaw paintings and that generation, so, they didn't sort of appreciate Munch. I mean they were...came later.

And do you like his work?

Oh enormously. Yes.

And when did you first see it?

I first saw it in a lavatory in... And the... One of those ones where you, which is in the end of the garden in the summer house that my godmother had in Norway, where I used to go every summer, and she used to cut out pictures of, you know, Monet and all those sort of thing, and they hung on the walls on, with you know, just stuck on a wall. And it was the first time I ever saw modern painting. We had no training of modern painting at my school.

So how old would you have been when you encountered this?

Well I was, from about thirteen, fourteen.

And do you remember how you reacted at the time?

Yes, I remember being thrilled by them. You know, the men... I'm not thinking of Monets, I'm thinking of one of his contemporaries. I remember thinking them wonderful. I never thought I would be a contemporary artist myself.

And, did you see things in Munich, Italy or Paris that were really important as well?

Yes, I was taken to art galleries. And then my daughter had a travel thing connected with art called Grand Tours, which she arranged and organised and ran, and she took her friends, their friends, and my friends and their friends, on trips all over the place. We went once to China and we went once to India, but we also went to other countries, and then we, mostly, it was Russia twice, we were allied to seeing the art of the time. And then she took a lecturer with her, usually Terence Mullally, but it was that man who was a traitor, you know who I mean.

Blunt?

Yes, he came with us.

And what was he like?

Oh he was very... Well his uncle was a friend of my parents', I've got his books, he was the founder of the Chelsea Society, his uncle was, a very nice man. And he was an absolute charmer. I did ring his uncle up once but he wasn't terribly interested, so I left that subject. And, he came here when Juliet married, I gave two parties, once for the family here, and then the day of the wedding, the next day, at Cheyne Walk, my mother was still alive, and Blunt came. It was the time of the, when the scandal broke and he came and walked through the house and went out again in this room.

Somebody said to me, 'We saw Blunt here.' I said, 'Well I didn't see him.' He made his mark and then went out again. It was a very sad story.

And were you very shocked when it was all uncovered?

Yes, terribly shocked. Terribly shocked. I mean one had been through the war and all that sort of business, so I mean, a traitor's a traitor isn't he, one.. No, it was awful.

And you never encountered him again?

Well that was when he died, it was just before he died, just exactly before. I mean it was the time, they had a thing in, not 'Private Eye', yes 'Private Eye', with him, at just that time that he went on one of Juliet's things. By that time one knew he was for it, when he was in this house. But I mean one didn't turn one's back on him because of it. I don't think one does that.

But how would you have gone on in a relationship with him? I mean you must have had strong feelings about what he did.

Oh well, I mean, he was very allied to her with her work as a lecturer at times, and so it was natural to invite him. And it was, well, I mean... I mean it wasn't proved that he was a traitor at that moment, but it was...it was just breaking. I don't suppose one would have seen him. After all he did bring death to people, didn't he.

Mm. Did Brian Sewell come into your life at all ever?

No, never.

But, when I was asking about Paris and Italy I really meant when you were very very young, when you were there studying. Did you go to the big collections, did you see...?

Oh yes, yes we were taken to the Louvre, and, yes, we ended up with the Impressionists. One never saw anything beyond that, at that time. Well then, as I hadn't been painted by Uncle Philip, my parents commissioned a painting of me by a man called Barry Craig[ph], and it was just before war broke out, and so, then he...he liked what I did, drawing and things, and he said he would like to teach me. And so he took me to a lot of places, and so he showed me Matthew Smith's work for the first time and things like that. And then Renoir he was very keen on. And then he was teaching at a school in London, a very well known school, and war broke out, and he was over-classed, I mean there wasn't room for anybody more, so he smuggled me in.

Which school was this?

Well it's the one, it is a very well known one.

Not the Byam Shaw?

No, no, it isn't the Byam Shaw, no, but that comes into my life too. One of the very well known ones in London, and he was teaching portrait painting, and life. So he smuggled me in to the classes, so, and I was living at Cheyne Walk, and I wasn't separated from my husband but he had gone, the war was on then and he had gone to, he had joined the Air Force, and so I went to these classes. And he introduced me to Modigliani and all these people, the works of I mean. And then, then he went as a war artist, and died just after the war, he remarried and died just after, but....

[BREAK IN RECORDING]

Then a young man, who was a young sculptor, he told me of a very modern school, class, lessons, course that was taking place in London, and he thought it would be a good idea if I joined it, and I said, 'But I haven't any qualifications.' And he said, 'Oh well that doesn't matter,' he said, 'just put down the exhibitions you've had,' or where you've exhibited, or something like that. And so I did. And he killed himself, and, I had gone to America and I got this news when I came back, and I didn't have an idea where this course was on, and then suddenly out of the blue came the thing saying they had accepted me. And this was de Sausmarez, does that mean anything to you? He lived with Bridget Riley for a long time.

Oh right, yes.

And he made her famous. And, he was one of the, he didn't teach us but he came in, and nearly everybody, well everybody else had qualifications. And they didn't allow us colours, and we weren't allowed to keep our work, we weren't to be squirrels, we were to tear it up or whatever. And we did rather a famous thing, we did the moving nude, we did three nudes at the same time, which was, they did a film of it, which I believe is shown sometimes. And I think that was a very big breakthrough for me actually, you know, I sort of lost a lot of the shackles from the previous teaching I had had. And then, then I decided that I must learn to enamel, because I must paint, I must do my skies on earth, and so I signed on at the Central School.

And who taught you there?

Well, I can't think of his name for the moment. He was a funny little man, he had favourites, so if you were his favourite of the day you were all right, but if you weren't, he didn't go near you. And he was brilliantly clever. And then I had made friends with Paul Oppie[ph] with my exhibition at the, the one where I showed the first ones from the sky, when he came, and he sort of encouraged me enormously. You know his collection has been bought by the Tate, and he had this wonderful collection of water-colours that he, drawings, drawings, which, I think they paid £4 million for them, and he was just collecting them then, and they were unknown names, very, not totally but to the élite, but to people like me, I had never heard of them, half of them. And, he encouraged me, and I wanted to do 'The Seven Days of Creation'. And the oven, the gas oven I had the use of would only go (it's on the landing there) to this size, and I said to Paul, I said, he was old enough to be my father, he was years older... he was my father's contemporary, and I said, 'How can I do it in that size, Paul?' And he said, 'Oh yes you will, oh yes you will.' And, you know, he encouraged me so much, which was wonderful. And so then, it went on from there.

And how did you do it in a large scale?

Well it's on the landing there, if you want to look you'll see it. Well I just, I did drawings of light and darkness, and ending up with Adam and Eve, thinking of this man I had been love with when I was fifteen, fourteen. And then the middle day, God saw it was good. And I did it, and I showed it in New York. I've kept it together, because people have tried to buy one from me, but I don't want to split it up. And then, as I say, sort of gradually the enamels became more important.

And when you had begun to do enamels, were you always thinking of using it in the form of a picture, it was never going to be objects, it was...?

Yes, it was objects too. I wanted to sort of, I wanted to make a belt for my daughter, and, but I saw its potentiality very early, and.. And then, well we only had a little thing at the Central School, we had to grind every colour ourselves, and then my big ones, I did three big ones, they were done in a pottery kiln in the Central School. And he was a great, Woody, his name was Mr Woodard[ph], Woodard, Woodard was his name. He believed in you making your own mistakes, which was that if you ruined a piece of work you had worked very hard on, and then you did something silly, and then he could easily have told you, 'Don't do that,' but you did it, and then you didn't do it again. And, then we... And then for some reason or other, I don't know why I wanted to do *plique à jour*, which is my speciality, which you can see through, well there are three there but you can't see through them now because it's dark, those three in the window. Well that's the first one.

Right.

The white one, the mother. And then, as I say, the Leicester Galleries gave me a total show of enamels. And then I started to make a little jewellery, which has gone... And then I won two prizes at Goldsmiths Hall, one was for enamelling and one was for the most original thing. And all, everybody else were sort of young people, men, young students, and they called out, 'Marit Ashcan'. And I got up and walked to the rostrum

to get my £5 or £10 or whatever it was, and saying something, and then a huge thing of laughter because I was a woman.

So is it traditionally a male art?

There were very few women. Well it was all crafts, I mean it was jewellery, it was the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, it was everything. And then I sort of got the odd commission to make a necklace. And, well I made a necklace myself, and that was sort of seen, and then the odd person who had been in a museum or something suggested I should make it, and so I started making a bit of jewellery. And the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths bought my first pieces, and showed them with the necklace which they didn't buy. The V&A came and wanted to buy the big piece, but they couldn't afford it because it was set with diamonds, and, I mean I was quite willing to give it to them for nothing but I wasn't, they would have had to have paid for what it cost me. And so I've had quite a few commissions, which is very nice. But, I work on really mostly *plique à jour*, that you can see through them. I'll show you, there's a piece there.

Did you stop painting gradually, or do you still paint as well?

I've never stopped painting, I still paint. I take my paints to Norway, I used to paint in Switzerland when we went skiing. And, I was in America twice this year, I took my water-colours with me and painted. And, well I mean, it's sort of part of one's life, but...

And when you said you never started out thinking that you would become a professional artist...

Never.

Did there come a point where you realised you had become one, or...?

Yes, I suppose it did, because, it was really.. Well it was Barry Craig[ph] who gave me the push really, the one I told you about, who, I must remember the name of the school. It's a very well known one, it's still going strong. It's in London. I mean, you know, he just sort of said, you must un-learn the things you do badly, that you don't understand, form or this that and the other, and you know, he sort of shook me up a bit.

And when you were growing up, did you go to places like the Royal Academy and the Tate and the National Gallery, or not? Were you not taken there?

Well we did with Mrs Hope-Nicholson, but she sort of ended with Burne-Jones, Burne-Jones was sort of, and Rossetti, well Burne-Jones really, I mean she didn't sort of go beyond that. And, because where I went for the ten years, because her mother was Laura, Laura Hope, and, I mean we were much more encouraged to draw and paint water-colours. It wasn't...it wasn't really very good schooling.

Mm. And, which painters give you pleasure now, I mean whose painting shows do you go to?

Well, I like very modern things. Well, what...Let us think who I like the best. Well... Well, I'm very keen on Matisse, I'd put him as high as anybody. The contemporaries I like very much, most, a lot of them.

Contemporaries of Matisse?

Of Matisse, yes. I like later people too. I can't think of names at this moment, but...

And, was it through the paintings of the sky that abstraction came in to the work?

Yes.

And was that a conscious thing or was it just something that had happened?

Totally unconscious.

Because for many people it's still a big issue isn't it, whether something is figurative or abstract.

Yes.

I mean the most extraordinary way, that it should still be so really.

Yes. I mean that, I'm most passionate about, is the sky, but you can't just be up there all the time painting, I mean, you've got to bring it down.

And you said you were in Africa and you were painting in Africa.

Yes, well my husband, just after the war, he, on business went round Africa, so that's when they gave me the place in the Comet, to paint from the sky, to paint up in the stratosphere. And then of course I did landscapes, and then I had a show in London afterwards, and I...

So where in Africa were you?

Oh all around. Tanganyika, Kenya. It was the time of the Mau-Mau, and I had my paints wherever I went. I went to Zanzibar, and that was very exciting. And, I went there on my own, I left my husband and flew to Zanzibar, and did a couple of paintings.

What was it like?

Well, it was very, very jungle-ey. And then of course you had these famous carved doors. There was a woman who turned up just as I arrived, and she said, 'You don't want to paint those old doors everybody is painting.' She said, 'Get into the back of my van and I'll take you somewhere to paint.' So I lay in the back of her van, I mean literally lay in it, and she sort of dashed me off somewhere. She said, 'There you are,

this is the real jungle,' or something like that. She was quite mad. But, I'm a bit mad too, so...

And did you paint it?

Yes, of course. Yes, I never painted the doors.

And just to get it straight for the tape, who did you marry and when?

Well I married Carl Aschan when I was eighteen, and...

Where was your wedding?

In Chelsea, from Cheyne Walk, from the home there, where my sister's was too, both sisters' were. And in the big church that was burnt, you know, in the square, which is...

By Eaton Square?

Yes, that one, yes, that's where the wedding was.

And then did you have a honeymoon?

Yes, we had a honeymoon. I didn't paint.

In somewhere wonderful though, or not?

Yes, we flew to Germany, and, it was a bit of a disaster really, because various things happened, like my husband went off mountaineering and things. It was a time when Hitler was up in the Berchtesgaden, we went near there, and then we ended up in Capri, I think that was the bit I liked most.

And what was your husband's business in Africa?

End of F6745 Side A

F6745 Side B

What was he doing?

He was a hemp merchant.

Oh right.

He was with the top firm of that here called Wigglesworth. He was born in Sweden, Swedish parents, and he came as a boy of sixteen to England, went to Cambridge, and became an engineer when war broke out. He was over the age to be called up, but he joined the Air Force and then he ended up in Combined Operations, and that's where he met Louis Osman and people like that. And then my sister had been left in Norway, because my parents thought we were all going to be killed, and so she was left in the place which, where they had been fishing, and we didn't see her for six years, we couldn't get her out, because she was registered as being adopted by a Norwegian family. And English families were able to do things through the Red Cross but we weren't able to. But in the end my father went to the Irish people, the Irish, Mr Dulante[ph], who was the Irish Commissioner, High Commissioner for Ireland, and he said, 'I am born in Ireland, and you've got to help me get my daughter out'. And so, she was just going to be 21, and so they issued a passport for her, an Irish passport, and the only thing that was not genuine in it was her signature, which I had, my mother said, 'Well you're the artist in the family, you'd better do it'. And so I did. And it was sent over to her by the underground, she was sixteen when we saw her last. [TELEPHONE] [Oh hell, will you forgive me?]

[BREAK IN RECORDING]

She thought it was a false thing, because somebody from the underground just came to the door, rang the bell, and said nothing, handed her this passport and went away again. So they dug it in to the garden, they were so frightened of it, and then after a while she thought, well, 'I'd better get it out,' and she did. And she thought, still thought it was false, she went to the German Gestapo with it, and she said, 'I'm Irish, you must let me leave'. She couldn't say she was going to England. 'So you must let me leave for Sweden.' And they said, 'No, no, no we won't.' Well she was very

much my mother's daughter. And so she went again, and she banged the table, and she said, 'I demand to go. You are to let me go, I am Irish,' still thinking it was all false. And they let her go. And my then husband had become one of the air attachés in, Norway had fallen, he was sent over with the Norwegian to help the Norwegian forces, and when Norway fell to the Germans he went over on skis to Sweden, where he was born, and became one of the air attachés at the embassy there. So he got Ingrid back on a boat to us, and she worked for the Norwegian Government here. And she was the only one out of us, all of us, who was nearly killed, because a bomb hit the woman next to her when she was having a lunch break, and the woman next to her was killed. So she, the one who was sent away to be safe was really in the most danger at the end.

And did the fact that you had had a six-year gap cause a difference in your relationship?

Very much. She was very very difficult, she would snatch the food from, your plate from you and say, 'We eat this bit under the skin,' and all that sort of thing. And, she wasn't all that easy to get on with, and my mother and father, well, especially my mother, was in a bit of despair occasionally. But my mother and father both had joined the A.R.P. and they were out every single night fighting fires in Chelsea, but my father ran the bank in the day and my mother was number two at the Norwegian Red Cross, and my father helped the Norwegian Government enormously in many ways, and they were both given the biggest Order that Norway can give, which is called the Sint Olaf, both of them, which is very very unusual, and we are very proud of that, because of what he did for Norway and what she did for the Red Cross. She went to prisons and used to interrogate... Anybody who could claim that he was really a Norwegian, even if he was born a German had to be interrogated to find out if there was any truth in it, and, because of course quite a few Germans tried that on you see. So my mother would go off to these prisons and things. And so, she, you would have liked my mother, she was quite something. She used to go to a prison where the man, the governor was a woman-hater, and she realised that, and one day he said to her, he had one great passion in life which was footballing or something, and he had this prize-winning football that had won something, and he said, 'Mrs Guinness, will

you do me a favour?' And she said, 'Well what is it?' He said, 'Would you sign it?' She said all the men had signed except this woman-hater. Well then, the war ended and there was a mink coat missing, had been put into Harrods' store by a friend who went, escaped from Germany through my sister and went to America, and his mink coat had been put in Harrods' store, and my mother remembered, my mother said, 'Well, they'll never give it up,' to my sister, 'without a ticket or anything, but I'll go.' And so, she said, 'Come to think of it, my father in the Great War had put a coat in at Harrods' store too,' she said, 'I think I'll try and get that back as well.' No tickets. So they went to the manager of Harrods, and they were found, these coats. And my mother had to sign for them. So my mother said to my sister, my elder sister, who was very amusing, she said, 'Helga, the last time I signed something unusual was a football in prison.' And so my sister said, 'Oh Mummy, why a football?' And the manager of Harrods said, 'Mrs Guinness, why in prison?'

Splendid. What happened to Ingrid?

Well Ingrid married. She first of all got engaged to a man who died because he gave up his rations to his nephews and nieces and was undernourished, and so, he sort of proposed to her on his deathbed, and that was very upsetting. And then she was sent away to go to some island through my mother's best friend who had means and was able to take her there, a Norwegian, and there she met her future husband who was a chartered accountant, who she married. And there were two children, and then he died unexpectedly, and she died soon after my second sister died, my elder sister died. I'm the only one left now.

And did you become closer to Ingrid again later on, or was there always a sort of...?

Not ever really terribly close. I became very close to Helga. Ingrid was a very different character, and, I mean she was a very estimable person and a marvellous mother and cooked beautifully, which Helga and I didn't do, and she rather despised us for not being able to cook, or cooking the way we do, or did. And you know, her house was always perfectly tidy and all those things. And we had a lot of laughs

together of course, naturally, one does. But the one I miss most is the elder one, I miss her very much.

And when were your own children born?

Well they, David was born during the height of the war, and Juliet was born after the war.

And had you always wanted children?

Always. But my husband didn't want them.

Oh that must have been very hard.

It was awful. There was no way round it. I think his father persuaded him when he was in Sweden, he's never admitted it, but when he went to Sweden and his father said, 'You are an only son, it's your duty to have children,' to my surprise he was prepared to have a child when he came back.

Why didn't he want them, do you know?

I don't know. He never... But you see we didn't discuss that sort of thing, when I married I mean I just thought we would get a child.

And when he had children, did he become involved with them, or did he...?

It hasn't been a marvellous relationship, but, his relationship with Juliet is as good as can be. Of course he is very very Swedish. He's married at least twice since me, and a couple of times not been married, I mean there's been at least four, but two real marriages. And, he's convinced he still loves me, so, I don't quite know what the answer to that is.

And what about you with your children, were you instantly involved with them?

Oh yes. But I mean they, I was brought up that your parents weren't with you all the time, and David blames me all the time about that. I don't think I was stuck up because I think my husband feels that way, but I think he's forgotten all the bad bits, and I think that's very lucky.

And what do the two children do now? You talked a little bit about Juliet's travel business.

Well Juliet sold that. She had a take-over bid, and one of the well-known travel firms bought it with all the names and all that, but they didn't carry through the bit she did. And so really it's gone. People still say to me, 'Isn't Juliet doing anything?' Because it was such fun, because it was her friends and my friends, and you know, we...and we did such nice things. And it was great fun, that. And then David has been ill on and off, and so, I find that difficult to talk about.

Right. And do you have any grandchildren?

Oh yes, I've got six.

And are you close to them, are they part of your life?

Yes. I am, and I'm very involved, but, I mean, I suppose the two eldest, David's two eldest I know best, and Juliet's two I know best. But, it isn't sort of families, like when I was young. I mean, I couldn't think of going two or three days without going to see my mother. I mean it's an entirely different thing.

And actually just going back into previous family relationships, did you know Lucy's twin, was he called Noel?

Uncle Noel? Yes indeed I did.

What was he like?

Oh he was a dear. I wouldn't have said he was a great brain, and of course he was the father of the one we call Hare[ph], Henry Guinness, who ran the bank in Ireland, and he was an absolute darling, a terribly nice man, married to somebody called Betty, and he had a lovely garden which was full of, I don't think it was heathers but he collected plants, in Norway, he would take back little plants and things from there. But he came fishing every summer with my parents, and Betty didn't care for the fishing so she... It was a very very happy marriage, but they just didn't go together. And he's the one of course whose son, you know, was, the wife was kidnapped, that one.

Oh right.

And then he died falling off this mountain, just after... It was a terrible tragedy. He was running the bank in Ireland and he slipped, they went away for a holiday after she had got back. The Irish Government forbade him to enter into any agreements with the kidnappers. They thought they were kidnapping our distant cousin, you know, the head of the brewing, that's who they thought they were kidnapping. And that, my grandmother is related from that side, so Daddy was a double Guinness, so... But her father was a clergyman, and he married three times, and his first family got all the brewing money, and then his second wife died without children, and his third wife was my great-grandmother, years younger and very beautiful, and he gave her a life of privation in Australia where he took them by sailing ship and built a church called, which they called the Guinness Church. And he was horrid to her. And my grandmother, who was that one of the portrait, she was very very religious, and the Bible says you must honour your mother and father, so, my mother said she never mentioned her father, or just about didn't. But it's a very awful thing to take a young wife away from Ireland, much much younger than you, six children, five or six children, Granny was the only girl of that marriage, and then, I mean there was no help, there was nothing. He forgot to put in a bathroom, he forget to build a bathroom on, and then he had to build that on outside, and all that sort of thing, you know. And,

she did have a very hard life. But, it must have been... And then Granny came back and married my grandfather, a distant cousin.

And had a very different life.

A very different life. She was very very religious, and, I mean they said prayers every day, Grandad said prayers in his dressing-room, and we sort of knelt with him, and then they said prayers after breakfast as well.

And are you religious?

No, I wouldn't say I am.

And were you Church...?

I hope to meet Michael, but I don't want to otherwise.

And were you churchgoing as a child?

Oh, no, only with my grandparents, when we were there we were churchgoing. We often drove down in time for church, to join them in church, and then go to Clandon Regis where they lived in Surrey, you know, for lunch. My grandmother doted on my mother, her daughter-in-law, she said to her, 'You've been more than a daughter to me,' which was true.

And was Ireland part of your growing up, or not?

Not at all. We went, Daddy bought a flat in Ireland near where he was born, in Dun Laoghaire, or near Dun Laoghaire, just the other side of the water. Hare[ph], the one we were talking about, John's...Noel's son, he lived up at the top, you couldn't see it but we lived at the bottom. And, we used to love to go for the Dublin horse show, we would go there, and my mother was very happy in Ireland, she loved the Irish. And

so we did go quite a bit there. Then my father got old and got rid of the flat, and that was that.

And, did you have any idea of the relationship between Noel and Lucy, were they special because they were twins, or...?

I don't know anything about that at all. But I only know that I never thought of Uncle Noel as being a very brainy man, but Hare[ph] was, his son.

And did you know any other of Lucy's brothers?

I knew none of them. That's all Grandad's side, and then Granny's side which was also Guinness, I knew them. No, I did know, I knew a Eustace Guinness, we called Little Eustace, who was the brother of Humphrey Guinness, the man who was the crack shot for playing polo, and that was that side you're asking me about, and we called him Little Eustace. And he wasn't allowed by his mother to meet his brother; she took against him because her husband went to the Boer War, I think it was the Boer War, and so she was separated from him, and so she took against the child, which was Humphrey, and Grandad took him in with his five sons because they were threatening him, to put him in a sort of mental home or something. He was no more mental than you or I are. But he had a funny laugh, and he was very brainy, and he became a good stockbroker, but he never married. And then his brother was Humphrey, who she doted on, the mother, and one day he saw Humphrey somewhere and he said, 'Would you mind introducing me, because I've never met my brother'. Extraordinary.

And did they then become...?

And now Uncle Philip painted her portrait. That's come back to me that. Because they are trying to locate all the pictures. And, she must have been a very cruel woman, don't you think?

Or very hurt I suppose, is the only other interpretation.

Yes, that's true.

And did the brothers become friends, or not?

No. No. No, no. Eustace told that story with a laugh. No, they didn't become friends. I'm sure he would liked to have. And then, who else was on Grandad's side? Well of course there was Uncle Harry, the eldest, the eldest one, who wrote the family tree, got together the family tree, he's the one who accosted Alec Guinness's mother and asked how she christened her. He went through the gate and rang her doorbell. Cluse[ph] her name, Mrs Cluse[ph]. And he rang her doorbell and he said, 'I'm writing the Guinness family tree, I wonder if you would kindly tell me why you christened your son Guinness?' Because he is christened Guinness, Alex Guinness, and Cluse[ph] is his surname, her name. At which she shut the door in his face. But we all absolutely convinced that he is a Guinness, and that one of my grandfather's cousins, there were two of them, neither of them, both were married, one at least twice, but then none of them, neither of them ever had any children, and one of them we are all convinced is the father of Alec Guinness. And in fact a will has been seen in which that one left her money for life, that she got every month or whatever. So, but Alec Guinness doesn't want to think that he is a Guinness, and he wrote in, a cousin in Ireland, a book, the other day, he wrote 'Alex Guinness', and underneath he wrote 'alack', alas. But he is a Guinness, I mean, because he's like my father, he's like my uncles; he talks like them.

Has it been very important to you to be a Guinness, do you feel it as a defining part of you?

Yes, very much.

And does that marry up with you as an artist, and you as a...?

Well it's rather, something I had to rather live down to begin with, because you know, there were one or two well-known families in America showing, and one always

rather said, 'Oh well, they've got where they are because of what they are,' and then when I parted from Carl, I was having my first show at the Leicester Galleries of enamels, and that was my second show in London, but my first show of enamels, they invited me, and they begged me to call myself Marit Guinness, and drop the Aschan. Young Philips did. And I thought it was very hurtful to Carl, and to the two children, and I didn't see any reason to flaunt the name Guinness. I mean nowadays it doesn't mean any more than Smith, but at that date it rather gave you the feeling you were perhaps getting where you were because of it. And you see when I got the two prizes at Goldsmiths' Hall, one for the enamelling prize and one for the most original piece of work, you see I was called out 'Aschan', 'Marit Aschan,' and they all thought I was a man, and there was ribald laughter in the hall, seeing a woman go up, and they just said, 'We thought you were a man'.

And, I mean have you felt any alliance with other female artists, or other females for that, I mean, has the feminist movement meant anything?

Not at all, not at all. No. No, all the artists I've known best have been men. Barry Craig[ph], he had a wife who was painting, Dosier[ph], not Dosier[ph], it was his second wife, she didn't, she married again and pursued other things. Well, I knew of course Dame Ethel Walker very slightly, that's her painting there.

Oh yes, I was looking at that.

And I inherited her studio through an artist, a Polish artist called Marion Crotokvil[ph] who gave me quite a number of lessons on colour and formation of the face and things like that. He wasn't the Barry Craig[??] who taught me in the school, where he was teaching. I wish I could remember the name of the school, I mean, it's one of the well-known ones. Anyway, and, he gave me lessons, and he was very annoyed that I went on to enamels, because he considered enamel a very secondary thing. But, he came to my last show in London at the Saga Gallery and then he had come round, so that was all right.

And did you say the Byam Shaw came into your life?

Yes. Well they put on this extraordinary, it wasn't quite... Byam Shaw was connected with it, it was up at Kensington Church Street, there was a school on the left there, and it was in holiday time, and I had just parted from my husband, we weren't divorced but I was parted from him, and I went to do this course. And everybody else except me was sort of really professionals, they were teachers mostly, and they were just teaching us to try to look upon things in another way, to try to paint from outwards inwards and not inwards outwards, and not do an outline, and tear a thing up, don't think of anything, don't be squirrels. And we weren't allowed to use colour. And as I say, de Sausmarez, who had then just got attached to Bridget Riley, he came in one day, he was one of the people who ran it. And, I think that was a great jump for me.

Was getting divorced very shattering to you, in terms of how it was to be a divorced woman at that point, or not?

Yes, yes it was awful, because my father was so terribly against it. He felt you should just put up with anything and you should never...he wouldn't...he didn't want it. But when Michael wrote finally, about six years later, that, well much more than that, twelve years later, that we were getting married at last and that he wanted to marry me and all that, my father was terribly happy. But then he was dying from cancer, so he never lived to see it, but...

Did you feel your father's lack of understanding about how it might be, putting up with anything as you put it, was that a very upsetting response from your father?

Well, my mother said, he said in front of my mother, 'I forbid you to divorce unless you've got somebody else to marry,' and I hadn't. So, he said, 'Well you're not going to divorce.' And my mother said, 'I think, Sam, we should think of how unhappy our daughter has been.' And my husband, ex, was there in the room. This was two years before I divorced him. And, no, it wasn't when I parted from him,

because it was six years, six years before. And my husband never forgave my mother for that remark.

So it was you who wanted the divorce was it?

Well yes, because I found he had somebody else, and I thought he wasn't in the least bit interested in me. And I just didn't really see the point. And, I mean we loved skiing together, and we both liked Scandinavia, because he came from Sweden, and I am half Norwegian, and we liked travel, but that isn't really enough for a marriage.

And, did you have friends who supported you? Because it was not a sort of...

Oh, it was so tiresome. Yes, one or two women friends, one or two, but not very many. Because you see he's very good-looking, and he rather charmed my women friends, and so, they thought I was an awful fool to let this go. And, it was very very difficult, because my father was so against it, and I didn't do it till six years later, and then it still took two years. He wouldn't give me a divorce. And, but I mean he had women falling over themselves wanting to marry him.

But part of it must have been that you needed some independence, that you wanted to have the space to yourself?

No, it wasn't that really, I'm very much the marrying sort. No, far from it.

Were you afraid of being alone?

I found it very difficult. I still do. But, it wasn't difficult when Michael was alive, but when he died very suddenly then it all became that again. But, I wouldn't just marry for companionship. I think it's got to be, it's very difficult when you've sort of had families, and, you know, you are involved with your own family. I mean I would gladly marry somebody in England I was in love with, I've nothing against that, I'm all for it, but, I couldn't have abandoned my son in hospital and things.

Mm. Do you think the world's got better for women than it was before?

I don't think it has. I mean, there's equality of women. I mean this comes up quite often when people are talking to me, about giving advice to their daughters or something, or grandchildren or something and saying, 'Now you realise that a man doesn't pay for you, a man does this that and the other.' Well, I think we're both totally different, men and women, so why not have some of the perks as well as all the rest?

End of F6745 Side B

End of Interview