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File: **LR003218 - Vivian Daniels (interview 41).wav**
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START AUDIO

Interviewer: A history of North Regional broadcasting. This is interview number 41, Vivian A. Daniels. Was the 'A' Anthony?

Vivian Daniels: No, it wasn't.

Interviewer: You're not saying. (Laughter)

Vivian Daniels: No, I'm not saying.

Interviewer: Right, Vivian A. Daniels it is.

Vivian Daniels: That's right.

Interviewer: First of all, Vivian, tell me a little about life before the BBC.

Vivian Daniels: Life before the BBC: Manchester University. Do we need to start…? I suppose we could start a fraction earlier than that

and start with Manchester Grammar School and Lady Macbeth.

Interviewer: Yes, exactly. I'm looking at the programme here.

Vivian Daniels: There we are.

Interviewer: December 1937 and probably the first time V.A. Daniels got a professional billing as Lady Macbeth.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, I imagine so.

Interviewer: And a write-up, too, I notice.

Vivian Daniels: The critic eventually married my sister, (Laughter) but we didn't know that at the time.

Interviewer: He was so impressed seeing you as Lady Macbeth he thought, "I wonder if she has a sister."

Vivian Daniels: [Or something; or something 0:01:06], yes, maybe.

Interviewer: Yes, that's how it happened. They gave you quite a nice write-up. They gave you quite a nice write-up.

Vivian Daniels: So I believe; so I believe, yes.

Interviewer: Yes, 'Who came through well through the classical test of histrionics and the sleepwalking scene.' There we are.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: Your first claim to fame at Manchester Grammar, December 1937, as Lady Macbeth. Let us take it from there.

Vivian Daniels: Alright. Then on eventually to Manchester University, where I didn't stay very long, because the war broke out. I then went and worked in several places but principally as a petroleum chemist. That was because the Labour Exchange found out that I was reading for a BSc and they'd totally ignored the fact it was a BSc in Psychology and sent me to work in an oil refinery. (Laughter)

I spent about three-and-a-half years there and then about two-and-a-half years again being directed with Medical Research Council, playing about with radium, during which I lost my fingertips, which has some relevance today because, because of that, during that time I lost my fingertips. Consequently, I can't read Braille, which is more than a bit of a nuisance.

However, and then eventually when the war finished, I then started working as an actor in the theatre, and did that for a couple of years and then went to Trieste to join British Forces Radio in Trieste. That was very enjoyable.

One of the things that I do remember doing was launching a once-a-week – I think it was a 45-minute – radio slot in which all I did was improvise a story. I went into the studio with the opening sentence of some lunatic story and was then handed, every five minutes, a 78 rpm disc and asked to work the title of one side of it into the story, and did that until I got to the title. Then we played the disc, and then I started again and carried on. (Laughter) It was a daft idea, but it was mildly entertaining.

We did all sorts of curious things in forces broadcasting, but I did do some radio production as well, because we did have a radio studio. This was in a large house on the top of a hill in Trieste, in a gorgeous spot, but the house was a rather sad place. It was known as the 'Villa Triste' – the 'Sad Villa' – because it had been the Gestapo headquarters during the war. These are the sorts of things that one remembers.

However, eventually it was over, and I came back and I started looking around for jobs. Eventually, after I think about six months, I saw an advert in the paper for a drama producer in North Region, and applied for it, and was shortlisted. I seem to remember an enormously complex interviewing situation which involved… I think there were four, or four or five, of us on this shortlist, and we went across to Leeds and spent a full day going through several hoops.

The long and short of it is that I didn't get the job. I got a little letter from… Signed Robert Stead, saying, 'I'm sorry you haven't got the job, but there we are,' and promptly forgot about it, and about six months later had a letter from Bob Stead, saying, 'There's a job going in Manchester, not as a drama producer but as the overseas assistant for the region. Would you like it? If you would, if you can start a week on Monday, we'd be only too pleased to see you,' or words to that

effect, anyway. That was how I began. That brought me into the BBC.

0:06:16

Interviewer: That was 1949?

Vivian Daniels: That was September, I think, '49, yes.

Interviewer: Looking in this magnificent tome of yours, cuttings and things, Vivian, I see Thursday 23rd March 1950. I immediately recognise the building because we did television from there – and, indeed, radio – Lyme Hall, home of the Legh family. It says, 'In 'Woman's Hour', Vivian Daniels describes the hall and introduces listeners to some of the people he met there.'

Vivian Daniels: Fancy that. (Laughter)

0:06:47

Interviewer: That was part of overseas, was doing 'Woman's Hour' for the home market?

Vivian Daniels: Presumably, yes.

Interviewer: Yes. Page two you're interviewing a young artist from the ___ galleries, presumably for overseas.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

0:07:03

Interviewer: Quite a lot going on for you in 'Woman's Hour', though, through 1950/51.

Vivian Daniels: Quite a lot of press cuttings about 'Woman's Hour'; no press cuttings about much else, but that's because that was what the press was interested in, but the things that I was doing for overseas were very, very curious.

I can still remember the very, very first piece of broadcasting I did for the BBC, which was to be sent up to Tyneside to cover either a flood or a drought. I'm not sure which, but I remember chasing around all around Newcastle, and scrambling into the studio by about 5:30 and putting my notes together to go on the air in some programme that began at 7:00, and sitting in the studio at 6:55 with my knees quivering.

A little fellow, a little Tyneside/Geordie fellow came in. He was an engineer and he came into the studio, carrying in his hand a kitchen alarm clock – one of those things with two bells on the top and a pinger. I said, "What are you doing? He said, "I'm just checking the studio clocks," and opened the studio clock and put the clock right by his alarm clock. (Laughter)

Interviewer: Very Mickey Mouse.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

0:08:34

Interviewer: Vivian, what were your initial impressions of coming into the BBC?

Vivian Daniels: I seem to remember, in a room at the end of the corridor in London House, was it called?

Interviewer: Yes.

Vivian Daniels: Feeling very lonely. That's my strongest impression. I know that Graham Miller, who was Head of Talks, to whom I technically worked as overseas assistant, although not officially, he didn't stick his nose in, but clearly someone had had to carry the can for the overseas assistant. As Head of Talks, he carried it. I remember his room was about three doors down. Who were the other fellows [in Talks 0:09:33]?

Interviewer: In London House, Bob Gregson.

Vivian Daniels: Bob Gregson; Bob Gregson was the other one. That's right, but I didn't have a great deal to do with either of them. I was left curiously alone as overseas assistant, because most of my contacts were with London, simply telephone calls from people saying, "Would you go and do this?"

I remember being asked by – now, who was it? It probably was David Porter in North American Service who asked me to go to Preston to do an interview with the pilot of a new plane that he'd just test-flown. It was a services plane of some kind. Whether it was an early version of the Canberra; I think it was, and he'd just test-flown it.

David had come up and we did the interview, or at least I tried to do the interview. Every time I tried to ask the test pilot how fast it flew, what speed it had gone at, he avoided the issue and eventually we had to stop recording. I said to David Porter, “Look, this is daft. There’s no point in asking him. I’ll have to start again.”

He said, “No, what you must do is go on asking him how fast it flew, until he admits that he is not going to tell you. Then you’ve got the situation clear.” I began to learn a little about talks broadcasting for North American Service. There were all sorts of-

0:11:18

Interviewer: I should think it would have been David Porter because, of course, David was an instructor, a flying instructor.

Vivian Daniels: Was he?

Interviewer: Yes.

Vivian Daniels: I didn’t know that.

Interviewer: His most famous pupil was one Jimmy Edwards. (Laughter) How he got Jimmy off the ground one wonders.

Vivian Daniels: I can’t imagine.

Interviewer: He talks about it in this history of North Regional broadcasting, does David. Of course, he [was 0:11:38] shot down a prisoner of war in Germany.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

0:11:42

Interviewer: You had a sort of roving reporter, then, brief as the overseas-?

Vivian Daniels: Yes. It was simply that there was this character called the overseas assistant, who was there, and available, and anybody's dummy for anybody in overseas broadcasting. One used to get phone calls asking for the most extraordinary things, but I don't remember many of them.

0:12:11

Interviewer: For how long did that situation remain?

Vivian Daniels: I began to settle down after probably about a year, when I think I got the 'Woman's Hour' brief. That gave me something a bit more meaty to get my teeth into. I did that – that, together with overseas assistant – for another year so that by the time two years had gone there was another drama producer going begging. Who had left I don't quite know, but somebody must have done.

Interviewer: I think the producer who was appointed when you were shortlisted but didn't get the job would have been Patrick Campbell.

Vivian Daniels: More than likely. That's right.

Interviewer: Yes, because Dick Gregson-

Vivian Daniels: Then presumably it was when Dick went two years later. Patrick Campbell took over his reins as Head of Drama or whatever, and I went in as his number two.

Interviewer: Yes. The other two over in Leeds, of course, had been Rex Tucker, but Rex left very early to go to children's television.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, but we didn't overlap. Yes.

Interviewer: And the famous Guy Deghy

Vivian Daniels: The famous Guy Deghy, that's right. (Laughter) He was a funny fellow.

0:13:33

Interviewer: Whom I think quite a few of us used in our plays, didn't we, more than perform for?

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

0:13:42

Interviewer: Tell me, then, you arrive in Leeds as the new drama producer. What did you find there? What did you find in the way of studio facilities, Vivian?

Vivian Daniels: The studio, I found the studio, this large – well, it seemed fairly large after Manchester. It was about the size of Studio One in Manchester, in fact, wasn't it?

Interviewer: Yes.

Vivian Daniels: Or a little.

Interviewer: Perhaps a little bigger.

Vivian Daniels: Perhaps a little bigger, with a balcony. Why it had a balcony I never worked out, but it did have, and it had the standard upstairs control room. We didn't call it a gallery. What did we call it?

Interviewer: Studio control cubicle.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: Rather nice, though, because in Leeds I always felt very superior producing from Leeds. I looked down on everyone.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, because you looked down.

Interviewer: Manchester, of course, we were eye to eye, ground level. (Laughter)

Vivian Daniels: Yes. Of course, it also had those two little rooms under the balcony.

Interviewer: Yes, the dead room.

Vivian Daniels: One was an absolutely dead room and one was a reasonable acoustic talks acoustic room so that it did give one the possibility of using three microphone locations at once, anyway.

In fact, we tended to do the majority of drama productions in the rooms under the balcony, rather than in the big room, because we couldn't get the acoustics right in the big room until eventually somebody supplied – and I don't quite know where they came from – these six gigantic screens.

Interviewer: Acoustic screens, yes, absorbent on the one side.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, which were about 12ft high, flat on one side and absorbent, with a bowed plywood backing to them, almost like half a cylinder. They really were gigantic and constantly falling over with lively actors.

0:15:53

Interviewer: On the other side, of course, they were reflective, so you had a hard surface, didn't you?

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: You [built the] acoustic that way.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

0:16:00

Interviewer: Again looking through your cuttings, Vivian, we're in October and the first billing that you've kept yourself for drama is 'The Thursday Play': 'A Deal of Killing'. It's written by-

Vivian Daniels: Written by Robert Gittings.

Interviewer: Adapted by Gittings. It's by Ivan Butler, adapted by Anthony Gittings.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, and I have no recollection of what it was about. (Laughter)

Interviewer: You had some good names from the North there, apart from Richard Hurndall. You had Barbara Greenhalgh, Tom Harrison.

Vivian Daniels: Dear old Tom from Leeds, yes.

Interviewer: Yes, the Co-op funeral service director.

Vivian Daniels: Tom who… That's it, yes, that's right. (Laughter)

Interviewer: Alfred Bradley used to say you could never use Tom on a Sunday, because then he used to say, "I'm terribly sorry, I will be viewing some of the bodies."

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: Norman Somers.

Vivian Daniels: Yes. Norman Somers. He was the man who wore rather gay clothes.

Interviewer: That's right, and became an announcer at Granada in later years.

Vivian Daniels: Did he?

Interviewer: Yes. Dorothy Gordon, [Constance Sykes 0:17:01], and the Inspector, by the venerable Pat Woodings.

Vivian Daniels: My goodness, poor Pat Woodings, yes.

0:17:09

Interviewer: He did a lot of drama, I think, for all of us, didn't he, in his time?

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: Then just turning over, in November you're doing Allan Prior's 'The Prawn King'.

Vivian Daniels: Allan Prior is a very important person in my life, I must say, because I felt a tremendous rapport with Allan Prior. He worked in Blackpool, in some terrible ministry, and he'd written a novel called 'A Flame in the Air', which was an absolutely belting, smashing first novel.

He came from Tyneside. 'The Prawn King' was set in Tyneside. I don't remember much about 'The Prawn King'. In fact, I don't really member anything about it at all, but Allan Prior wrote a lot of plays, quite a number of plays that I directed, both on radio and television. Of course, he's still going and is a very, very well-established writer – novelist, as well as television and radio writer. He's a smashing man.

0:18:31

Interviewer: Then just a month later we get to December. You're doing another Wednesday matinee, 'The Legacy'.

Vivian Daniels: 'The Legacy'.

Interviewer: Or 'The Tippler and his Dog ', a new comedy by George Bellairs.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, I think probably best forgotten.

Interviewer: But a very good cast list, thinking in terms of northern performers: Fred Fairclough, Herbert Smith, Valerie Skardon, Jimmy Miller.

Vivian Daniels: Jimmy Miller?

Interviewer: Better known as Ewan MacColl, yes.

Vivian Daniels: Jimmy Miller. Jimmy Miller, of course, whom I'd worked with in Theatre Workshop during the years before I joined the corporation, yes. He died only recently, in fact, yes.

Interviewer: Very recently, yes. Jimmy Miller, Reginald Waithman, Betty Alberge, Frank Crosland. Then some of the other parts: further relations, fishwives, market-men, and other inhabitants – Doris Gambell, Randal Herley, Joan Littlewood

Vivian Daniels: Who was Jimmy's wife, of course, yes.

Interviewer: Wife, yes, first a time. Norman Somers, Graham Tennant. Pat Woodings. There we are.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, a better cast list than the play, I think. (Laughter)

Interviewer: A little while later, Vivian, we come to 'The Thursday Play': 'Tomorrow May Be Fine', Ken Horton.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: We'll be coming on, of course, to television at a later time. We're still in the days of the wireless in the early and mid-'50s. Two very nice photographs of your leading ladies in Ken Horton's play: on the left Miss Doris Gambell, on the right Miss Violet Carson.

Vivian Daniels: At one time I thought 'Tomorrow May Be Fine' was not a bad piece, but I now can't remember much about it at all, which is rather sad. However, maybe if I could hear a script, I'd be reminded. (Laughter)

0:20:31

Interviewer: The memory is holding up very well here, a picture of a very young John Slater sitting with you in the [Leeds] ___. Wasn't he splendid?

Vivian Daniels: John was.

Interviewer: Then something I remember you doing for us for 'Children's Hour', a lovely billing in the 'Radio Times': 'Henry IV, Part 1', edited and produced by Vivian A. Daniels at '5:12 approx,' it says. (Laughter) How's that?

Vivian Daniels: Is that Part 1 or Part 1?

Interviewer: That's Part 1.

Vivian Daniels: It was 'Henry IV, Part 1, Part 1'.

Interviewer: Yes. These, of course, we were doing because they were set books for matriculation and so we used to [do those in 0:21:09] 'Children's Hour'.

Vivian Daniels: Yes. John Slater, I must tell you, I remember John Slater. One of the fondest memories I have of John Slater was when he came to do a play for me in Leeds and he arrived on the… It was a two-day rehearsal one and he arrived. He had a rather smart neckerchief on of red silk, with a yellow pattern, and I said, "That's a smashing neckerchief." He said, "Thank you," and carried on.

The second evening we came to transmission, which I think was 9:15 or something like that, and sort of 10:55pm he was leaving the building to go and catch his train, and he said, "Thank you very much, Vivian. I've enjoyed it very much.

Here's a little present for you," and handed me the neckerchief. (Laughter) That was John Slater all over.

Interviewer: Exactly, yes. Now we're coming to an author whose work you obviously thought highly of, because you produced several of his writings. It's 'Children's Hour', Vivian. The title is 'The Thwarting of Baron Bolligrew', adapted by you and produced by you, and written, of course – it's rather strange here-

Vivian Daniels: Robert Oxton Bolt.

Interviewer: Oxton Bolt, yes. One doesn't see that very often these days.

Vivian Daniels: No. Robert is certainly, I think, quite without any room for argument at all, the writer of the highest quality whose work I've produced – who is a contemporary writer, anyway. He was absolutely brilliant.

'The Thwarting of Baron Bolligrew' I adapted. He'd written it as a short story, and I turned it into a play. From then on, he then took off and he wrote his own plays from then on. No doubt you'll come to something else of his.

Interviewer: Yes. The very first one he did – interestingly that this should be for 'Children's Hour' – was for 'Children's Hour' West Region, and he wrote it for Mollie Austin, who was the organiser. It was called 'The Banana Tree'.

Vivian Daniels: No, I never heard that.

0:23:30

Interviewer: That was his very, very first. He was teaching at the time. Was he teaching when-?

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: I want to come to the main one, of course, of his that you did. Just going through, you've done 'The Thursday Play', Galsworthy's 'Strife'.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, which is a good play.

0:23:47

Interviewer: Yes, goes well on radio. I'm just going through now. May I explain, Vivian, why I'm turning over the pages of your scrapbook?

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: You mentioned the fact earlier on that in working with radium you'd lost the tips of your fingers and couldn't read Braille.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

0:24:07

Interviewer: Now you have a guide dog. Therefore, unfortunately, you're not able to read your lovely cuttings, but I am, so excuse me peering and nosing into them, won't you? (Laughter)

Vivian Daniels: That's alright. You're a great help.

0:24:21

Interviewer: On a much lighter tack, 'The Thursday Play': 'Call Me Uncle Charley', Ross Cockrill comedy, with a very nice illustration. By Jove, those days we got some illustrations, didn't we, in the 'Radio Times'?

Vivian Daniels: Yes, we did; we did.

Interviewer: We were very lucky, very well served.

Vivian Daniels: Yes. On very rare occasions, I used to write to the Editor of 'Radio Times' and say, 'Could you let me have the original?' and on a couple of occasions he did. They were rather nice. They're somewhere in the bookcase.

Interviewer: Yes, I have one or two.

Vivian Daniels: You have?

Interviewer: Yes.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, but I don't have any Eric Frasers, because Eric Fraser never illustrated my programmes, the rotter. (Laughter)

Interviewer: Now we come to something that you can be justly proud of: Anthony Jacobs stars in 'The Master'.

Vivian Daniels: Yes. When people ask me, "Do you think that anything that you produced had any importance at all?" that is certainly one of the pieces that immediately comes to mind. It was a gigantic undertaking for a young writer. I don't know; do you want me to tell you what it was about?

Interviewer: Yes.

Vivian Daniels: Not really.

Interviewer: Yes, I think a little would be rather nice, about the wandering scholars in the Middle Ages.

Vivian Daniels: It was set in the 11th century – 11th or 12th century – and it concerned a young cleric from Bury St Edmunds who, at the beginning of the play, goes to the master of the cloister and says, "I have to go away and find the master." The master of the cloister says, "But you know who is the master?" He said, "No, I have to go and find him."

He then travels round Europe, an enormously complex tale. As he succumbs to one sin after another – one of the divine sins after another – he becomes more and more of a man. It still chokes me even to talk about it: right at the end of the play, when he has done all manner of terrible things and he goes back to Bury St Edmunds, and he goes back there to die.

Interviewer: You had songs translated by [Helen Waddell 0:27:07]

Vivian Daniels: Sung by a marvellous-

Interviewer: Alfred Deller. Gosh, what a countertenor, Dudley Jones, and again Ewan MacColl, accompanied by Desmond Dupré, music composed, arranged, and conducted by John [Hotchkiss 0:27:24].

Vivian Daniels: By Hotchkiss, yes.

Interviewer: Played by the BBC Northern Orchestra.

Vivian Daniels: That's right. It really was a storming good piece.

Interviewer: Those were the days when radio could be done in Technicolor.

Vivian Daniels: That's right, yes.

Interviewer: Given the right script, given the facilities, the programme allowance.

Vivian Daniels: Yes. It didn't cost a great deal; it really didn't.

Interviewer: No. I'm now going to turn to another side of your work if I may, Vivian, and that is television. Here I can say without fear or favour, "You are unique," (Laughter) because – "Wait for it," you're saying to yourself-

Vivian Daniels: I'm the only man with three heads.

Interviewer: No, but you're the only man who did television drama in the North Region. You were the first and the only one, really. I mean [home produced 0:28:22]. We had guests.

Vivian Daniels: The only one on the staff of North Region.

0:28:24

Interviewer: On the staff. We had guest people from time to time, but 99% they are your productions, so let me begin by asking you: does 25th October 1954 ring a bell? It's your first production credit as a producer of television drama from the North Region.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, go on.

0:28:46

Interviewer: Do you remember the play?

Vivian Daniels: No.

Interviewer: It was called ‘The Blue Suit’. It was a Tyneside comedy.

Vivian Daniels: Was it? (Laughter)

Interviewer: Yes, directing the cameras because you couldn’t be expected to know all that.

Vivian Daniels: With Barney Colehan.

Interviewer: Barney Colehan, yes. Yes, you gave him the money and he directed for you, presumably. We’d only just bought Dickenson Road in ‘54 from Mancunian Film people.

Vivian Daniels: I’m pretty sure we did this in some sort of church hall up in Tyneside, but really there is not one whisker of memory about it at all.

Interviewer: There we are. It was ‘The Blue Suit’ – the first, as I say, to bear your name on a production credit.

Vivian Daniels: Oh, well.

Interviewer: There's a gap, of course, because from '54 until '56-

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: Sorry, I've interrupted you.

Vivian Daniels: No, I was just going to say that I have no doubt I know exactly why there's a gap, and that was because the BBC realised after that had been transmitted that Vivian Daniels had better get some training. (Laughter)

Interviewer: That might have been the case, Vivian. I'll ask you about that in a moment. In point of fact, of course, we were using Dickenson Road, if you remember, on a drive-in basis, using the outside broadcast things.

0:29:57 It wasn't very satisfactory for any of us, was it? July 1956 I'm going to come to, because that's when you do the first regional television play production from the refurbished Dickenson Road. Dickenson Road, of course, was the first BBC studio outside of London.

Vivian Daniels: Was it?

0:30:18

Interviewer: Yes. What happened with television for you between 'The Blue Suit' and your first production from Dickenson Road? Did they give you some training?

Vivian Daniels: Yes. I did, presumably, a three-month course in London, together with all sorts of people – announcers and I can't remember, but there were some very good people on the course.

0:30:44

Interviewer: They were good courses, weren't they?

Vivian Daniels: There was also, of course, Richard Burton's father was, I think, the head of staff training at the time.

0:30:56

Interviewer: Was it his father or his brother? No, his brother was outside broadcasts.

Vivian Daniels: No, his father.

Interviewer: Yes, his father.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, his father.

Interviewer: His brother was on outside broadcasts, yes.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: Not using the name of Burton, of course; using the family name.

Vivian Daniels: That's right, yes.

Interviewer: Yes. In July '56, there you are. We have a young chap now who's joined the staff in Leeds, name of Colin Shaw. Young Shaw starts to take on more and more drama work, leaving you, presumably, to tackle the television side of things.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, that's right.

Interviewer: So, off you go, doing a Ken Horton play, the one you'd done for radio: 'Tomorrow May Be Fine'.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, and I still can't remember what it was about. (Laughter)

Interviewer: I have here a still from the play. It is gorgeous. It is almost like looking at something that came from the first days of television. On the back it says, ''Tomorrow May Be Fine': a play with a North Country setting which deals with the reactions of ordinary people to the stress of circumstances.'

Vivian Daniels: That's vague enough, isn't it?

Interviewer: ‘This is the first play to be televised from the BBC Northern Television Studio in Manchester and was produced by Vivian Daniels.’ Gosh, you’ve dropped the ‘A’ now, Mr Daniels.

Vivian Daniels: No, he’s dropped it.

Interviewer: He’s dropped it. Left to right, Brian Peck as Tom Wright, Noel Dyson as Anne, Margaret Anderson as Sheila, Bryden Murdoch – bless his heart – as Andrew McGregor, Patricia Ware as Dilys Thompson, and John Roddock as Stephen Wright. That went out on 31st July 1956.

Vivian Daniels: I remember it was a sad play, but I can’t remember the details.

Interviewer: The cameras look as they should have looked in the early ‘50s: very heavy, very large.

Vivian Daniels: They were still very heavy and very large when I left.
(Laughter)

Interviewer: Enormous, enormous amount of lighting. We hadn’t [Colortran 0:32:55] in those days, but very nice to see that. Your designer – in fact, our designer because he-

Vivian Daniels: Was that Ken Lawson?

Interviewer: Was Ken Lawson, yes. I say, “Ours,” because he was the only one who was designing for any of us who were doing telly at that time. Five full-length plays, Vivian, came from Dickenson Road in 1957, and you produce four of them. The fifth, ‘The Two Mrs Carrolls’, is done by the distinguished George Foa.

Vivian Daniels: George Foa, yes.

Interviewer: George Foa, yes. Of those, if I can remind you, in ‘57… It’s thanks to Kenneth, by the way – Lawson – that I have this sheet with me. Having interviewed Ken, he said, “Now, dear, would you like a list of what I did?” rubbing his chin as he did, smacking his lips. I said, “Yes, I would, Ken.” You’ve got ‘Job for the Boy’, Dennis Driscoll.

Vivian Daniels: Yes. I enjoyed that, you know, because that was a good old fish-and-chip supper comedy. I reckoned I understood those kinds of plays. I wasn’t really very good at the London West End matinee idol pieces. I remember doing one by Rattigan which was an absolute disaster. I produced it very, very badly – simply, I don’t know, I couldn’t come to terms with-

Interviewer: The sun was not shining for you.

Vivian Daniels: Something like that.

Interviewer: It was called ‘While the Sun Shines’.

Vivian Daniels: That's right. (Laughter)

Interviewer: Yes. 'Job for the Boy', Vivian, this is very interesting. Again I have a still which Ken gave me. He said, "When you interview Vivian, do take this still along and tell him what it's about." We have Violet Carson standing on the doorstep of number two.

Vivian Daniels: Of course, yes.

Interviewer: A small head scarf tying her hair together.

Vivian Daniels: Photographed in Dickenson Road, I think.

Interviewer: I think it must have been, because this is obviously outside.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, it's on location.

0:35:25

Interviewer: There she is. She's in her [sprig 0:35:27] pinafore, one rather podgy hand stuck firmly just under her bosom, and there is Fred Fairclough, her husband, shirtsleeves rolled, in braces. He was the one who was very fond of hens, wasn't he?

Vivian Daniels: Yes, that's right.

Interviewer: Always wanted to go and look after the hens.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, that's right. 'Job for the Boy' had one marvellous scene in the middle which in the theatre was the beginning of the second act. Or, in fact, it consisted of most of the second act. Really, it simply comprised an enormously long and complex piece of business with a collapsing bed, one of those canvas beds that you stick onto a trellis support.

0:36:15

Interviewer: A sort of camping bed?

Vivian Daniels: A sort of camping bed. If you get the support, which expands and contracts with the most alarming rapidity, provided you have it properly greased, you can really milk it.

Interviewer: As I said, there's Violet Carson as Maggie Lomax; Fred as Walter, her husband. Two-and-a-half years later, of course, Violet Carson appears as Ena Sharples in 'Coronation Street'. I once asked Tony Simpson – Tony Warren, as he became – if it was this play which two-and-a-half years later gave him the idea for 'Coronation Street'.

Vivian Daniels: Not that one.

0:37:01

Interviewer: No, Tony maintains that it was probably Vi herself. You remember the song she used to sing, 'Bolton's Yard'?

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: *'At number one in Bolton's Yard, my granny keeps a school. At number three, right facing pub…'* Tony said to me in an interview some years ago – in fact, I was doing a programme about Violet Carson and he said he thinks that's what gave him the idea, but when he wrote it he called it 'Florizel Street', and he sent it off in the first instance to Barney Colehan.

Vivian Daniels: Did he?

Interviewer: Yes. Barney tells me in his contribution to this history of North Regional broadcasting, he said, "First of all it sounded to me like some sort of bathroom disinfectant." He said, "What's more," he said, "I thought, 'Fine for a single play, but for a series too working class,'" so off it went to Granada.

Vivian Daniels: Oh, well. The tale that I had heard was that Tony Warren's synopsis for it arrived back Granada about a fortnight after the transmission of a play called 'June Evening' which I'd done for television, which was-

Interviewer: Yes, I remember that. I'd like to talk to you about that.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, alright. (Laughter)

Interviewer: We've talked about 'Job for the Boy'. That was in 1957. 1958 you got another four productions to your credit here, again a fifth produced by, in this instance, a former Manchester colleague of ours famed more for radio features than for television drama.

Vivian Daniels: Denis Mitchell? No.

Interviewer: No, Douglas G Bridson.

Vivian Daniels: My goodness.

Interviewer: Yes, I think it was D.G. Bridson's-

Vivian Daniels: Dougie Bridson produced a play?

Interviewer: Yes, it was his own – I think his own. It was called 'The Christmas Child'. Bridson was later on to do other things for us in Manchester.

Vivian Daniels: Yes. Bridson is a name to conjure with, yes.

Interviewer: Yes. I'm particularly interested because I remember this very vividly. I think it was by William Marchant and it was called 'The Desk Set'.

Vivian Daniels: The American one.

0:39:16

Interviewer: Yes, and you had a huge computer, didn't you?

Vivian Daniels: No, not particularly huge, but I had a huge office. I know it was set in a huge office, with a whole heap of desks and people working at them. The only way that I could see to mount this for television was to virtually turn the whole of the studio into the office and have the cameras running around inside it, instead of the usual in those days way of shooting against two or three walls. Instead of this, one built the whole four-walled set, and had the cameras inside, and simply made sure that they didn't see each other. (Laughter)

Interviewer: Yes, you simplified it slightly, I would suggest.

Vivian Daniels: A little.

Interviewer: One of your cast can get through an ordinary 2'3" door. You had cameras having to get through so that the door had to be moved, computer had to be moved, all this going on and the thing was, as I say, a live transmission.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

0:40:28

Interviewer: Did that put a few grey hairs into your head?

Vivian Daniels: Not particularly; not particularly. It was simply a question – and I do mean this – it was very simply a question of working it out. That's all.

Interviewer: Really, really careful planning, yes.

Vivian Daniels: Yes. Of course, I've got this sort of terrible pernickety mind, which suits me nowadays, now that I work with a computer. The computer behaves in exactly the same way that television cameras do. Provided you give the instructions right, it'll be alright.

Interviewer: Correctly programmed, the result is splendid, yes.

Vivian Daniels: That's right, yes.

Interviewer: Vivian, to me 1959 started with another technical feather in your cap: the Cyril Abraham play '[Ice Blink 0:41:18]'

Vivian Daniels: Yes. That was quite something because this was the play set in a small tramp ship in the North Atlantic, in iceberg waters. The entire action of the play took place on the ship. A) You never saw the sea.

Interviewer: Exactly.

Vivian Daniels: B) After the transmission I had three letters from ex-seafarers, two of the letters of which said, 'I'm sure I recognised the ship. Isn't this it?' and giving me the name. They gave two different names, and of course the whole thing was shot on the studio floor in Dickie Road. (Laughter)

0:42:18

Interviewer: You had a good team, didn't you?

Vivian Daniels: I had a marvellous team.

Interviewer: By now you had Muriel Schofield as your production assistant.

Vivian Daniels: That's right, who was absolutely super and stayed with me for about seven or eight years, I think.

Interviewer: Mike Malone as your chief floor manager.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

0:42:33

Interviewer: He was jolly good, wasn't he?

Vivian Daniels: Yes, very good, very good; super people. There's one thing – and I'm not certain whether you will leave this in or not; I

imagine you probably won't, but I'll tell you anyway – and this was the man who played the skipper, who was an absolutely superb actor, but he lived on his own and he was getting on. He'd played Claudius to Michael Redgrave's Hamlet, and he couldn't learn his lines.

He'd got nearer and nearer to transmission and he still hadn't learned his lines. There was only one thing for it. That was to put them on autocue. He played the whole of that standing on the bridge, staring through the windscreen or whatever you call it – I can't remember – staring straight at the autocue. Nobody ever knew.

He did say after the transmission, he said politely, "Goodbye, and thank you very much," and added, "I shouldn't imagine you'll ever invite me again." (Laughter) He was quite right, but there we are. But it was a good piece; it really was.

Interviewer: It was super, yes, very dramatic.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

0:43:53

Interviewer: The cameramen, [Gordon Edison, Barry Bevins]. No, Barry came a little later, I think. He was [not but] a lad in those days. Who was doing your lighting most of the time? Was it Tommy Mottram?

Vivian Daniels: Tommy Mottram. Tommy Mottram, yes.

0:44:08

Interviewer: He could light anything, couldn't he?

Vivian Daniels: Yes, absolutely.

Interviewer: [Very clever]. I don't know how you feel today, Vivian, but some of those things in black and white were so effective.

Vivian Daniels: Yes. The one thing I can tell you about 'Ice Blink', and that was the radio room. There were two pieces – two principal pieces – of set: the two halves of the bridge, and the radio room. For the radio room I rang Marconi Marine, and told them I was doing this, and asked them if they could be of any help. They're down in Essex somewhere.

"Yes," they said, "We'll come and furnish the radio room. You put up the flats." We put up three flats – just three flats and a door – and they came up with a three-tonne truck full of gear and wired up a complete radio room in Dickie Road, and then took it down and went away again. (Laughter) Super people.

0:45:10

Interviewer: During 1959 some nine television plays come from Dickenson Road. 1959, that's the year in which a young fellow – well, he's not all that young; his name is Alfred Bradley – he joins the BBC in Leeds. Do you remember sending me a note saying, 'Don't call him Alf; he doesn't like it'?

Vivian Daniels: No, I don't. (Laughter)

Interviewer: Yes. I discovered after, you see, exactly what the ‘A’ ‘W’, or the ‘W’, I haven’t found out what the ‘A’ in Daniels stands for, Vivian, but the ‘W’ between ‘Alfred’ and ‘Bradley’ was ‘Wilfred’.

Vivian Daniels: Wilfred, yes.

Interviewer: Yes, so, if I felt that he was deserving it, I would say, “Now, come along, Wilf. I know I mustn’t call you Alf.” (Laughter) 1959, and that’s the time-

Vivian Daniels: Hello? Is that somebody knocking? No.

Interviewer: No, that was your lovely guide dog’s tail.

Vivian Daniels: It was Nick. It was Nick. Hello, fellow.

0:46:06

Interviewer: Is Nick going to say anything? Yes, he’s just given us a grunt.

Vivian Daniels: There you are; there you are.

Interviewer: Yes. He wondered what his master was doing for so long sitting up here.

Vivian Daniels: That’s right.

Interviewer: In your radio room, as it were, or your computer room. He's come to look.

Vivian Daniels: He's come to lick. Yes, he's a good fellow, aren't you?

Interviewer: I discovered it was in 1960 that North Region did the first of the drama series. That was with 'Yorkie'.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, which I had nothing to do with.

Interviewer: No, it was a London production, but they were just… Manchester was hosting this for them.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: I mentioned 9 television plays 1960; '61 there are 11 altogether.

Vivian Daniels: Good gracious.

0:46:50

Interviewer: Yes. Shall I just remind you of some of those? I'll get the sheet here, '61. Yes, January 1961 another of your plays I remember very vividly. The author is Jan de Hartog.

Vivian Daniels: With Mai Zetterling and Anton Diffring.

Interviewer: Yes. It's 'The Four Poster'.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

0:47:19

Interviewer: Not only a two-hander, but didn't you do, Vivian, the whole of the last act on one camera?

Vivian Daniels: Yes, I did. The last act is the act in which he… Wait a bit. Which one is still alive? He is still alive, but she is already dead.

Interviewer: Yes.

Vivian Daniels: It was such a lonely piece that I couldn't bear to spoil it by… Cutting between different viewpoints felt absolutely wrong. It felt to be confounding the very solitariness of the thing and so it was like a slow movement. It had to be conducted like a slow movement, which meant one camera. That's all there was to it, really.

Interviewer: Rather a shame, I feel, that we don't perhaps concentrate certain things with just one camera today.

Vivian Daniels: Hitchcock had his fair goes at it, didn't he?

Interviewer: He did, yes. (Laughter) He certainly did. Yes, 'The Four Poster'; 'O Captain, My Captain', Alun Richards; 'Reunion Day'.

Vivian Daniels: 'Reunion'. That had-

Interviewer: Peter Yeldham.

Vivian Daniels: Yes, that's right. That's the Australian piece, the [Australian 0:48:50] piece. I certainly remember one piece of that, which was it all took place in a bar on Reunion Day. I certainly remember the difficulties of doing one scene in which somebody drinks a pint of beer standing on his head. (Laughter) There had to be some very, very quick cutting and swapping of the tankard so that he didn't, in fact, have to drink the whole of it, but it took a bit of doing. It was a lively [Australian 0:49:24] piece. It was alright.

Interviewer: I notice, Vivian, that some of the drama productions you're doing for television are plays which you did in earlier years on radio, but there's one here, I think, that was possibly written specially for television by Alan Plater, and that's 'A Smashing Day'.

Vivian Daniels: Yes. That I remember in a not unsimilar way to the way that I remember Allan Prior's work, because Alan Plater also became very, very much my television writer in a sense.

‘Smashing Day’, he’d already written several things for radio, which I think had been produced by Alfred Bradley, and then he wrote ‘Smashing Day’ for television, which was an absolutely super piece performed beautifully by Angela Douglas and Alfie Lynch. Alfie Lynch wasn’t a Lancashire lad, and Angela wasn’t a Lancashire lass either, but both of them were absolutely super playing local kids.

It was a particularly touching play because it was about a young man falling in love with a girl that he met in the park, and he met her only once. Then eventually he meets somebody else and gets married to her. One of the nice things was the whole of the wedding sequence was played without a single shot of the bride until the very, very last shot, when you suddenly found that the girl he was marrying was not the girl he’d met in the park.

0:51:25

Interviewer: Was she played by June Barry, the other girl?

Vivian Daniels: She was played by June Barry. June Barry was the one he married; Angie Douglas was the one he met in the park.

0:51:34

Interviewer: That was by the bandstand, wasn’t it? I can see the bandstand now.

Vivian Daniels: That’s right, and the band… I can still remember Angie Douglas doing a little piece of business on that bandstand in Dickie Road which came out of absolutely nowhere. It had nothing to do with anything that had been rehearsed. She found hanging from one of the wooden supports to this sort of

pergola, she just found a piece of string, and got hold of it and started playing with it, and played with this right through about a three-minute scene. There was something very touching about this very simple young lass getting a sense of security from a piece of string hanging from a wooden pillar. It was a very touching piece and very touching performance.

Alan Plater then wrote a lot more which I directed. He also eventually at some stage, when he'd become very, very well known, sent me a publisher's print of one of his pieces, with a very nice inscription in it, saying, 'To Vivian, who taught me television,' or words to that effect. Yes, but I've always had a very, very warm regard for Plater.

Interviewer: You've got the designer there, Paul Bernard. In 1963 you start working with Tim Harvey – Tim, who in later years was to collect many drama design awards.

Vivian Daniels: Yes. I can remember Tim quite firmly as an individual, but not as somebody that I worked with, curiously enough. That is reserved entirely for Ken Lawson because Ken Lawson seemed to be – to me to be – much more creative in the studio, but you know.

Interviewer: Ken is an extrovert, and Tim Harvey in those days was quite the reverse. He designed for us on 'Pinky and Perky'.

Vivian Daniels: Did he?

Interviewer: Yes, particularly with John Slater as Captain Scuttle and things like that. He really took us to sea in the Melody Master.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: Yes, very inventive; very inventive. It's in '63, Vivian, and really after Alan Plater's 'Pretty Lights' that-

Vivian Daniels: Yes, that was the one on the pier.

0:54:21

Interviewer: 'See the pretty lights,' yes, on the pier. That's in the autumn of 1963. Then, as far as your own 'Radio Times' credits from the North of England are concerned, they start to dim. In fact, they disappear. Was it at the end of 1963 that you then went to London?

Vivian Daniels: I was still based in the North Region, but I think I simply… Why, I'm not certain, but I simply began to do all of my productions from Television Centre. Television Centre opened, I think, in '64. In fact, I did the first drama production from TV Centre. I think it was the second week after the centre opened.

I'd been working down there in what is now, or what became known as, the canteen block, which is presumably still the canteen block, the place with two restaurants – possibly now got three restaurants, and maybe a nightclub as well, but then that was the only standing building to begin with.

Interviewer: With studios Three and Four.

Vivian Daniels: With studios Three and Four had been built, that's right. For several years I worked out of Manchester, going up to London for three or four weeks at a time, staying in digs down there and working from TV Centre.

0:56:02

Interviewer: Because the decision was taken, wasn't it, that really Dickenson Road was not properly equipped for large drama and that-?

Vivian Daniels: That's right. For one thing, you could only use three cameras. There were lots and lots of limitations.

Interviewer: You surmounted a tremendous number of them in what you did prior to 1963.

Vivian Daniels: Sure. I don't know when this sort of prepossession with extravaganza took over, but it did take over at some stage, I think in the middle and late '60s, that no drama production that took anything less than five cameras was worth doing, but when I started we were still very much confined with editing. You couldn't break a drama without going to black in between, because you couldn't join the tape.

Then eventually I found that there was a way that one could do it without taking the screen to black. Provided you took the screen to a shot that didn't include any actors who were also in the following shot, it was possible to break sound and vision

and to use sound to cover the editing, because there was this complicated business of the sound edit being at a different place on the tape from the vision edit, which led to some minor complications. However, it was possible to correct them.

These are minor technicalities that aren't of much interest to anybody else, but certainly the business of using a lot of discontinuous recording, of shooting television more or less like film, I don't think really began to take over until after I left, until after '69.

Interviewer: Of course, to begin with – you've been talking about recording – we were recording in the early days on, if we were lucky, 35, from film, of course.

Vivian Daniels: If you were very lucky.

Interviewer: Very lucky. Otherwise, it was 16, but when you started, of course, you weren't recording at all. It was all live.

Vivian Daniels: No. That's right.

Interviewer: We had no recording facilities in Manchester.

Vivian Daniels: That's right, yes. It didn't make life more complicated, because one wasn't aware that it was possible to do discontinuous recording, so the alternative possibility didn't arise. It also had a minor advantage, in a sense, of forcing television into being a

medium of its own, of being not a relative – not even a poor relative – of the film industry.

It simply was not film, whereas nowadays, when you can do as much discontinuous recording as you like, you can produce a drama without ever intercutting, without ever cutting from camera to camera. You can produce a huge extravaganza of a drama production using one camera, in exactly the same way that you produce film, that you direct film: you shoot it one shot at a time. You can relight for every single shot.

That, for me, is no longer television. I don't quite know what constitutes television production nowadays. I don't know what differentiates television production from film production, really. Do you?

Interviewer: No. In fact, in my own case I got rather fed up with electronic working and I went entirely onto film. Then, of course, it was going and doing feature subjects – mainly for children's television, but I mean going abroad a lot with just one camera and a cameraman. It was a little more creative, I felt.

Vivian Daniels: Yes. On the other hand, in drama production I still have a feeling that exactly the arguments are used by people from the theatre in terms of the creative process – the fact that the creative process of performing a play in the theatre means that the play has to be performed from beginning to end. The creative process of the actor is involved in maintaining the whole feeling of the play right through from beginning to end.

1:01:05

Interviewer: Vivian, having been in right at the very beginning, having literally pioneered television drama in the North Region, what

made you decide in, when was it, about 1968/9 to give it all up?

Vivian Daniels: My eyesight, very simply. My eyesight had begun to go a bit funny, and it was going either funnier or less funny, depending on which way you look at it. (Laughter) When eventually I found myself sitting in the gallery, wearing two pairs of specs and still not being able, really, to see the monitors, I began to realise that working in the gallery was really no longer on, that I finally decided this was the time to opt out. It's as simple as that.

Interviewer: When I said, "Give it up," I mean you decided at that point that you were going to leave the BBC altogether.

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

Interviewer: You went to Hull.

Vivian Daniels: I freelanced for a year and then got offered a post at Hull University by a super, super gentleman called Sir Brynmor Jones, who was then the Vice Chancellor, who took me on as director of a new department, of virtually a department of communication studies, with a brand-new building, which included television and film studio, and a radio studio, and cutting rooms, and graphics – full support and quite an exciting prospect in view, which remained exciting as a prospect for the first three years.

Then Brynmor Jones retired from the University. I was diagnosed as being technically blind and that then became a little less exciting. (Laughter) I struggle on for another few years, but that also then became too much.

1:03:25

Interviewer: Yes. Now here you are in Cheltenham, living in retirement. One or two of us live in retirement in Cheltenham, don't we, it seems? (Laughter)

Vivian Daniels: Yes.

1:03:35

Interviewer: You're surrounded by all sorts of beautiful equipment, word processors. What's the one behind you? What does that do? Is that one that speaks back to you?

Vivian Daniels: They both talk. They're both computers. This is the good old BBC computer with a speech synthesiser. I spend my time, in fact, writing programs for the blind on it. I wrote my own word processor and did data processing and everything else.

It's all talking programs which are sold to the blind. The money that they pay or that they get from other trusts, and the RNIB and so on, all of that money is then turned round and gets spent on trying to improve life for the blind in the Third World, which gives me some sense of satisfaction.

1:04:39

Interviewer: We'd mentioned your start into showbiz: Manchester Grammar, appearing in 'Macbeth'. As a boy, were you drawn to the radio, listening? Did it awaken any-?

Vivian Daniels: No, not really. I think my real basis in drama was my work with 'Theatre Workshop', which, when I was with them in Manchester in '38, '39, '40, it was then called 'Theatre Union', but this was the theatre movement run by Joan Littlewood and Jimmy Miller, as he then was, who became Ewan MacColl.

It was through them that I became absolutely fascinated by the creative process in the theatre. They taught me, Jimmy in particular. This may argue with some people: I found Jimmy even more creative than Joan. I learned a tremendous amount from Jimmy, quite apart from his folk singing. (Laughter)

1:05:58

Interviewer: In the time you spent, Vivian, with the BBC, what was the happiest period for you?

Vivian Daniels: The happiest period was, no doubt at all, producing good television drama, when I produced good television drama. That was tremendously satisfying. Also, the best of the radio drama was also very satisfying. That early Robert Bolt play opened up as many vistas to me of radio as anything else that I'd learned and done up to that point.

Another play that I produced in television, which was 'Walk a Tight Circle', was a tremendous – absolutely tremendous – piece about a young girl who discovers in one terrifying moment that she's desperately in love with her own father.

This makes me absolutely shudder, the problems that that production posed, the revelations that the script made to me, the performance of the lady, Elizabeth MacLennan, who played Janecis. These are very much seminal moments in my life

which gave me tremendous pleasure and a sense of achievement.

1:07:55

Interviewer: You felt you enjoyed a freedom, working for the BBC?

Vivian Daniels: Enormously; enormously. I'm sure, looking back, I worked enormously long hours, and I have no regrets for working those enormously long hours. Nobody ever asked me to work them, but I would work every day until 11:00 at night, and later.

Writing a camera script, as far as I was concerned, there was only one way to write a camera script. That was not to lock yourself up in your office with your PA, and ask your PA to tell you every shot that you'd got worked out and had written down, but was to lock yourself up alone in a room with three scripts, two of them virgin scripts and one annotated script, and slowly write the whole camera script through the night. I generally reckoned that if I got started after dinner, round about 8:30, I would generally get the camera script finished by about 5:00 in the morning.

There was absolutely no feeling of anybody owing me anything for doing this. I was doing it because I wanted to, because it gave me enormous satisfaction. It's as simple as that. I also have a feeling now that I only work voluntarily, so to speak, but it doesn't feel any different. I suppose it's got something to do with the fact – I suppose this has some bearing in this current social situation – that having worked 20 years for the BBC and 10 years for a university means that I've spent virtually all of my working life without ever working for anybody who had a profit motive.

I think possibly that has some bearing, but I don't know. I don't know. I know that whether I worked long hours or cut them short didn't affect the salary that anybody who was responsible for what I did suffer. They weren't penalised if I didn't work hard – in other words, the management.

I simply feel, and I like to imagine, that life in the BBC remains to a large degree the same: that people work because they want to work, because they want to do the job. They get their own satisfaction out of doing it, and they work as many hours as the job takes. Provided they get a living wage out of doing it, the question of how much you get paid is hardly relevant. That's my feeling.

[Break in conversation 1:11:14 - 1:11:59]

END AUDIO