

**MANX HERITAGE FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPT**

‘TIME TO REMEMBER’

Interviewee(s): Mr Thomas William [Tommy] Cashen

Date of birth: 21st October 1931

Place of birth: Lezayre, Isle of Man

Interviewer(s): Elizabeth Ardern-Corris

Recorded by: Elizabeth Ardern-Corris

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Topic(s): Growing up in Glen Duff
Early schooldays and discipline
The Sulby Home Guard
WWII and airplane crashes
Childhood mischief
Church and Sunday School picnics
Visiting Mother in Ballamona Hospital
Stories about internees and locals
Manx sayings and pronunciations
Living conditions and poverty
Bird’s egg collection
Father employed as local rat collector
Entertainment for adults and children
Local characters and shops
Celebrating Christmas with family
Leaving school and working

Tommy Cashen - Mr C

Elizabeth Ardern-Corris - EA-C

EA-C I'm Elizabeth Ardern-Corris, it's the 13th April 2012 and I'm at the home of Mr Tommy Cashen in Andreas. Mr Cashen, can you just tell me a little bit about yourself please?

Mr C My full name is Thomas William Cashen, I was born on 21st October 1931. I was born in Lezayre in a place called Glen Duff which, over the years, has changed names; it was originally known as Gabba Vunny [sp ???]; Laurel Mount; at the moment it's known as Café Rosa.

EA-C And were you an only child or did you have any siblings?

Mr C There's five of us. And my mother, when I was about five or six years old, she took a mental illness and she had to move into Douglas ... Cronk ... she had to go to hospital in Douglas and she never came back. And my youngest brother then was fostered out, so my father reared four of us through the Second World War. The local church and 'thorities [authorities] came and asked him, did he want to foster us out? He said, 'No,' he said, 'I'll manage them meself.'

EA-C And what did your father do for a living?

Mr C He was sort of labourer, round the north – well, locally labouring – Mooragh [Park] gardening – anything at all. And we had a hard life because we had no electricity, we had a toilet at the bottom of the garden, and water was in short supply, so ...

EA-C And whereabouts in the family did you come – were you the eldest, middle?

Mr C Next to the eldest.

EA-C And did your brother who was fostered out, did he ever come home?

Mr C No, but he was only about ... he moved to ... he was fostered in St Judes, which is about two miles away, so we kept in contact with each other.

EA-C And whereabouts did you attend school?

Mr C We went to Sulby School, which is two miles away and we walked 'til we were old enough to afford a bicycle. And there's very little vehicles on the road them

days, you know, to give you a lift. But one of the children, I know, lived down at Lezayre Church, so he walked an extra half mile. So he'd set off at school, so maybe two or three of us walking and by the time we got to school there'd be a whole army of us all walking along the road because you all joined up with each other. I remember getting me first bicycle 'cos there's a little boy called McFee who got drowned in the Sulby river ... where's all the children played in the Sulby river, but we kept out of the deep places, but I don't know exactly what happened, but he drowned anyway and other children ran for help, by the time they got back it was too late. These days children are taught what to do at school, aren't they? Anyway, I was cheeky – I went and asked his mother what she'd do with his bike, so she give it to me! *(laughter)*

EA-C What age were you then?

Mr C Do you know, I can't remember – maybe eleven or twelve years old or something like that – so I had a bicycle to go to school. I remember distinctly one thing, we all had to bring a gas mask to school with us, we all ... in case there's a ... the Germans dropped gas over here, and I never ... I didn't bother bringing mine, I just left it in the house, and me brother ... I always said, if anything happened, me brother's smaller than me and I'm going to take his. *(laughter)*

EA-C Did you enjoy your time at school?

Mr C I don't ... I can't remember. There's good days and bad days, I mean, in the winter time, you know, we went to school, we were half-dead by the time we got there, but I can only remember the good times; which I had the advantage over the other children because the headmaster was my relative.

EA-C And what was his name?

Mr C George Sayle.

EA-C And do you think he might have shown you a bit of favouritism?

Mr C He did show me a lot of favour. They called him, you know, a blue-eyed boy because he did, if there was any trouble with the children he'd question them all ... he'd generally sort of skip me. But then some of the bigger children sort of

bullied you because of that, but they didn't bully you too much because he was the headmaster. And then we found out later on that he was ... the headmaster wasn't – we called him Uncle George, but he'd been fostered by my grandfather – my grandparents had fostered him as a child, so that's why we called him Uncle George. So anyway ...

EA-C Can you remember the names of any of your other teachers?

Mr C Yes, there was a Mrs Pratt, because in Sulby ... well, Lezayre, all the houses all were ... the airport at Jurby and Andreas, the airport married people who lived there, so one used to live in Sulby – she was a Mrs Pratt. Her husband was in Jurby Airport, so ... she taught us; there was a Miss Craine, and always remember Miss Craine, she could only play about three tunes – we always had a hymn singing in the morning, and she could only play about three tunes, so we always had the same hymns over and over again! So ...

EA-C Can you tell me what your favourite subject at school was?

Mr C Art, because it's in your hands, it's natural. You know, I didn't have to learn that. Favourite subject was maths. I loved maths – I don't know why – and when I left school I went and bought a book on algebra to find out how algebra worked, you know, I couldn't understand doing maths with letters, so that was the end of that. But me father ... the headmaster wanted me to go onto ... you know, the higher school in Ramsey, but ... my younger brother went, but I didn't go, he said, 'Son, you have to do some work,' you know, regards me father, so...

EA-C Were there expectations that you would go onto college or university when you were at school?

Mr C No. No, me father more or less told them that. And you see, there's a lot of interruptions going on because of the Second World War, it had just ended when I was fourteen, and everything was mixed up and people all had to get back on their feet again, so very few people went to school, or higher school or anything like that.

EA-C Have you got any memories of any incidents happening during the war?

Mr C Too many, really, people say ... some people say you should forget it. I remember Sulby Home Guard, how smart they were with their uniforms and their guns – somebody said they were only imitation guns, I don't know about that. I remember they had, well, two of them, I had two uncles who worked on a farm all day and at night – I don't know how often they had to go on duty – in case the Germans landed here, so they ... at Sulby, the local hall, they were in there with a telephone. And one man was supposed to be outside, watching out for enemy planes come. So it was a ... I'm sorry that I never ever got a photograph of them, 'cos there was a lot of men – they're all dead and gone. And another incident I used to remember as a little kiddie – I must try and find this from Charles Guard – *Ellanbane* [sp ???] *Farm*, which was next door to us, I can't remember how often, but the soldiers would all suddenly roll up and take over the farm – you could carry on working there, but ... I found out later on, it was kept top secret, but resistance workers, you know, used to get help from the ... the British used to drop ... agents in Germany ... occupied France, and they trained at *Ellanbane* [sp ???], because you'd see them coming across the fields and all, hiding and had to try to get to the *Ellanbane* [sp ???] headquarters without getting caught, and if you got caught then they locked them up in the cow-houses or something like that – and I've seen them. But the farmer was sworn to secrecy because if the Germans caught any of them they were immediately shot. And funny enough, I was doing a garden for a chap there later on, and he was a pilot who used to fly them at night and drop them by parachute, you know, in France. And he said, he told me, he said one night he went by moonlight and he had a small plane and he landed at a field in France, and he said it was kept top secret, he said half the village were all waiting for him to land, and it was supposed to be top secret! So err ... you know, they were exciting, that, because well, the other ... the sky was full of aircraft, because in the north there, they used to pull drogues, the planes used to pull a drogue and the other planes used to shoot at this drogue and quite often they broke loose, so the kids used to all watch out for them to break loose because you got a reward if you handed them into the police station.

EA-C Can you just explain what a drogue is?

Mr C It's like a ... I don't know whether you've seen them at the airport, it's like a windsock. It's about the same length as the plane, and the plane pulled it, and then the plane would go out over the sea and then the other *Spitfires* would shoot at it, and then they'd land it. Near us was another airport, Close Lake –

Hall Caine [Airport] they called it – well they dropped it there and then went and landed at Jury. And one day my brother, Henry, shouts to me, ‘There’s something wrong with that plane!’ and we’d seen that plane going over Close Lake, which is about a mile away, and suddenly the plane dived into the ground! So we jumped on our bikes and went down the road, and they were just getting the two pilots out of the plane!

EA-C So who was there before you – the police?

Mr C Yes, it’s right by the ... military police ... this was right by the side of the airport, Hall Caine Airport. So ... but ... it didn’t ... we didn’t worry about ... we were curious.

EA-C And how close were you allowed to go?

Mr C Err ... a hundred yards. We were ... we stood in the gateway and we looked in through the gateway and we see the two fellows being put in the ambulance. And then there’s a chap in those houses and that, where ... wardens ... he’s a retired advocate, and the plane missed his house by inches – went over the roof, so passed a hundred yards just from the house.

EA-C Were you close enough to hear the sound of it going down and the explosion?

Mr C It didn’t sound like an explosion – it just simply dived into the ground.

EA-C And was there a lot of debris about?

Mr C No, it was a small plane. The biggest incident I’ll always remember is a ... one night in bed at half past – I remember this was half past twelve, because we got a proper record from the Air Ministry – it was fifty years before they let you know officially what happened – and me brother, Henry, woke up and he said ... he said, ‘There’s a plane gone past our house on fire!’ So we all jumped out of bed, ran through to the window, and it went past the window and disappeared. So we ran to the other window and we heard a big crash and explosion. And next thing the whole thing went up on fire. So ... me father ... we’d no electricity ... me father got out of bed, lit the lantern, got dressed and he went over the road and he said, ‘I can’t go near to it,’ it’s ... you know, there’s ammunition exploding and it’s on fire, ammunition exploding. So then one or

two more people started arriving, then, I think a car arrived – in them days there were no cars on the road, you know, at night. So next morning we got out of bed early, we went there, and I was wondering to meself, ‘I wonder what sort it was?’ and there was nothing but burnt debris on the ground. And it had hit a big tree, there was a tree at the side of the road, along the Lezayre Road there, where Judith Ley lives now, there were trees both sides, and if it had hit the tree the other side of the road, it would have crashed and blocked the road, but as it was it went through a gap and hit the tree the other side and went into the field. And straight away we started filling our pockets with ammunition. There was a military policeman in the gateway, but he let everybody in! Mind you, if he wouldn’t have let us in, we’d have gone over the hedge. So all ... every ... I don’t know how people knew about this, but people came out from Ramsey on their bicycles to look at it. I mean, there’s no ... wireless them days.

EA-C And was ... how many fatalities were there on that incident?

Mr C Two. And, this is true, the pilot was sort of smashed to pieces, and the fellows ... I remember distinctly ... this is true, this, they were going round with sacks, little sacks gathering up the pieces, and I was really proud, because I said, ‘There’s a fellow’s arm laying down there.’ So I went down and showed them where this fellow’s arm was. And ... the kids, you know, I don’t know why the military policeman didn’t stop us going in. I went back about ten years ago with me metal detector and straight away I dug up some of the debris still, you know, metal in the ground.

EA-C And what kind of plane was it?

Mr C A *Bristol Bullfighter* ... they was on ... they flew round the Island this, from England, looking out for maybe enemy submarines or something that shouldn’t be in the sea or something. But that particular night, they say, ‘Why didn’t it go onto Jurby?’ – evidently there was a German raid going on in say Belfast, or ... Liverpool, automatically everything over here was switched off. You know, so Jurby ... so the boys couldn’t contact Jurby to land there. They might have made it, but Jurby was completely blacked out. So ... then another day a *Spitfire* crashed on what we call St Judes, so we went down to have a look at that, it was in the hedge-line. There’s another one ... I’d seen a trailer going past with a ... a plane on the trailer, and that was all that ... and the only incident [unclear] regards the war, up on top of the hills in Sulby, the army went on manoeuvres,

and so when you're in school, you'd hear the guns and all, they only had blanks, but some people said they had live ammunition, but you'd see the soldiers up there practising on the hills, so ... and the weekend then, the children would go up the hills and gather up all the loose ... you know, left by the soldiers.

EA-C What would you do with all the ammunition that you collected?

Mr C Err ... along the way ... along the way you sort of get rid of these things. Now, one little incident was ... one night, we were just going to go to bed, the whole sky was lit up from Ballaugh, right through in a straight line to Ramsey, with flares – the magnesium flares, and it was like daylight, the whole of the north of the Island was lit up with them, and I never – it was kept top secret, but I never found out were they German or were they British. But anyway, a fellow in the Home Guard found one of the flare containers – it was about three foot ... three foot long and about six inches wide, had pins on it, it had come down on a parachute but the parachute burnt out, and I got it! And I was too little to remember looking on the side to see if there was any wording on it. The museum says was there any wording – I said, 'No.' Well, I can't remember – I was too little to see whether it was German or British. And one day me father dug a hole ... one of our sheep – we had about twenty sheep – a sheep had died so me father took all our rubbish and put it in the hole and buried it, so that's the end of me flare! So ... a chap in Sulby called Billy Graham, he had one. So if anybody – Charles Guard – could contact him he could tell him about it – and he doesn't know whether it was British or was it German, either, but he had one.

EA-C Well, when you went down to look at these aircraft that had crashed, did you go out on your own or did you have friends that you met up with?

Mr C Oh, half the village went, yea ... yes, as I say, I don't know how word got around so quick, and yet, you know, near ... down near Cronk Ruagh sanatorium where Germans dropped a bomb, he was being chased by a *Spitfire* and the German dropped a bomb to make the plane lighter, so he could get away, and that's why they dropped it down there. Broke all the windows in Cronk Ruagh and all that, but it was ten years later before I'd heard about it, 'cos all the children didn't go ... in the wartime the children didn't go too far, you didn't sort of go out of your locality. In fact, the only time we met some of the other children was at Sunday school. You know ...

- EA-C** Would any of these incidents been reported in the newspapers?
- Mr C** Do you know I'm sure it was kept top secret, I'm sure of that, but some day I must check up in the museum to see. You see, under the Secrets Act you weren't allowed to take photographs, and I'm sure there's nobody in it, I don't think there's anything to see – I must check up on that, but I'm sure it's kept top secret, sure of that.
- EA-C** Just going back to the plane that crashed at midnight ...
- Mr C** Yes.
- EA-C** ... when you were in bed and you all got up – or your father got up to see what it was ...
- Mr C** Yes.
- EA-C** ... you went the next day?
- Mr C** Oh, the next morning – as soon as it was light. Half the village – they'd even come out from Ramsey on their bicycles – it's marvellous how information gets around so quick. (*laughter*) Mind you, it burned most of the night and you could hear the bangs of the ammunition exploding. And ... but I say, they was excitin' days, they were ... you know, they were sort of excitin' days and err ... as regards the Sulby Home Guard, as I say, the last time I remember they were on parade we had a celebrations at Kerrowmoar which me father went to as a – you know, his dad ... was his little church, which is a garage now, and they all came along for the final ... they all came along all dressed up for the ... it was at the Harvest Home, and that's the last parade they had and I thought how smart they looked all in the church, and I remember ... after that they just disintegrated – that was the end of them. And there's no record of them – mind you, people have got memories, 'cos I told a woman the other day, she said, 'Oh, my husband was in it.' You know ... I said, 'Have you got a photograph?' she said, 'Oh no.' she said.
- EA-C** Hmm.

Mr C The internees worked on the farms with us. And one of the internees, after the war he stayed here and brought his children and his wife over. And they ... first of all there was a bit of animosity against them in Sulby village, but they integrated and became very popular – they were very popular, and they were well liked later on, and a chap called Arnie Dan [sp ???], who lives in Douglas – I think he works in the Harbour Board in Douglas – he’s still about, he’d be his son. But his father was an internee here.

EA-C Where would they have been housed?

Mr C In Ramsey in the Mooragh Park, they were housed down there. And the internees used to tell me that they could see the sea, you know the prom in Ramsey, North Prom, they could it – they weren’t allowed to go down and swim in it, and yet they could see it in front of them, you know? But err ... well, the internees I knew, they liked it here because they were English. When the war broke out they happened to be in England so most of them could speak English and all – they were what you’d call, ‘enemy’ – they were just caught up in the war. Same as in the wartime in America the Chinese in America – the Japanese in America were interned.

EA-C Hmm.

Mr C But err ... (*laughter*) I always remember one of the internees, he was a cook, so this farmer he used to take veggies and stuff to Douglas, this cook used to go in to help his wife get dinner ready (*laughter*) – bit of a local joke! (*laughter*) Anyway, I’d better not mention no names on that, had I? (*laughter*) Yes ... the only little thing I would add is that in Lezayre there’s no record now that airmen – several airmen died in Lezayre, in the Parish of Lezayre. Their bodies were sent and I think they should have a little memorial or something. They’ve got one up in Maughold to the ones who’d crashed there, the Americans crashed up in the mountain, and I think a little memorial should be put in Lezayre just to say what a happened. I mean, the one we’d seen, the one we’d seen crashed ... he was Canadian, he was 22 years old, he was Canadian, and the engine of his *Spitfire* at the moment is in the Aviation Museum in Castletown. About twenty years ago I wanted to dig it up, ‘cos the lady told me where it was, but the farmer wouldn’t allow me, but somebody did get permission and it’s now in the museum, so err ... but they were good years, there’s good – I only seem to remember the good years. I remember when we were at school the summers

seem to go on forever when we were on holiday, but there must have been bad days.

EA-C Well how would you have spent your holidays?

Mr C Mostly playing ... the hills and the farms, there's restrictions now, but the kids played on all the local farms, they all sort of knew each other. There's one or two little vandals amongst them – I remember one of the boys, there's Bobby Simpson, his brother had a shotgun at twelve years old, he pinched his father's shotgun, and quite often he'd fire the gun over your head! They'd always fire it over your head, you know. And err ... Sky Hill and the hills, that's the hills at the back of Lezayre, that was our playground, we played up in the hills. And I remember one night we come out of school and there was some little incident, and we left school at four o'clock and we generally be home at four-thirty, and seven o'clock at night we were all in getting our tea, you know, so (*laughter*) but ...

EA-C And what caused you to be so late?

Mr C Something happened in the village ... oh, and at Sulby Claddaghs there was a tank – there was a tank on the Sulby Claddaghs so the kids went up round to see it, and were sitting in it and ... actually, it wasn't a tank, it was a *Bren Gun Carrier*. Well, the kids were up ...'cos the army used to practise on it, on Sulby Claddagh. We were sitting on the tank and talking to the soldiers and ... then you know how kids play about, I remember seven o'clock, so ...

EA-C Can you tell me the names of some of the friends you had when you were young?

Mr C Well, actually ... I only really had two friends, and their name was Humphrey and their father was in the RAF, and ... my brother and I and the two Humphrey boys, at night we used to play, you know, cowboys and Indians or soldiers so there's two of each, you know. But we played up the quarry, up in the Glen Duff quarry which was private and was dangerous, but we still played up there, 'cos we lived across the road – I've got a photograph of it – and I remember distinctly the Highway Board told us, 'Don't be playing onto the rocks, because up on the very top there's a big crack coming inside the hill,' and they said, 'some of it's going to slide down.' It did one night –if we'd been underneath –

hundreds of tons slide down within seconds – but as kids you don't care, do you? *(laughter)*

EA-C Did you get up to any mischief as children?

Mr C We did ... we did, and we all ... I wouldn't say ... but oh yes, we got up to mischief, I mean, typical was coming home from Sunday school there, one night there's a lovely covering of snow and I remember all the children come out of church – it was a moonlight night and we rolled a big snowball off, and there's a woman there we didn't like so we rolled the snowball into her gate and then up to the door, so a snowball about two foot high in front of this doorstep. Children turned the gates upside down; we used to raid the orchards; me father had an orchard and they used to raid our orchard. And ... we had a Sunday school, and a lot of the time you only met the neighbours' children at Sunday school, and ... a lot of children, as country children, they set snares to catch rabbits, or they went out at nights with the light to get money to buy a bicycle. And I was very good to set snares, I had about fifty snares, I'd maybe get a couple of rabbits. Some of the boys could get twenty rabbits. It's a big thing, going setting snares.

EA-C How much would you get paid per rabbit?

Mr C I can't ... I can't remember now. I only managed to get about a couple which me father generally made a pie with – and rabbit pie was lovely! You had other meat with it, but ... the children lived on ... the children lived on rabbit – it was a big thing then. I remember going to school and you'd see some of the children going with a bundle of rabbits to put them on the train – they'd send them to Douglas to the butcher. And before they went to school they'd take them down, and they'd be sitting at their desks half asleep, yea.

EA-C Did you ever go on the train?

Mr C Only Sunday School picnic. We went as far as Glen Wyllin, which we thought was wonderful – we never went to Ramsey on the train. And then as things became more civilised we went onto Silverdale, and then the train went onto Douglas, but that was after ... I remember going as far as Douglas on the train, but we rarely went on the train.

EA-C And what about buses – when did buses come in?

Mr C Umm ... the beginning of the wartime, but we never went ... we rarely went to Ramsey even, we couldn't ... just me father – we were that poor we couldn't afford it. And if you went to Ramsey you went on your bicycle; and we rarely went on the bus.

EA-C You said earlier that your mother was in hospital, so she wasn't at home?

Mr C No ... never came.

EA-C So who did all the shopping and housework?

Mr C Me older sister, yea. We sort of had to muck-in together.

EA-C And where would she have got her shopping from?

Mr C We had a grocer came out in a van, he came twice a week. But we had a smallholding, and then we had hens and sheep and cattle – had to laugh, you know, 'cos we'd two cows and yet at school I had to get milk every day because they reckoned I was under nourished, and yet we had [unclear], so ... that's alright with me. And a big thing you used to see as children, we did, when farmers drove their animals into the Mart in Ramsey, they'd just ... somebody would say to you, 'You're coming with me on Saturday.' The kiddies ran on ahead and shut the gates, so their animals wouldn't go in the gardens, so they'd give you a sixpence, maybe, at the end of the day. But they didn't tell ... they just told you, they said, 'You're coming with us tomorrow to take the sheep into Ramsey.'

EA-C There'd be no choice?!

Mr C Not really.

EA-C Did you miss a lot of schooling?

Mr C Not a big lot ... not a big lot. But there was one thing we all had respect for, I remember, was for three people; the vicar, the policemen and your school headmaster. We all had ... they put the fear in us.

EA-C Well what would have happened if you'd misbehaved at school? What was the discipline like?

Mr C They generally made you stay in and write out – they rarely used the cane. But ... it's ... I've still got it kept somewhere ... I remember me father, he went to Lezayre School, and he was telling me that ... the building there now, what's left of it, it was in the graveyard, so you could sit in school and look through the window and see the graves around you. Then for right or wrong the Health people moved it. But me father remembers starting school with a slate and pencil.

EA-C What was your father's name?

Mr C William Thomas.

EA-C And your mother, what was her maiden name?

Mr C Evelyn, but she took like a mental illness, and she spent the rest of her life in there ... I forget the name, it's in Union Mills – the new hospital is built there now – Ballamona, but she became a cook, so she spent the rest of her life as a cook there. So, you know, she's just ... you know, she couldn't manage us.

EA-C Did you ever see her, did she ever come ...?

Mr C Oh yes, we used to go on the train ... maybe every fortnight, up to see her. And you know, we used to go up on the train to Union Mills and then walk up to the hospital. And I always remember I loved ... I don't know why, I was fascinated with the piano, and on the staging in the room where we met her there, there was a big grand piano, and I was more interested in going up on the stage and just touching the keys ... you know ... (*laughter*) coming to visit me mother. Seems I had a grandfather, when I used to come home from school ... they had ... my grandparents had a mill in Sulby – the Kella Mill – so quite often we used to go on up there in the mill. They'd maybe give you sixpence, but ... I used to call in to see him and he'd always give me a bar of chocolate. As soon as I got the bar of chocolate I said, 'I'm going now!' (*laughter*) But the place I was born in, in front of Lezayre Church, it was called Lezayre Glebe, I've still got the documents in here, there was eight acres of land and the house was for one pound a month. And I remember there was a chap that we were friendly with

when I was a little kiddie, and he lived up above the quarry, up above the hill in a sod-house, and I remember going with me father. It was made of sod, it had a window and a door and a galvanised roof. But the house basically just ... and err ... so ...

EA-C Do you remember a lot of poverty then around?

Mr C A lot of poverty 'cos ... when I was little, eleven or twelve years old, I remember some of the children in the summer had no shoes. It was all they could do to eat – they just couldn't afford the shoes. But I seem to remember they're the good days to the bad. I always remember school, little things sort of frightened you, but ... after a week or two you were happy. I remember a little fellow called McFee got drowned in the river, another girl I was in school with had a tooth taken out and she died – bled to death! So that's frightening to children and all! And another little girl I sat – she actually sat – we sat boy and a girl, boy and a girl in a desk, and one morning I come to school and teacher said, he said, 'Eva died last night,' he said, 'she'd bought a bicycle and she came off it – a wagon hit her.' And so all of a sudden I was sitting in me own desk, you know, she was gone. And then another little boy I went to school with he died of double pneumonia! And there was a big fear of diphtheria; children thought, or had a fear, you know, somebody got diphtheria it was the end of you?

EA-C Well what happened when you became ill as a child, who looked after you?

Mr C I can't remember. I think we had a doctor to come and see us on a bicycle, but everything nearly – they always had a big bottle of medicine – cure everything. And ... you didn't call the doctor unless you really had to. I remember I bust me ankle when I – just when I started working, and me father was upset because I couldn't work! He wasn't worried that I'd bust me ankle.

EA-C And how did that happen?

Mr C We were messing about up in the hills and we had a race ... we had a race home, so I tripped over something and tripped over another thing and went flying and bust me ankle. When I got home I couldn't get me shoe off, and next morning it was worse still, so me father said I'd have to get somebody to get the doctor. So ... doctor said, 'You'll have to go into hospital.' And I'll always remember the

first thing the nurse said to me, 'You'll have to have a good wash,' she said – I think we only washed about once a week. The children were very rough, most of them.

EA-C When you were young, do you remember anybody speaking any Manx?

Mr C No, not full Manx, no. No.

EA-C And what about sayings, did anybody have any sayings?

Mr C Yea, they had little sayings. Now, a saying me father had and I told Johnny Crellin about this and he said that I'd never heard of that, any young person who was cheeky, was a '*hafrun*' [sp ???] – used to be our father just said, 'Young *hafrun*,' [sp ???] because ... (*laughter*) me, one night when we're out, it's true this, we were all sitting there, we're reading from the paraffin lamp, we had no electricity, we were sitting there paraffin lamp and the next thing, the door opened and a big firework come in and the explosion put the lamp-light out! And me father ran outside and he said, 'The young *hafrun*,' [sp ???] he said, 'if I catch him!!!' That's true, that. (*laughter*) And another saying he had was, anybody going fast, 'Went like *smooke* [smoke] – I don't know why. But I mean, one night there he said, 'Stanley [unclear] a TT rider,' he said, 'he could go like *smooke* [smoke].' And I think his other saying were...well, the people were used to it, I mean, like our local...one of our neighbours was called 'Tommy the Gow,' because that's Manx.

EA-C What would that mean, 'Tommy the Gow'?

Mr C It means blacksmith in Manx. And what happened at farm, we had all usual things, we had the manure heap outside which was called the midden. And then you'd got a horse and cart and you put it in the field and put in heaps and they were called pollags; and to pull the stuff out of the cart we had a thing called a *brethsan* [sp ???] for pulling the stuff out of the cart. So ... otherwise I don't think ... that's all the Manx he had. Kiddies ... the kiddies, any little kiddie you would say they were a 'nipper.' And as the kiddie got bigger he became a 'lumper,' and a 'lumper' would go to twelve years old – a 'nipper' would be about five or six years old. So that's about it I remember of the Manx. But talking about going to Lezayre Church which was the hub for Lezayre, we ... although we weren't religious, we enjoyed going because you met your ... you

met your friends there. And I remember me sister got a diary given to her in 1957 and she wrote in her diary, it was in July, 1957, 'Only seven people in church tonight.' They say church is dying out, but half a century ago there was only seven people in Lezayre Church, so ... which is now closed. But I remember Lezayre ... people had their own little groups, you know, you had the Catholics and the Protestants, and when I was at school we had the religious teaching in the daytime and the Protestants had to go out of the room and go into another room. And then ... then they had the Wesleyans in Sulby – they had the Methodists. And always me father said, he remembers as a little kiddies, people all couldn't understand, they only had one church in Lezayre, and people sort of broke away from it and started up their own religion; and they built six more in Lezayre, and half of them are closed now.

EA-C What religion did they start up?

Mr C There was like ... Primitive Methodists, or ... the St Olaf's Church in Ramsey, they started one up in Glen Auldyn – I can't remember what that was called. They had one up Sulby Glen ... another up Sulby Glen; across the road there, there's one there – they also had a school up there. And in Sulby they had St Stephen's Church and they had the Wesleyan Church alongside Caley's shop. They had one down the Garey road, I can't remember what ... I generally can't remember the name of that, but for some reason they all spread out, you know, they all had their own little churches. So ...

EA-C Was Caley's shop there when you were a child?

Mr C Yes.

EA-C Tell me about that.

Mr C It was there in the wartime. I remember I was very naughty because (*laughter*) I remember in the wartime we couldn't afford decorations in our house – we had nothing at all, and you used to get decorations, you could pull them out – concertina – I remember in the shop one day there, I said to me self ... there was always a big box-full there ... and I always remember, they were tuppence each, which is a fortune. And then one day she went in the back, so I got a couple of them and later on I was going to pay for them – I never did! (*laughter*) I told me father that I'd found them on the road, and he said, 'Well, try and find out

who'd lost them.' (*laughter*)

EA-C Would that have been Mr Raymond Caley's mother ... had the shop?

Mr C No, no – going back further than that.

EA-C What was the name of the people who ran it then?

Mr C Well, she'd dead – a Mrs Quayle ... a Mrs Quayle and ... another little thing ... well, I didn't sort of look at it as being ... pinching or anything, 'cos I was actually going to pay it back. I remember another day outside the shop I found a ring, and I said to me father, 'I found a brass ring.' And he said, 'Alright.' It was a gold ring. I think I give ... put it in the shop and some lady thanked me, she said it was her gold ring, but it meant nothing to me at the time.

EA-C Can you remember what kind of things would have been sold in the shop?

Mr C I remember they had another shop in ... near Sulby Bridge – that was always known as Tommy 'Pop' – Tommy 'Pop's' shop. And even his son now, John Cottier, they still call him Tommy 'Pop.' He doesn't mind, and he just laughs but ... and as soon as you went in the shop – they sold everything; sweets, bread and all. And they had a big tank in the corner selling paraffin, and the whole shop reeked of paraffin. But people ... well, the health and ... you wouldn't be allowed that now, would you? And a little thing I always remember was too, we got our first wireless, and this was after ... in the wartime nobody had a wireless ... maybe ... I don't know anybody who had a wireless, and ... when we did get one, it sort of had what you call a battery, it had to be charged, and you had to bring it into Ramsey, you went to the pictures on a Saturday night, you brought it into the electrician, he charged it up and you collected it afterwards and brought it home. And that's the only time ... you know, you had to ... thing ... and they had acid in them, and you had to carry it home, and that's how most people ... and a lot in Lezayre, only about one in ten people had a wireless, so if anything special on, the neighbours went to the house to hear it. I remember there was a boxing match one night and about a dozen of us gathered just to hear the football match.

EA-C What other programmes would you have listened to?

Mr C Oh ... well, we only listened to the news because the batteries were so dear – we couldn't afford only the news. I don't know why really, because it was English news. And we never bought a paper – we always got one handed to us about a week later. And ... you know, they generally passed it round the neighbourhood. And it finished up ... (*laughter*) it finished up in the toilet – most of us had newspaper, you know, hung in the toilet. And err ... my son was laughing at that. And ... we had a well ... we had a well for the water for a while, and one night the local kids went and threw a dead sheep in it, you know. (*laughter*) But that's the type of thing you used to get up to. The common thing with the young people just after the war was – in the winter nights especially – on a summer evening, they'd no proper entertainment – they'd be sitting at the corners, like at St Jude's crossroads. You'd go past on your bicycle and the kids would be all sitting on the hedge, and they'd be throwing things at you and cat-calling and ... same at Sulby Bridge, they'd be sitting on the wall ... a sort of a gathering place, because they'd no television an nothing ... but me father, up to the day he died, he wouldn't have electric in the house, so we had no television – we had a wireless, but you had to go to somebody else's house to see their television, so that's ... but a thing that annoys me slightly now is the Sulby River you could walk ... the children and the people all walked, on a Sunday when they could walk right from Ramsey right up through to Sulby on the Sulby River, walk back on the other side. Me, I've got photographs of this – it's all private now; you can't do it now; it's all private. A lot of the walks it was at the owner's discretion, but now they're the type of one's they've got now, they just close them. And I think it's a pity, like, that that's happened, that. It's err ... and another little thing I'll always remember; I was quite proud of me ... I had a birds' egg collection. And I remember one day at Sulby School the policeman come in and he gave us a lecture and ... first thing the teacher said, 'Anybody here got a birds' egg collection?' and I put me hand up and I said, 'I have.' And he said, 'How many have you got?' and I said, 'oh, about fifty of them.' And the next thing, the policeman said, 'It's against the country ... it's against the law.' And he give me a bit of a telling-off and I said, 'Well, I used to only take one egg out of the nest,' ... and I love the countryside, and there's a nest with about three eggs in, and the bird's laying six, you knew they weren't ... they were pretty fresh, so I took one out, and I only took one out. And some of the rarest eggs, one day, I had the drawer with them in with cotton-wool, and our cat had gone ... I'd left the drawer open and our cat had gone to sleep and flattened them. But after that I didn't ... you know? Another thing we were ... in another way we were too [unclear] at school when we were kids, we used to

catch long-tails [rats]. And me father had the book, if you brought a female – a dead female you got tuppence – no, four pence, and you got tuppence for a tail. I remember some of the kids coming home from school on their bicycle and they'd see a dead long-tail, they'd jump off their bike, cut the tail off, put it in their pocket, go home and have tea – didn't bother to wash their hands – and it's true, that. But when they stopped the system, we had the book ... he come to me, me father, with a little bag, 'They say there's ten – two females here and some tails.' So me father, he just took their word for it and he paid them, and when the 'thorities [authorities] said to me father, 'It's going to stop it now,' I wanted to keep the book, and me father said to him, 'We've lost it.' That'd be history, that; because anybody brought the long-tails, had to put their name and address down.

EA-C So they brought them to your father?

Mr C Yea.

EA-C And what would he do with them?

Mr C He'd light a fire and burn them, you know, like burn them up – or dig a hole and bury them.

EA-C But why would they have brought them to your father?

Mr C 'Cos he was ... for Lezayre, for Lezayre and Sulby, he was the collector – he was the collector for Lezayre in the end. Each parish had a book, and ...

EA-C And who would have paid ... who would have given him the money to pay out?

Mr C The commissioners – he had to show the book to the commissioners. But once they'd been thrashing on the farms they got the big hay – the big farm stacks were full of long-tails. You always had a lot then, so you had to have money ready for to pay them. But some of the kids and all that, people were fair, some of them used to put ... we used to open the bag and have a quick count, but if you get the root of a turnip it looks just like the tail of a long-tail, and they used to throw half a dozen – half a turnip in, and they all used to say ... and me father would say, 'Yes, you've got twelve there.' But ... another little thing that ... I remember was it twice a year ... or once, used to have a religious service up on

top of Primrose Hill, and then the Methodists from Kerrowmoar went up on the hill and had a little religious service, and they had a little hand organ which is, you know, worked by feet, like a little harmonium, and two men used to carry it up. And we'd have a religious service, and some of the local kids used to go up and throw sticks and all at them because at the top of the hill there, they used to hide behind and throw things over the top. And anyway, I ... after the war ... after the thing ended I had that little harmonium, but through time I broke it up and got rid of it. That would have been a bit of history, that. It came out of Kerrowmoar chapel. So err ... but that died out. In Lezayre we had a social club; we had seventy members and before ... we used to have it twice a week – used to have table-tennis, had discussions, slide shows and dances and all that. And all of a sudden it died out – television came in – straight away it killed it. We had picture houses in Ramsey – two picture houses and the kids used to go in Ramsey once a week to the pictures.

EA-C What would you have paid to get in?

Mr C I think it was ... you paid sixpence, I think, to sit down the front – the kids called them the flea-pits – that's where the poor children went, and I think you paid a shilling, and then I think it was a bit dearer when you sat up on the balcony. But they had two picture houses and I mean, they've died and gone. So you got *The Courier* – you got *The Courier* on a Friday night, and the first thing you open the paper to see what's on next week at the pictures. I mean, I used to love going and watching Laurel & Hardy and I'm still watching them on television. A big thing in Lezayre was magic lantern show. The only time we see the Christmas tree, was once a year at Lezayre ... you know, the Sunday school. And I always remember ... always remember ... this fellow came on in the big wellies, big Father Christmas to give us all the presents, and a little boy shouts out, 'That's not Father Christmas – that's Eddie Lowe!' By gum, the people went wild – it spoiled it for the little ... smaller kids. But ... I mean, everybody has Christmas trees now, but them days we thought it was marvellous, you know, to see the Christmas tree, and ... I remember, we only got about four Christmas cards, and I've still got some of them kept. I've got Christmas cards there that are a hundred years old, but you only got them from your sisters or your ... or your ... I mean, everybody has Christmas cards now, but them days you sent a ... me father used to get a card at Easter and Christmas, and I always remember the envelope the cards came in, things were so scarce that he used to take the envelope and use the back of it to write the grocery list

on. And err ...

EA-C Can you remember who your postman was?

Mr C He used to come round on a bike – bicycle. I just can't remember ... but there's a fellow ... the Sulby postman, perhaps he came from Lezayre ... I just can't remember, but there's this fellow, somebody called Bobby Corlett, and he was so honest, he would cycle a mile with one letter ... you know, people said. These days they'd wait 'til two or three letters, then deliver them. But he was so honest he'd go ... a whole mile just with one letter.

EA-C Can you tell me about any local characters that you can remember?

Mr C Oh yes, there was local characters. Well, there's this Bobby I was telling you about, Bobby the postman, his name was Bobby Corlett but everybody knew him as Bobby the postman. And there's a local character there, he was always getting drunk, he's banned from most of the pubs, but he was a good natured fellow, but he had a stammer – a very bad stammer, and his name was Bobby Christian, but they called him 'Perbut,' 'cos he always used to say, 'pppp ...' you know, so he was known as 'Perbut.' And one night, it's true, me father said in *The Ginger*, [Hotel] some fellow said, 'You're Mr 'Perbut.' And he had a ... he hit him straight away, and ... you know, he beat him up! (*laughter*) 'Cos he had a few drinks in him and he was wild, but ... but in Lezayre now ... the pubs did a lot of trade in them days, but there's no other entertainment!

EA-C Would it have been mostly men that went into the pubs?

Mr C Yes, yes.

EA-C Did you ever get women going in?

Mr C A few of them, a few of the ladies used to go in there in the wartime. They sort of got medals for entertaining troops. (*laughter*) I found this out afterwards.

EA-C Can you remember the first time you went into the pub?

Mr C Yes, oh yea – I'm not a drinker, I've nothing against them, but I've no interest in it. And I went in for somebody's wedding anniversary, and I didn't bother

going back again because ... but for a while then, as we were teenagers, well, being a young lad, they had the dances in Ramsey.

EA-C Where were they held?

Mr C It's gone now, it was a place called *The Pool* – it was a dance hall come pool. But it was in the wartime, and me father said there were awful fights going on because the air force and the army, the navy and the locals be all in after the local girls, there'd be fights and drinking and err ... that disappeared ... then we had the Teddy Boys – the Teddy Boy era. We were sort of teenagers then, but ... I wasn't a Teddy Boy, but a lot of me mates and all were, and they carried a flick-knife, they carried a knife with a blade that was six inches long, but they never used them, it was a show thing, you know, to show off to the girls and ... there was a lot of fights went on in *The Pool* in the dances because they had the air force cadets at Jurby. Well, the air force cadets on a Saturday night, they'd be going to the dances because there was no other entertainment and they'd taking some of ... they looked better than the local ... the local girls were more interested in them. Quite a few of them married them! And there'd be a lot of fights going on. So the first thing in Amnesty year, we had our local dance, you had to hire a policeman, we had to hire a policeman for the gate just to control the kids, there were that much trouble! (*laughter*) But I remember one night – I'll never forget – I had a bicycle and I had a torch, and the bike – which was dear – and somebody had pinched it, so next I went to the dance I took me torch and I hid it round the back of the hall, in the grass in the corner. Well, when the dance finished I went out the back to get it and there was a courtin' [couple] standing on top of me torch, so I had a job to persuade them that that's what I went there to get me torch! (*laughter*)

EA-C And did you ever get your bicycle back?

Mr C Oh, yes. But quite often when you went to Ramsey on a Saturday night your bicycle got stolen, because the airmen come on the bus into Ramsey to get a few drinks in them, maybe go out, then missed the bus home – they'd go and look for a bike and pinch it! But as a rule, you'd be ... you know, you'd check with the police at Jurby, you'd get it back again. I remember getting fined – I had no lights on me bike – I got fined five shillings in the old money. And me father see'd it in the paper, he was crying nearly to see my name in the paper, I'd no lights on me bike. But the policeman warned me for about a month about it; he

said, 'I'll book you,' and I couldn't afford them and ... (*laughter*) and then I had a laugh over it because me father – he was very conscientious, he took a row with the neighbour over something, and the next thing the neighbour came and reported him, and a policeman came to the door and he said, 'Mr William Cashen, you haven't cut your thistles,' he said, 'I'll have to ...,' he said, 'it's been reported.' Me father said, 'Who told you?' and he said, 'Well, I haven't to tell you.' So my father got *his* name in the paper for not cutting his thistles! And the judge said, 'Mr Cashen,' he said, 'you've got two able-bodied sons,' he said, 'you should have had them cut.' But err ...

EA-C So there would have been great shame, then, attached to getting your name in the paper?

Mr C Oh, me father's very conscientious like that. I remember as a little kiddie, they always put it in the paper if you left a bit of money, and anybody, you'd always leave them money to cover your ... any debts or something – they don't do that now. But ... so ... you know, people had a lot of respect, I remember, for funerals and all that. You'd go along the road and you father would say, 'Stop, there's a funeral coming.' You got off your bike and stopped 'til the funeral had gone past. And I remember me grandmother and all, dressed in black, and me father would have an armband or something on him, and we drew the curtains – when me mother died we drew the curtains for two days, to let people know that she'd died.

EA-C When somebody died, did they have a wake?

Mr C I don't remember doing that ... I don't remember going to any. It became a thing that came in later. No, I don't remember having any wakes. The funerals I went to we didn't. But err ... I had ... another thing I used to enjoy, we had relatives living up the top in Narradale, and they reckon they had the highest farm in the Isle of Man – I don't know whether you've ever been up in Narradale or not? And it was a hard life. And we used to go up there on a weekend, we used to walk. It took us nearly ... it took us half a day to walk up, have something to eat, have a chat with them, and walk home again. We had to walk up over the top of the hills, and err ... I'll always remember, we drove our sheep – them days there wasn't many traffic on the road, we thought we'd give our twenty sheep a change of grass, so we drove them on the road, over to *The Ginger* [Hotel], then up the road and ... we stood up and had something to eat and ... this was on the

Saturday, and Monday me father looked in through the window ... and he rarely swore – and he said, ‘Damn, me sheep are back!’ Our sheep had worked their way over the hill and back again! I’ll never forget that – we didn’t do that anymore!

EA-C Did you ever meet together with your family – your extended family – for any big events?

Mr C Yes. We’d ... I’d two uncles and both of them worked on a farm nearby, so they lived up the hills, it took them half an hour to cycle home, they had to cycle up the hill. It was easy going to work because they went downhill, but at night they used to come and have something to eat with us before going home. And then they had to go home and put their uniform on to go on duty because they were ... if you weren’t in the army, and you worked on a farm, you had to go in the Home Guard, so ... you know, they were worn out. So ...

EA-C Did you celebrate Christmas and Easter and birthdays?

Mr C This is true, I remember one Christmas me father said to us the four of us ... he said, ‘There’s no presents for you, but,’ he said, ‘the family got together and, you know, the uncles, and bought a big goose for us.’ Well, some of the children were in that same boat, and we sort of accepted it, but we got a present at Sunday school off the Christmas tree. But I remember the relatives used to give us apples and pears and things. And oranges – the only time you’d see them was at Christmas Day and they give you them, the relatives, but a lot of the children were in the same boat. But the surveyor of the Highway Board across the road from us at Glen Duff quarry, they had about thirty staff up there, the surveyor, he was very rich, and his son, his son and his daughter, when he’d finished with last year’s Christmas present, they gave them to us, and do you know, they were beautiful! We thought they were marvellous even though they were second hand. So after a while, then, we got their second-hand presents. But err ...

EA-C And what about ... what did you do about clothes, where did they come from?

Mr C You had to use coupons. In the war time you had coupons and you went to a little shop in Ramsey and bought ... you know ... used to go in with your little book and they’d say, ‘Yea, you’ve got enough coupons in there to buy yourself

a suit.’

EA-C So as you got older do you remember times getting a bit easier?

Mr C Yes, since the war ended, it took about five years or so for the people to get back on their feet, but there was work for everybody – well, there wasn’t because, a lot of the lads I remember came home from the forces, there was no work for them. And people say to me, ‘Do you remember the wartime, the soldiers and all?’ I mean, when we gather and have a memorial service I only knew three people in uniform. I had an uncle who was in the air force, and another was in the navy, and another chap was in the army, and I remember them in uniform coming home from India. One came all the way home from India and that was my uncle. And I remember our vicar, he was in the army and he had a ... he was a Padre, and he had a beautiful ... you know, nice uniform, a bit of quality, and so people say you must remember these people – we were too little to remember them.

EA-C Well what age were you when you left school Mr Cashen?

Mr C Fourteen.

EA-C And did you get a job?

Mr C Oh yes, I went into gardening straight away, but me father said, ‘Get into the first job you can get and get some money in.’ And ... so ... but a lot of the children, they sort of had very ... and all the children were clever and never really went ... they just couldn’t afford to go onto college like they can now. I remember we went to school, I remember we all had just a wooden ... plain wooden pen with the nib in the end, and a little inkwell, and my pal, he had a fountain pen, but he was very rich, they were, compared to all the other ... and one day he lost his fountain pen (*laughter*) – it’s true, this, and he said to me, ‘I’ve lost me fountain pen. Anyway,’ he said, ‘it doesn’t matter,’ he said, ‘I’ve got two more.’ Because he had a green one and a brown one and a red one or something – beautiful – 19 carat gold nib! ‘Anyway,’ he said, ‘it don’t matter if I don’t find it.’ And I found it, so I kept it! (*laughter*) Told meself, ‘Well, he’s got plenty more. (*laughter*)’ And this is the truth – I’ve still got it in there!

EA-C Are you still in contact with any of the people you went to school with?

Mr C Only about a quarter now because three-quarters of them are gone. They've either gone and spread out all over the world, because the headmaster, George Gell, his son went to British Columbia, he was very clever – he was so clever at school we used to call him, 'wise arse' you know. (*laughter*) He was so clever and he went on to British Columbia. And my other friend, as I say, we used to make model aeroplanes together and all, he's got dementia now. And he was, you know, they say keep your brain active, it'll help, but it's not – he was always active with his brain, but he's got dementia. The other half of them are gone now, you know, they were in their 80s and they're dead and gone. There's a woman – a girl I went to school with there, she had a stroke this week, I went to school with her brother – he's gone ... So ... my ... three of my family are gone now – I've only got me younger brother left ... who was fostered out, so we keep in contact. But err ... we had a simple life, but I don't know, sometimes ... you know, the children used to ... play in the countryside, better ... more of a better community spirit, but you only think that, you know. I remember we used to all go out as soon as spring came, the kids would all be out in the field gathering birds' eggs – well, I had our collection, and we'd be bringing flowers to school; all that's gone now. Even my son now, he doesn't know the names of the different trees nor nothing. But you'd go out with your parents and they'd say, 'That's a daisy and that's a dandelion and all.' That's all gone, but we didn't know any better.

EA-C Do you think, looking back, you've had a good childhood?

Mr C I don't know ... I don't if I have or not, really ... I had ambitions in life, but perhaps ... I don't know really, you can't go backwards, can you? Because I know some of the children, who were successful in life, and at school they couldn't read or write, but they went on to be ... you know, just sort of had the ability to make ... I remember one of the lads at school, and the teacher used to say to him, 'Before you leave school,' he said, 'I'm going to learn you to read and write.' And he became a big building contractor. He's, you know, very wealthy now. So ... once a year we always look forward to our Sunday school picnic – no, Sunday school party at Christmas we had a magic lantern show, and I really looked forward to them – them's the first pictures we'd seen – and I always remember his favourite was 'Little Red Riding Hood.' It was done like a cartoon. And the chap that err ... Canon Kermode was going deaf, and he used to ... he was the ... and I often wondered what happened to that collection, because me dad got a magic lantern and I've got magic lantern slides, but I tried

to find out what happened to that collection. Yes, I'll never forget that, and we looked forward to seeing it. I can always remember little things – at the end of the war we had a little celebration party in Sulby, and they had a dance on the Sulby Claddagh, and they danced on the road, and they had a bonfire, and we had a party in the local hall, and I'll never forget this; they started off showing the Battle of Tobruk. I remember this distinctly; when Montgomery and the Battle of Tobruk, and the children were shouting, 'When's this going to finish?!' because there was going to be a cartoon on afterwards – Charlie Chaplin – and the kids didn't want the war, they wanted the Charlie Chaplin film, and they all shouted, 'When's it going to finish?!' (*laughter*) I'll never forget that.

EA-C How do you think childhood has changed?

Mr C I like the sort of simple things in life. I mean, my son ... my son who works in an office, he's into computers and on the eBay, and all that. I don't ... I don't ... people go ahead and miss the simple things in life sometimes. But it depends what you like, isn't it? Now my son enjoyed travelling, but I'm not fussy about travelling. But he just likes to go travelling and seeing things, and sometimes I think he's just missing the little things at home. But it's the trouble of getting there – Heathrow Airport and all that – I haven't got no patience for that. But err ... there's other little things, well, that's about ... I think about it, but it's err ... there's a chap in Sulby there, Bill Graham, he's like me, he's very knowledgeable on local things. But you see, you all get old now, your memory starts to go a little bit. Anyway ...

EA-C Thank you so much for sharing those memories. They are absolutely wonderful, thank you.

Mr C The only thing I will say is, it seems like yesterday it happened – yea, yes. (*laughter*)

END OF INTERVIEW