

Angus Mackay Diaries Volume II (1952-1966)

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 19

Angus Mackay.

Being the fifteenth. v.

From June 15 1952.

To November 21 1952.

PAGES MISSING

...conversationalist either his appearance or his inclination would really suggest. He is shy/retiring, and means to be a good listener; in fact he rarely succeeds in making you feel anything but his wish to be rid of you, a wish he has himself frequently contradicted.

The message about the bit of extra-work solved itself as these things generally do. I slept through until my usual time, got up and pretended to Gerard with more guilt than I could really feel. I had guilt about not feeling guilt.

Friday June 20 1952

Depressed today by my failure of yesterday. I wondered again and again whether I should have taken the extra-work, while my common-sense said 'If you can get on without it, nothing could be better than to keep away from a fatal groove'. In the evening I was particularly down because I had had little more than a biscuit or two for lunch. I was particularly pleased when Joseph R. asked me out to dinner at Bianchi's in Frith Street. I am not at all sure that I have described Joseph at all fully, and certainly not as his position in life at Kingly Street deserves. Joseph Rykwert then, is a scruffy long-haired Jewish-Polish intellectual, with the bulging stomach of the rickety, a long haughty Jewish nose, and two slightly self-consciously naughty eyes. His clothes are grease-spotted, his shoes scuffed, his whole aspect unkempt and unattractive. His mind is at once far-ranging and narrow, humble and arrogant, well-trained and bigoted. His manner is not calculated to make a good first impression, being very contradictory and given to propounding very revolutionary opinions in the most heavily casual tone. But for all that, his mind is within its limits extremely thorough and penetrating, though neither original, nor, I should have said, particularly creative. He has not known happiness very often, I should think, and has often himself been without a dinner. We walked off to Bianchi's, Joseph asking me on the way what I thought of St. Paul's. I said I thought it was really rather fun. He said loftily that was because I had never studied the subject, and St. Paul's was really a very wrong-minded building. Sparring gently over this, we arrived in Frith St. with tempers surprisingly intact. Bianchi's, a small undistinguished brown-varnished shop, is, I am informed, very Italian in atmosphere. There seemed to be to be no atmosphere at all, except a loud smell of garlic and a loud sound of Italian voices, but no doubt that is what people mean by Italian atmosphere. We had a nice enough meal, of which I was very glad and afterwards felt guilty of all my strictures on Joseph after his kindness. We went along to the London Pavilion afterwards to use the free tickets that Gerard's little usher friend had sent him, saw the Film Garden Party on the news-

reel which Joseph had attended the day before, sat through part of the silliest film I have seen for a long time, 'California Conquest', and then came back to Kingly St. for a drink to an address in Lowndes Square, where his cousin, Mrs. Orme, has a flat. I got there at about 6.15, having had tea and changed, and found on the west side of Lowdes Square a large ugly block of brick flats, looking ill at ease among the haughty yellow stucco of the rest of the square. In the hallway of the flats the name-board has a number of varnished black spaces instead of names. When I was let into the flat, over a glass of rather bad sherry, in a drawing-room furnished in the purest Curzon St. Baroque, I asked Mrs. Orme, a commonplace jolly woman, with a diseased hip and lot of money, what was the reason for this. She told me that it was because the occupants of some of the flats were so grand they didn't want anybody to live there. She says she often sees ex-Queen Marie of Yugoslavia carrying in a case of beer. Michael's brother was also there, a small shy boy, frightened to be anything but brazen.

Michael and I went off for a lovely dinner at a restaurant near the Knightsbridge end of Sloane Street, followed by a drink at the Grenadier in Old Barrack Yard. We had a long long talk, naturally about Ju most of the time. He feels much the same about Ju as I do, and I am glad to find that there are one or two others who feel the same foreboding about him until and unless circumstances force him into reality. He has been too lucky really, I don't think I'm jealous. I'm sure it's not a good preparation.

Monday June 23 1952

To St. Anne's this evening for the last of the literary conversations. This one, on Firbank and Saki, is between Osbert Lancaster and Harold Nicholson. The audience, larger and more distinguished than the first one, arrived early, and sat waiting in expectation of amusement. The appearance of the speakers created a much larger buzz of conversation than usual. Led by bustling plump Gerard, they threaded their way to the front, amid a polite hum of subject-changing. As they sat down, I could see that Mr. Nicolson is a well-covered smart prosperous man of middle height, with small neat features, thin white hair and very bright blue eyes. When he was a young man, I can imagine that he was a typical Edwardian, with a sleek head of absolutely smooth fair hair, and the anonymously regular features of one of Wallis Mills' Knuts. Osbert Lancaster, on the other hand, much younger, is thick-set, four-square on the ground with an odd blunt square head, covered with thick d. brown hair; his face is pugnacious, the nose defiantly pug, the eyes cold and sardonic. He wears a huge bristling handle-bar moustache, and his whole aspect is so truculent and fierce that one wonders where is the gaiety and lightness of the man who dreamed up Stockbrokers' tudor, Curzon St. Baroque, and Maudie Littlehampton. His delivery is slow, measured and interrupted by frequent hummings, er-er's and smacking of the lips, as if he were considering the merits of a bottle rather than a man.

Harold Nicolson opened the discussion with an amusing though over-chatty expose of Firbank saying as clearly as he could in such company that Firbank was queer. He told of their meeting in Spain, before the Great War, when H.N. was in the Foreign Service, and F. got an introduction to him from his parents. He told of Firbank's limpness and giggling, without seeming to realize that if he met such a person now he would think nothing of it. Then he was young, conventional, and I should say, rather dull. The truth is that he can't forgive R.F. for his wicked portrait of him in I forget which of the novels. Nor what is more, that he himself was kicked out of the Foreign Service for the certain vice he accused F. of.

Osbert Lancaster was not particularly amusing not enlightening though pleasant enough. Both of course were adept at the polite exchange of insults in as polysyllabic a vocabulary as possible that passes any educated people as the small change of public speaking, and on this they more or less relied for the evening. I come more and more to the conclusion that authors like Firbank can in fact not be critically examined at all, or if at all quite unproductively.

Tuesday June 24 1952

I saw in 'What's On' last week that 'Domenico d'Agosto was on at the Classic in Croydon. I had heard so much about it that I determined to go down and see it. I scrambled onto the train at Charing Cross, and just got to the cinema, miles along Croydon High St., in time for the big film. Oh dear, it was so good. The young love affair in it, was enough to make you feel that you had finally caught the essence of nineteen for ever and ever. I love them both, the smooth rounded plump slightly self-conscious girl, and the casual volatile protective boy, leaping in and out of the sea together and running over the sands to drop down breathless in each others' arms.

When I got back I found a message from Colin and Mary asking me to dinner. Changed in a great hurry, and got there to find I was the only guest. So nice, and enjoyed the evening in quiet and peace.

Wednesday June 25 1952

John B. called me this morning, and told me to come out to lunch. I went and we had a long long lunch followed by a long long walk around Regent's Park. Thank heavens for someone who remains the same, and can pick up a friendship absolutely where he left off without the smallest trouble. He gave me a great encouragement by saying that he wouldn't regard my being out of work for two years as an indication of any lack of talent. He needed to give some encouragement after the tales of hob-nobbing with the great, and all his dramatic plans and schemes. He had been invited to luncheon by Dadie, and arrived to find that his fellow-guests were the Lunts and the Oliviers. of course John is hopeless for really interesting details. He couldn't tell me for example exactly how many times Lynn has had her face lifted, nor just how loving the Oliviers are. John did say though, that the first thing Olivier said on being introduced to the Lunts was 'Miss Fontanne, how old is your husband?' Not the most tactful of questions for the world's champion face-lifter. He told me a great deal of his plans for Cambridge in the autumn, at which I felt very down. I wonder if they realize how lucky they are having such lovely big parts to act without any trouble but suitability. I know I didn't.

Thursday June 26 1952

Today Gerard's father and mother arrived to stay for the weekend. It is their annual visit to London for the Regimental dinner. Mrs. Irvine, of whom one naturally thinks first, is a tallish plump dominating woman, very like Gerard in manner and appearance. She immediately set about getting some dinner in an extremely slapdash Gerardian way, to my extreme fury. The little General is very small, with a red face, a hook nose and a vague manner. Older than his

wife, (he is seventy-seven) his wandering speech and dreadful cough emphasise the senility to which he is rapidly giving way.

About six o'clock just as I was thinking of getting ready for Pamela's dance, the telephone rang. It was Robin, asking me to go down to Sudbury for the weekend. An absolutely heavenly piece of luck to be pulled out of this frightful close weather into blissful country, and away too, from this invasion of Irvines. By the time seven o'clock arrived, there were five people changing for the evening. Timothy I. brought two friends in to change too. One of them used Joseph's towel as a bath-mat. Very natural.

Off to Mrs. Keith Barlow's dance, with nice little dins. at Pam's first. Mrs. Barlow has a house in Church Gate just off Kensington Church St. A conventional London house, but unconventional these days because she has the whole house. The dance was in her first floor drawing-room, a medium-sized prettyish room with cabinets full of rather inferior china and uninteresting minerals. The dances were not too exactly done, and not very exhausting. Human nature being what it is, all the irritation was confined to the proficient with the consequence that as familiarity with the dances increased, so did the irritation. The balcony proved very popular and beautifully cool it was to go and sit with a drink after in a tropical reef.

Monday June 30 1952

We posted back to London, a very fine hot day, and Robin and I went straight round to Kingly St. We found General Irvine and his wife waiting for their taxi to take them to Paddington. Gerard was sitting with them looking most wan, pale, upset. We talked desultorily, Robin getting on well with Mrs. Irvine - she was inveighing vehemently against the judge who had condemned a young woman to two years in prison for putting her baby on the fire, and the bits that didn't burn in the bottom drawer. As she said, 'It's either too much or too little'. When the time arrived, I got them a taxi, helped them down with their luggage, waved them off and got rid of Robin. When we got back upstairs, I said something desultory about G's upset. He looked at me oddly, and he did look ill, then he said suddenly, 'I'm not ill at all really. My tum's upset because I found out yesterday that most of my silver had been stolen.' I felt all timeless, as I do in a shock, and then said, my face feeling all stiff, 'Gerard!!!' After the first moment, my feelings became a combination of absurd guilt, and twinges of thrill at a disaster which did not touch me at all directly. Then I asked whether there had been an actual burglary, and Gerard said, 'No, it must have been someone in the house, because they used the key of the silver-box-. Oh! the uncomfyness! However, it was not long before I realised that suspicion had turned to a much more likely quarter - Bill. I must admit to my shame, that I was only too ready to find him guilty, for I have never really liked him. Gerard refused to admit to anything more than suspicion, and thus gave me a most impressive demonstration of working charity. My first impulse would have been to say straightaway 'My silver's gone, who can I clap into jail?'

At 5.30, a detective from the Police Station across the road at Savile Row, appeared. Joseph, Bill and I had all been asked to appear. J. and I were there, but no Bill. the detective, a startlingly nondescript man of about thirty, with a bald head with a fringe of fairish hair at the back and deceptively sleepy small blue eyes, a small headed-man, questioned us perfunctorily, for which, in J's case, I was glad, as he is so nervous of police, after his experiences abroad. The moment Gerard mentioned Bill, he asked briskly how old, asked to

see his room, and apparently went through it thoroughly and quickly on the spot. That was that, for the day, except that we sat up until 12.30, waiting for Bill to come home, Gerard being sick at intervals as he remembered the beastly task ahead. We were just going to bed relieved at the reprieve when we heard him come in. Gerard went down, and had the interview, at which Bill denied everything.

So that, for tonight, is that.

PAGE MISSING?

...the searching eye of the camera, and consequently were rather grotesquely bouncy. M.R. in particular was far too mannered and jumpy and 'natural' all at the same time. Ernest must be earnest. Only in his thinking of Jack and Ernest is there a spark of brains, and this is the big hurdle in the part.

The film alas spoilt most of the situation laughs. In particular the mourning entrance went for almost nothing through rotten timing and faulty direction.

Thursday July 3 1952

To the 'Pandarus' rehearsal at 3.0 at the Guildhall School of Music. A large dusty 'schooly' building, and a large dusty 'schooly' room. The music is arty-crafty neo-Georgian rubbish by a rude and careless young man called Ray something. The music director is a small fat Jew with a goatee beard and an odiously inflated manner. The people are all no doubt honest, respectable and hard-working, but cannot work at rehearsing and seem to have no sense of theatre at all. This is going to be a Large Disaster. How have they got a run-thro? Ran through my songs, absurdly old-fashioned inferior Gilbert and Sullivan with a dash of Roger Quilter. Absurd. Left considerably disgruntled and was calmed down by a long warm happy evening with Win and Ken.

Friday July 4 1952

At 2.30 through the tall red-brick of Grosvenor Square to No. 37, a large dull block of flats; through a stone paved empty hall to the section marked 30-50, and up to Flat 37. A very well-appointed flat as a flat, though furniture and pictures etc. all of the dullest and least interesting curious arrangements. A kitchen next door to the room we rehearsed in was completely fitted out with everything one might want, washing-machine, refrigerator, electric stove, aluminium sink and so on, yet all obviously unused, taps wrapped in paper sink dry and dusty, china not unpacked.

The rehearsal was attended by half-a-dozen other people, all of whom seemed to know each other very well, and I daresay that prejudiced me very considerably against them. Nevertheless their capacity for talking and laughing rather than working to a degree even beyond my low standards to excuse, in view of the impending run-through, was too much for me. I determined that I at least would be well-rehearsed, and sang resolutely through my three awful songs some dozen times.

In the evening round to Christina Muir's little house, in Wilfred St. A pleasant little street of dignified small houses, set in the area behind Buckingham Palace Rd. When we got inside, there was a great deal of bumping and banging going on, finally resolved by a large handsome man whose name I have forgotten, clattering downstairs to go out from beer and brandy. I am sorry to say that later on in the evening he became so drunk that he could only sit and stare and swear, and had to be taken upstairs. We were the first to arrive, and there was nobody else there that I knew even when the rooms were full. There were two real charmers, Wayland and whatever his wife's name is, Hilton-Young. He odd little gnomish creature, she fascinatingly pretty, small delicately high-coloured, with a lisp.

Saturday July 5 1952

Spent the morning at a rehearsal at St. Martin's. Too ridiculously frustrating. Helplessly slack, with no idea at all of the standard of efficiency required, let alone actual stage technique.

In the afternoon to tea with John Lambert.

Painted his room, door and mantelpiece white. Enjoyable, though nothing more.

Afterwards Peggy H. odd she is, took me out to dine. When I got back, off we went to Irving Revue.

Sunday July 6 1952

Was asked to luncheon at St. Anne's, but had to rush away though the company was fascinating, in pursuit of a Pandarus rehearsal in the wilds of Highgate. It was a very hot close day, and I was not dressed for what was practically mountaineering. I wandered sweating through the bleak wilds of Highgate West Hill for a street called Holly Lodge Gardens. Of course the house I wanted was at the top of the topmost hill; when I arrived in none too good a temper, but prepared to apologise for being about a quarter of an hour late, I was made furiously by finding that Donald C. and girlfriends were still en deshabille, and no one else had yet turned up! Oh dear!

Back to usual talkative tea at Kingly St., and then at 7.15, off to Chelsea. Mrs. Thirkell has a small ugly house, one of a row, in Shawcross St. She received me with a gracious condescension, ha!, and soon after left me with her son, Lance, a shortish plumpish young man, with carefully lively eyes, and a manner more or less like his mother's heroes. He came in, held out his hand, and said 'How do you do? I am my mother's son.' His mother, during dinner when I was even to myself (getting giggles inside) behaving ridiculously like one of her young men, said that I might tell her a funny story, if I would do so without the many 'ers' and ums' which marred my conversation as it did so many of my contemporaries. Rap. Later, after dinner, we were standing at the window, when a negro passed with a white girl on his arm. Mrs. T. turned to me with a stiff sweet smile, and said, 'There goes another dirty black! I would have them all horse-whipped, you know.'

The other guests were a Hungarian professor (v. dull), one of the Lady Bonham-Carters' (this one called Charlotte, very bird-like, complaining that her niece's nanny wouldn't be seen with

a white pram before the other nannies), Lance and wife. Why are novelists always like their nastier people?

Saturday July 26 1952

I did not take my diary with me on my Class 'Z' training. I am glad I did not. Army life of any kind but particularly the absurd 'Z' fortnight, closes one's attention to all but the most trivial grumbles.

The camp, at Whitchurch in Hampshire, was set in the middle of a very beautiful park, surrounding Hurstbourne Manor, of which I never got a glimpse. The camp was dull, ugly without even the usual amenities of army life, no proper canteen, no dances, nothing. Nevertheless I enjoyed myself very much, principally because this time I had determined to be popular and not unpopular. I succeeded beyond my wildest dreams, my every remark being greeted with awed and not derisive laughter, as it was before, and in the pubs where we spent most of our time I was an even greater success. 'The Old Brewery' near the centre of Whitchurch, boasts a piano played by a heavenly pansy called George. I who started out my 'Z' week talking Cockney so as to be sure of acceptance, had by the time we arrived at this pub - the second week - become entirely myself. I sang all night for three nights, being greeted with wild applause, bought more drinks than I could possibly hold, and cheered on the last night as 'Good Old Angus'.

Among my other successes were three young men - Ron Miller, a thin funny little creature who was about 20 but looked 14, 'Jock' Strain, a tall serious common-sensical Scot, finding great difficulty writing to a friend who had left the office about six weeks before, and Joseph Mounari. This last was a tall fair young man, with a great quiff of blond hair, hot unhappy eyes, and a sudden grin which changed the whole shape of his face. His father was Maltese, his mother Scots, both dead. He lives with a sister in Bethnal Green. He has two brothers in North London, a sister in Scotland, two brothers in Australia, and a sister in Egypt. He seems rather crude in some ways, but knows six languages and was a clerk in the Ministry of Education. I thought from his looks and behaviour he ought to be in the infantry, but when he had sat and talked twice for about half an hour I wasn't so sure. What's more twice more with no irritation from me, he dropped down beside me twice in the canteen.

The people on 'Z' training with me were as nice as could be - on the whole. Only a man called Moore, who spent his whole time grumbling and wondering how he could fiddle as he called it, a quicker release, seemed to me to be really unpleasant. All the others were just unpolished, for which nobody blames them and most people like them, I suppose.

John Jarvis, an insurance clerk from Norbury and John Westcott, a cutter on the...

PAGE MISSING

... I have no doubt not much better an actor, I at once made up my mind to pack it in. When Colin George, the dark cool brisk head of the thing, announced that while I was with them, they would be doing the 'Taming of the Shrew' only, I was even more determined. It was only an idea of mine anyway to get a little bit of varied acting in, with nice people and a good tour, but this really, only tiny bad part (because I'd arrived late I hadn't been there for the auditions) and a hellishly uncomfortable tour for no more experience than the Priestley thing gave me. I had it out with Colin George and I'm off tomorrow. Nice chap in this bedroom with Peter and I. Frank - something, blond and good-looking - playing Grumio. Dull a bit.

Tuesday July 29 1952

Back at home in Kingly Street. Oh! the heaven of it! With nothing to do, it's true, but still a little money and a few prospects. Very late - to bed.

Wednesday July 30 1952

We talked very late last night, to Patience O'Leary and an American friend she brought with her, and although we were by no means shouting, we (particularly me, as usual) did raise our voices from time to time. When I was going out this lunch time with James, Buchanan, who was cleaning out the telephone box, came out, and began to tell me off for all the noise the night before. I don't call taking noise, or rather it's something the owners of flats have to put up with. He became more and more contemptuously rude and familiar, and finally to my annoyance, I lost my temper, said 'How dare you speak to me in that insolent way!' and stalked out. He is becoming unbearably rude, and something will have to be done if he gets any worse.

It quite upset me at the time, and I would scarcely like to have seen him again very soon. But now I am able to see that tho' I shouldn't have lost my temper, he was still disgracefully rude. About three o'clock, just to set me up, Mike H. rang up, to tell me he was sending me two tickets for his father's presentation, Albert R.N. the new play at the Saville. He also said he wanted to talk to me about a 'thing' over lunch one day next week. I then rang up Donald Cotton to see how things were progressing, and apparently they aren't much, but it's still 'on' so far. So - Kitty Black wants to see me on Friday, so things are looking up a bit.

Thursday July 31 1952

Washing-up, or so it seems now, all day. Christina Muir found herself pulled in to lunch, and great fun she is too. Gerard was moved to amuse her with some of his best eccentric stories, mostly of Barty's father, who had a passion for saving electric light, and would never allow more than one light at a time to be on.

At six thirty or so, we started to doll ourselves up, and yet still with baths and everything, found ourselves at seven fifteen in a great rush. This gave us a splendid chance to take a taxi. We swept up at the theatre to walk with swelling hearts between a double row of sight-seers. Coo! The thrill of being mistaken for someone important. We saw Mike for a brief moment inside, and Anthony Sharp, looking well. I must remember to ring Mike tomorrow. Play indifferent, except for Hugh Burden goodish. He was hell.

Friday August 1 1952

At 3.55 this afternoon to the top of the Apollo Theatre to see Kitty Black, the administrator of the Company of Four. After waiting outside, up a precipitous flight of stairs talking to a bright dark girl from the Old Vic School, and a quiet blonde set designer, who looked like Madeleine Carroll.

When I went in, to a larger office than one might expect in such cramped space, with several large pillars propping up the ceiling, I looked behind a tall old-fashioned roll-top desk, and saw a pear-shaped pale face, smooth light-brown hair parted in the middle and drawn into a tight little bun at the back. We had a brisk little talk, then she suggested I apply for David Aylmer's part in 'Deep Blue Sea' for American production. Apparently Frith Banbury is the man, but I am afraid that was just to get rid of me. The next play they are doing at H'smith is about boxing. Rosemary, Gerard's sister is here. She's heaven! She is fat, cheerful, reminds me rather of Lalla, very intelligent (not very reminiscent of Lalla in this way) does a good deal of eating, a good deal of sleeping, and a good deal of talking.

While I was sitting writing a letter and waiting to see Kitty B., who should come leaping up the stairs but that thin scrawnily-elegant fine-complexioned figure which is Rose Macaulay. We talked for some little time about Kilvert and his rosy-buttocks, and I heard after that she thought I was nice.

Sunday August 3 1952

Among the others who came in to tea and also out to lunch, was a white haired rabbity-faced stupid but good-natured old man named Sam Gurney. His conversation, particularly after tea when he returned from christening a bell, was of a stupefying boredom. He propounded, with the air of one discovering the answer to all the world's religious differences, that people became Roman Catholics because they liked being told what to do. S.G. is of course a member of the famous Gurney family (rich as a Gurney, or whatever it is) and it was consequently very interesting to see him arguing over the price of a Welsh Rarebit in the self-service section at Lyons. The only time he showed any interest in my conversation was when I said what a pleasure it was to meet someone whom I had heard pursued by telephone round all the major clubs of London. In the evening to supper at Lyons with Rosemary. How I adore her!

Monday August 4 d1952

August Bank Holiday! And wet as usual, which pleases me as I have always been on lavish holidays both sides of it, and am pleased to think of hoi palloi being disappointed of their rather depressing gatherings. A nasty sentiment.

This evening to John Lambert's for dinner. Roy Porter, whom I forgot to mention we saw yesterday for lunch and tea, is staying with the Lamberts at the end of his Continental tour with Michael, John's younger brother. It was very pleasant to see Roy again, and find I knew him as well as I thought I did. The evening was far from being a success, however. Michael had rudely gone out to the ballet. John and Roy were both furious for assorted reasons, and the conversation never really recovered from a prolonged exchange of silences at the beginning of dinner - as I - afterwards heard the result of John not producing the bottle of wine that Roy and Michael had brought for the occasion. The lack of alcohol was fatal. The evening dragged fitfully on, ghoulishly enlightened by the grinding out of the 'Lady May' records, deeply depressing to me. About half past nine I said I must be going. This I repeated with variations until 10.30, always to be answered by John with 'Oh wait and meet Michael - you must now! About 10.45 he arrived, a tall curly-haired much better looking version of John, offhand, faintly aggressive in the Oxford way, insecurely poised, slightly

rude to me, though much more to John. did not yield to one's fatal charm as one these days rather tends to expect.

Tuesday August 5 1952

After an enormous hectic rush of a whirl-wind trying to swallow forty roundabouts which was Rosemary and Timothy getting away to Paddington, I have had, for the first time for almost a month, a quiet day at home. I hope something turns up all right out the few twiddling round at the moment. Mike H. rang up. Lunch on Friday - thinking of a radio show.

PAGES MISSING

Saturday August 9 1952

A very rainy morning was followed by a very rainy afternoon which was followed by a very rainy night.

Sunday August 10 1952

Another rainy day, during which I sat and wrote a few letters, and read the whole of a book called 'The End of the Corridor' by Michael Meyer. A good book in a few ways, but bad in most. The odd thing was that it reduced me to almost hysterical tears over the dismissal of a Nanny. It shows what a fixation I've got on Lalla.

I often wonder why I don't talk much in here about the books I read. I read so many. I suppose it's because they satisfy me and interest me in a complete sort of way, whereas people and places don't so I want to write about them. Some of today I've spent finishing off my review of 'The Unholy Trade' by Richard Findlater for 'Time and Tide'. It's not so bad.

PAGE MISSING

... monstrous bed, chattering away like a toy train. I wonder if he realizes how terribly difficult it is for a stranger meeting him for the first time to see beyond the drearily obvious queeniness, stamped with the die-stamp of the King's Rd., to the sweetness of nature and the kindness of heart, and the genuine piety that lies behind it. If he knew how many people stamp him as a type and leave him at that, I am sure he would trim his sails slightly. Only slightly - no more.

In the evening we went to the Seala, at which I had called earlier in the day, and had a brief glimpse of and talk to, J.B., who with masses of hair curly all over his head, dyed red, looks like Max Beerbohm's cartoon of Swinburne. The Seala, just past the Fitzroy in Charlotte St. is a large handsome but fatally unsuccessful theatre. It is the proud possessor of two special doors either side of the entrance to the Dress Circle, bearing the inscriptions on one side 'the King's box' and on the other side, 'the Prince of Wales' box', leading to the two boxes, topped by a crown and three ostrich feathers respectively. The dress-circle instead of ending flush with the boxes, descends in a broad staircase under the boxes on both sides down to the stalls. From above this is handsomely unusual. From the stalls it means there is a large bare space where there should be a box.

The first night was fun - Diana Goodman and Monica Craven coming along too. We saw a lot of old friends, among them John's parents, who remembered me most affably, and we had a very nice little talk. Errol Flynn, the Hollywood actor, was also there, looking most unpleasantly presentable in a bloated way. He was wearing a blue sports suit, with a white cloth tie!

Michael E-E was also there, and John Lambert with Carl's bit of nonsense.

Afterwards we went round behind, and were immediately engulfed in a mass of people and a volley of 'Marvellous' 'Darling, how lovely!', 'I know, so are we!' and so on. Toppet, whose Juliet I much admired, was very kind, and said she had heard so much of me from Nigel.

Everyone seemed pleased to see us, but we were glad to get away in the end from the atmosphere of, to us, past and empty triumphs.

Tuesday August 12 1952

To luncheon today with Michael Hall and Gavin. Mike, as nice as ever, seemed really pleased to see me, and we set off from the Saville, where the dreariest understudy rehearsal, how it took me back, was in progress, to Bianchi, where we had a nice little Dover Sole and a glass of wine. Lovely! Mike has some sort of scheme for taking over the Boltons perhaps, and making it into a theatre club again, though he seemed to think it wouldn't be. I wonder whether it would work. He also mentioned a radio show. All very interesting, and he certainly has some money and real commercial influence. I must stick to him - as a manager, I mean, as a person, I would anyway.

Off to 'R & J' again with him in the afternoon. Afterwards went to the pub next door for a brief second then left almost at once, knowing I couldn't bear the nostalgia!

Thursday August 14 1952

With Gerard to Lincoln St. to take a drink with Robin before going off to the Scala for the first night of the 'Family Reunion'. We had a rather dull little talk, with Robin at his most laboured, and then repaired to the theatre. A dull audience, but Colin J-W very good, surprisingly so, as Harry.

Round behind afterwards I found I had left all my nostalgia behind. I don't want to go back, and I can see just how nice and nasty it is. Had long talks with Toby and Toppet again. John J. also there, and Milton Grundy, too, looking very smart. He is apparently teaching at the preparatory school for RADA. Will never do much, I think. John H. I want very much to meet G. and 'get in with' 'Time and Tide'.

Saturday August 16 1952

This afternoon like old times. Colin, Jean S and Peter Lewis came to tea. Peter Lewis arrived at about 3.30 others at 4.30. We had a long and most amiable talk, during which I

extracted from all three of them, all comparatively impartial observers, a fair picture of last year.

I think things will slip badly next year. In fact I know they will, unless the freshmen turn out to be particularly talented; I don't suppose they will be - it's too soon!!

We talked and talked, and laughed and laughed, and when Gerard came in at about 5.0 laughed even more. We left at six and walked to the theatre where I found John Coleman at the stage door. Big, massively built, with a strong kind face, he is very like a certain type of writer, though very unlike the popular conception. He is another of the great band of those whom I thought didn't like me. He has always liked me, and remembers well the first time he met me, because I was so kind! He bought me drink after drink and talked and talked and talked. How he came out, and what the last year has done to him! What I heard about his affaire with Margaret Barron could be written on a threepenny bit with a telegraph-pole. He told me how worried she was that she was a Jewess. How she had secured a job with the editor of the Daily Express visiting America by asking for it. How her parents didn't like him. How last year he had learnt more than he would have believed possible. How he had once gone to bed with a man because he was so randy and couldn't get a woman. Poof! and then he came back to Kingly St and talked to Gerard about pre-cognition and ghosts and saints.

Sunday August 17 1952

Only a few people came to lunch today, and our Lyons procession was sadly diminished. Conversation was enlivened by a disaster in North Devon where the little village of Lynmouth has been apparently almost wiped out by a colossal wave of a river breaking its banks. I heard on the wireless this evening that nine inches of rain fell on the hills behind Lynmouth on Friday evening, when all the trouble started.

John Heath-Stubbs came to lunch and came back here with me, while Gerard posted off to Victoria to meet Dawn and Barty on their way back from Switzerland. John and I were involved in a complicated discussion of the use of Italian names in Shakespeare, whether the 'Taming of the Shrew' was written by Shakespeare, and whether there is a woman called Baptista anywhere in the canon. The point of this last being that Baptista Minola is correct, but to call a woman Baptista is incorrect. Soon we settled down to the Sunday papers, only to be interrupted by Gerard, who came in rather disgruntled having missed them at Victoria. He asked John to read to us, which he did, beginning with Lear's 'Daddy Long-Legs and the Fly' going on with one or two of his own poems, and finishing up, after the arrival of Dawn and Barty, to their manifest annoyance, with Jean Ingelow's extraordinary 'High tide on the coast of Lincolnshire' (1571). His voice has a curious quality, tremulous yet controlled, with a strong quiver in the vocal tone, yet an immense feeling for rhythm - immense. I don't think I've ever heard the pulse of line rendered so clearly; this combined with his long thin bony figure, his disreputable clothes and sightless eyes, made it a very strange afternoon.

Monday August 18 1952

It has rained all day today, both inside and outside. My 'Deep Blue Sea' chance, though still a possibility, fades further away in my imagination. I have feelings about these things and, I

am sure it won't come my way. If I had an audition, I know I would get it, but I won't have the luck to be heard. It's too good to be true.

Sara and Gerard went to see 'The Millionairess' tonight, and came back quite exhausted with Katharine Hepburn's vehemence and noise. Gerard told me that after the show he came out into St. Martin's Lane, and was just going to open Sara's umbrella to shelter them from the rain, when Sara said 'Don't'. It seems she went to the ladies in the interval, took off her panties and stuffed them in her umbrella.

Oh dear! I'm so tired and draggled and discouraged and creased and unhappy and miserable.

Wednesday August 20 1952

I was sitting on the sofa almost asleep over 'The Woman in White' after a flat ordinary domestic day, when suddenly the telephone rang. It was Gerard, to say that the party he had gone to with Rosemary was breaking up and seven of them were coming up here for coffee, and then going on to the Irving revue. After about twenty minutes, there arrived, besides Gerard and Rosemary, Carola Titcombe, the party giver, tall, good-looking and bored, a short bespectacled ugly young Brazillian girl, daughter of their German Ambassador, and a bulbous nosed slightly muscular American girl of very pushing disposition! After a certain interval they were followed by a pleasantly anonymous young man named Newbitt or Nisbet, who has the misfortune to be a paraplegic. They were all very drunk, and I found it very difficult to match the sloppy silliness of their conversation. I was biased of course, but I don't think they would have interested me much sober. The Brazilian girl did intrigue me once when she said she'd seen the kon-tiki expedition off. She spoilt it by saying that she had thought nothing of it at the time. The American girl spent most of the time imitating American dialects for me, and telling me how the English spoke. Carola T. is a raging Lesbian, so was not interested in me.

Thursday August 21 1952

Gerard had fixed today as his day in bed, and I had intended to stay in all day, and feed him. However, two telephone calls changed all that. Monica Craven rang up to ask me to go to the first night at the Cambridge Theatre with her - 'Affairs of State', and then John Whitley, who had spent Tuesday evening with us, to ask me out to lunch. Enjoyed both in a mild way. Monica is really very attractive.

Saturday August 23 1952

The last two days have been very quiet and lazy, and I have done little but read. My reading has been interrupted by hot waves of fright at the poverty of my prospects for the coming season. I have had no answer from Frith Banbury, nor will I get any. Bitty Black was only getting rid of me in sending me to him. The St. Martin's thing I feel sure will fade out, and there I'll be, as flat as a pancake. If only I could get something definite on paper to show, I shall avoid the depression of a scene with D. when I get home. It is so difficult to have a talk calculated to throw one out of sympathy with oneself entirely at a climax of self-confidence, but to have it when one's faith in oneself is faltering anyway.....

Surely I could hope for the weeniest bit of luck? Just a bit? I haven't had a scrap yet. But I will hang on, I will, I will.

Sunday August 24 1952

Christina Muir came for luncheon and stayed to tea. She only stayed so long because we told her how much we liked people to stay, and how we enjoyed having her. She knitted, Gerard played patience, and I talked. She is a reader at Longman's, and was telling us all sorts of things quite unmentionably unethical, such as that Edward Hyams' latest book is a failure, and how many copies Rider Haggard really has sold. Christina herself is slightly thick-set, with short untidy hair, blunt but attractive features, a cosy folded mouth, and the nicest laugh I've heard for years.

Monday August 25 1952

Gerard went home this morning for a rest, and will not be back until Saturday. I hope he will find himself rested, for he really does try his nerves until they let him down. He eats so quickly, gulping glasses of water through mouthfuls of food in the most childishly unattractive way that it cannot be long before he has a return of the ulcer from which he has once already suffered.

I sat on in the sitting-room, reading two rather bad modern novels - American, I think - and dreading going home with little prospect of work ahead, and filled with depression about my joblessness anyway. The bell rang, and upstairs came a slight seedy figure in a shepherd check suit, scuffed shoes and spotty navy-blue shirt, a weak amiable sunburnt face, sparse whitey brown untidy hair - an out-of-work actor. His name - Beaufoy Milton, and he had come to see Gerard. He stayed talking about half an hour, telling me how successful he'd been, 'but not in the West End, of course' and how he had walked out of his last job in the theatre, (which was five years ago; he's been working for a publisher in a very menial capacity since then) because he knew the producer would disturb him, and he couldn't stand the cosy get-together attitude of the rest of the cast. This was not calculated to raise my...

PAGE MISSING.

Thursday August 28 1952

Torquay again and no time to write.

Tuesday was a pleasant day indeed. Ran through 'Lady May' in the afternoon for the St. Martin's management - John Gibson and Dale Clinberg or whatever his name is. They were very cool and seemed to find Ju's stuff only good for review. Their attitude annoyed me not because they did not like the opera enough, but because they disliked it for the wrong reasons. Dale thing in particular, his sharp peevish features contracted in a wintry smile of contemptuous amusement beneath his improbably neat orange hair, made me furious by commending Pandarus' at the expense of 'Lady May'. I shall write to Ju all that they said though I shall attempt to do it in such way that he is moved to rewrite the thing, and not just take offence.

Afterwards Geoffrey and I went up to his brother's house at Hampstead. Only a minute or two away from Hampstead tube station we turned into Flask Walk, a downhill street with a raised terrace on one side. Nearly at the bottom we turned into a pale blue iron gate, and

found ourselves looking up a very pretty triangular garden to a neat Queen Anne House at the end of a stone walk. This is Gaynor House, which Geoffrey's alcoholic brother, Horace runs as a sort of frightfully superior guest house. Horace is small, plump and yet wizened, with smooth grey hair plastered round his head like a male impersonator. His age, seventy or so, and his gin capacity (he was sipping at a full tumbler of neat gin) renders him almost incoherent. The best example I ever heard of his way of talking, was a remark he made to John Wilders after a matinee of 'Lady May'. John was putting his gown on, watched with great interest by Horace. He settled it on his shoulders and Horace leant forward and said with deliberation and after some thought, 'You've got your gown on now.'

He was at his least tiresome and most funny fortunately, and graciously consented to stagger through a number of old songs from their teens and twenties that Geoffrey had written years ago. The house inside is delightful, with graceful mouldings round the doors and window-frames, and a general pale blue-green turquoise colour everywhere. The drawing-room is wonderful, a medium sized square room with a large bay window from floor to ceiling, of beautiful proportions and sporting full-length grey brocade curtains. Geoffrey had some records downstairs of a production of *The Comedy of Errors* done at Winchester. The breathy trebles of the boy-girls, and the husky tenors of the eighteen-year-olds, singing all the numbers from one of my own little past triumphs. John Cottrell, the most perfect bore I have ever met, going up with his parents. Quite a little crowd in the rooms, drinking, among them Geoffrey's sister, good-looking in a wrinkled ivory sort of way, and Ronnie Hamilton, the Winchester housemaster, a tall handsome militaryish looking gentleman, and his wife, older and dowdy.

After a drink or two, I went over to the theatre, and was glad to find that I felt no more than ordinary interest. Time was when I should have worked myself up to feel all sorts of interesting nostalgia but suddenly no more. The performance was extraordinarily good, considering that the cast was drawn from only one house at Winchester. The sweet trebles and husky basses moved me as school nostalgia always does, tho' it is a nostalgia for schooldays I never experienced. The audience, nearly all parents and brothers and sisters of the cast and the rest of the house, was cheerful, upstanding and gentlemanly. It was strange to find myself in the bar talking to Albert, whom nobody else knew.

Afterwards to Geoffrey's rooms, for a heavenly party. Ronnie Hamilton, a tall bland grey-haired man, sang duets of the most ludicrously delightful kind; everyone shouted for favourites, everyone had a chance to sing, or clap, or laugh. After an hour or so of this, during which I and my successor were made to sing our solo together, to my sadness, the older members of the party left, and we, although I felt myself to be a centenarian in comparison with the others, were left to sing and dance until half-past three.

Friday October 31 1952

It is useless for me to pretend that I shall fill in the month and a half's gap, and a pity though it is, I won't pretend. I write tonight because I am going to sing for the first time in public at a charity concert in Bethnal Green. I must say I am very glad that it is to be so obscure, because I hardly know how an audience will react to my singing dance-numbers. I am pleased at the prospect but frightened of the outcome. I will try...

PAGE MISSING

...Jean Bayliss was sweet and helped a lot. She is not very good really, though pretty in a brassy way and with a good loud voice. She may get a little somewhere like Jean Carson, but will never be really good. We finished off by singing songs round the camp-fire with the boys. I enjoyed myself very much and signed masses of autographs afterwards. As I said to myself after all what did it matter, - except inside where it always matters.

Sunday November 2 1952

A heavenly day of people people people. About ten came in for luncheon at Lyons', where I sat with Peter and Anne E-W missing entirely three heavenly new girls named Deirdre Plunkett, Diana Daniels and Muriel Sharpe all from Pinner, I bet. Then back for masses of talk, and going on to tea for which ultimately twenty-two people turned up among them Pam, Di, Susan and Colin and Mary W. All very gay. In the evening to my surprise I was asked out to dines. by Helen Smith and Grace Cracknell, the two Votes for Women sweeties of fifty or so. Wonderful strong-minded types. We had a long discussion about the church and Gerard and Hollywood and Patrick in a rather comfy hotel in Bloomsbury. When I got back here found Peter E-W was staying the night, and we have talked till 2.0. All about Gerard's and my different attitudes to morality.

Monday November 3 1952

Peter E-W came in immensely early and I haven't recovered all day. After letter-writing and telephoning all day Gerard took me in the late afternoon to see the Victorian and Edwardian Exhibition at the Victoria and Albert. It certainly is most fascinating, full of monstrosities and beauties. The greyish-green, blackish brown is the feeling I hate about Victorian things particularly in the seventies and eighties. William Morris and his people were good on their day, his wallpapers and cloth are certainly exquisite. Pagine I cannot stick, Alfred Stevens I liked, Burgess heavenly bed and basin I loved; the Glasgow Centre's work I thought most exciting, never having seen any Art Nouveau before. There was one extraordinary chair with a back almost six feet high and a seat about six inches from the floor. I like Walter Crane and Ricketts and some lace by a man called Lewis Day and some lovely wallpapers by someone whose name I have forgotten. When I left Gerard at Piccadilly, I met Teddy Fraser. Too awful that I have never rung her up. Asked her to tea a week on Sunday. Went on to Kilburn to see 'Golden Boy', William Holden's first film when he was only 19. A boxer and violinist from the Odets' play. Oh dear oh! dear how it made me cry. His youth and smile, to think he's nearly forty now. James and Walter Garnier came in rather tiddly from the Senior and nearly woke Gerard up.

Tuesday November 4 1952

A day alone until the afternoon when Robin asked himself in to tea. Gerard poor pet, so tired has gone off to Cumberland Lodge till Thursday. Robin rather miz I thought, not improved by hearing that Susan was coming at six o'clock. She stayed, as invited, for the whole evening, dinner which she brought with her and all, and we got on splendidly. She and I have no doubt I have improved very much since Cambridge. Italy has opened her eyes to a lot of things. She told me fascinating details of men coming to her bedroom as blissful Italian

dawns broke, and on her urgent request doing nothing except lie purely in bed beside her. She also told of a married man of forty called Mario who made such a determinedly passionate attack on her virtue that on her refusing him, he was obliged to 'relieve himself manually' as the papers say, in front of her. She has come on. Walked back to Gloucester Rd with her and back here 1.30.

Wednesday November 5 1952

Really almost nothing happened today, except that I went to a party Paulie H-R gave, usual dull people but very nice to see Mrs Slade again, and talk about Ju. I also talked for a long time with Juliet Mansel, Pam's aunt, who is an instructor at RADA. Good-looking, slightly embittered, emphatic, intolerant and not really up to scratch.

Thursday November 6 1952

This afternoon, after ordering the dress M. saw in the paper at Peter R. in Oxford Circus, went to the new National Film Theatre in Waterloo. Its first fortnight is open to everyone. Most interesting it proved to be with two of Norman McLaren's experimental films of a rather silly sort and a not very convincing three-dimensional effort, still with spectacles, I saw a better one than this at Bournemouth before the war.

Then came a selection of the great start of the stars. Few of them had I seen before at anything like length enough to judge what they were like. On this showing easily my greatest disappointment was Douglas Fairbanks. Easily my greatest surprise Greta Garbo who was, in Marie Walewska, street indeed cities ahead of any other film actress I've ever seen.

Friday November 7 1952

This evening to Juliet Mansels with Pamela, to go on to 'Dial M for Murder' which I very much enjoyed. J.M. took me round to meet Jane Baxter afterwards, with whom she once acted. Jane B. is sweet just like her every part. Must be quite 42, yet looks 28. J.M. rather opinionated and crotchety. Difficult mother, I should think. Michael Swan, youngish sharp little man interesting sympo, must come round.

Saturday November 8 1952

A cold windy day with nothing to do thank goodness but stay in and keep warm.

Read Evelyn Waugh's 'Helena' and was very unimpressed. Might have been an historical schools programme on the wireless. Hateful technique. Agnes De Mille's autobiography is much more to my taste. Failure for ten years - that's what I like to read about. So encouraging. When am I going to face up to mine, I wonder?

Sunday November 9 52

Another large party for lunch and tea, only one fascinating new face Jean Livingstone-Learmonth a tall round-shouldered gangling clever girl, with gold hair and a long wandering bony nose. It was her nineteenth birthday today and we all went back to Holbein Mews where we had a supper and ate her cake afterwards. Sara was on her top silly form and told hair-raisingly absurd stories about communal loos and things. Kathleen Brooke a quiet dark lively little sexy thing, said how did you play mousey-mousey. She loved it with her smooth old-ivory hands stroking away like mad. James cruelly did it to Anne and really he can't have any heart to do such an insensitive thing. Jane's my bet - large and motherly. That's what I like and Freud can make of that what he may.

Monday November 10 1952

A pleasant day with a lot of letters announcing visits to London by various people. In the afternoon I posted all the way to romantic Hendon through miles and miles of absolutely identical ribbon development. So samey was the view that every time I lifted my head from my book I might have thought we were stuck in the same traffic jam.

In the evening wrote answers to Joan, Marion Hardy and Teddy. Am...

PAGE MISSING

Friday November 14 1952

Prince Charles' fourth birthday. Pictures all over the paper, and flags everywhere. Yesterday went to help Susan move into her new flat in Britten St. not far from the Kings Rd. We lunched with Mary, went off to shop in K'sington High St. and spent the entire time in peals of laughter about nothing. I found her very good company for laughter and as it turned out for tears. In the evening we trailed all the way up to Hendon to see 'Domani e Troppo Tardi', that marvellous film about sex problems; I saw it first on the day Ju and I were in London for the Wooden Horse Ball cabaret. I never hope to see again sixteen year old love played so innocently and so glowingly as it is by Gino Leurini and Anna Maria Pierangeli, before Hollywood got its hands on her. Both are at that age when at one moment they are children, at the next young man and woman. When with adults they look children, when with children they look adults. Exactly adolescents' problem. The film is really about the resistance of temptation, and I have rarely seen anything so moving.

Today has been a nice ordinary dull day, rehearsing in the morning for this Anglo-Rumanian Society concert, and going to see Pamela F. at Time and Tide this afternoon. Met John Todd in the book-room, a pallid male impersonator, and Giles Wordsworth, tall, gangling, thin, bespectacled, I suppose clever.

Sunday November 16 1952

Yesterday evening we met, we being Monica Craven, Di Goodman, whose party it was, Sara, Ju, Chris, and I at the Berkeley Grill, a very insipid room all pink walls and crystal chandeliers, for dinner before 'Love from Judy'. We were all presented with colossal menus almost a foot square, covered in all the most delicious things imaginable. We were all

looking at them and muttering wise things in French, when Sara's loud clear voice said, 'Oh look 21/- whatever can that be? And all our illusions of persuading the other diners that we dined there every night were gone forever.

Today has been gay indeed. This afternoon we had another large lunch party and a tea afterwards to which Teddy and Marion Hardy and Liz came, and the Hilton-Youngs. Wayland and Liz H-Y are really friends of Gerard's and not awfully me. He is a half-brother of Peter Scott, a nasty thought. He is small, with a thin clever face on the front of a large head made larger with thick hair. His figure is slight and very small for his head, and gives the impression of age. She is small, very slim and boyish, though I believe she is pregnant again, with very dark brown hair, small regular neat features, a straight flat stare, and a fascinating lisp. Both seem to me on first blush pretentious and blasé. Martin Browne was also there, with his pleasant ordinariness to contrast agreeably with their bored pleasantries. Immediately afterwards I left to have dinner with the Slades. We heard a lot of Ju's new stuff for the Christmas show, none of which is very good, though all is adequate. Of his changes in Lady May I approve immensely. They are I think all for the better, particularly from the commercial point of view, at any rate. We laughed and we laughed and laughed as somehow I haven't laughed for months.

Monday November 17 1952

Ridiculous lecture this evening on West End Boys at St. Anne's House. James Curtis, author of a book about them called 'The Gilt Kid', was the only thing of interest there, a cadaverous, bright-eyed man, a well-preserved forty-eight, very knowing, very nostalgic de la bone Gerard said.

Tuesday November 18 1952

Met Joan and the two children, who were really looking very sweet in kilts of Mackay tartan underneath check coats, at 10.30, and toddled them round a few sights, having left Donald in the midst of crowds of spotty small boys. After an unexciting lunch at Lyons, we went off to Buck H., where Bodkin liked what she called 'the soldiers' pussy hats'. We wandered round the shops, pushing our way round the toy departments, always finishing up at the 'Christmas Fair' or 'Mr. Holly's Joy-Ride' or 'the Magic Swan', or just 'Meet Father Christmas'. There was an exceptionally nice Father Christmas at Pontings who was Scotch thus fitting in with Christma's idea of him' she still calls him Father McChristmas. We came back here for tea, and made quite a hit with Gerard.

I went with them to the station after seeing the lights of Piccadilly, to the circle...

PAGE MISSING

... of that vast place The Stoll, tiers of boxes on every side, and all heaven let loose on the stage. Afterwards we went back to his house for supper, a pretty early Victorian house in Leinster Terrace off the Bayswater Rd., where we sat in a heavenly Art Nouveau dining-room, and went for sherry to the long low drawing-room, with the most beautiful fireplace, sporting an Adam gas-fire. We got on very well in a faintly tepid way. I must not write more I have no money to buy another book.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 20

Angus Mackay

Being the sixteenth

From November 22 1952

To Coronation Day 1953

Wednesday December 31 1952

Before the New year begins, I must sketch in very quickly the month or so since I last wrote in this journal.

On Thursday November 20th last, Lady Rhonddha, with Miss Theodora Bosanquet, and Miss Jacobine Hichens made an occasion for a luncheon-party at Kingly St. Lady R. dressed in flowing Bardic black velvet toque and robes, has a broad good-natured self-satisfied face. She said not very much and ate rather a lot. Theaodora Bosanquet on the other hand talked a great deal telling us among other things how Henry James took her one day by the hand and said 'Look - there under the mulberry tress are sitting Leslie Stephen's two beautiful daughters'. And there, I suppose at his invitation, were sitting Virginia and Vanessa. Miss B. said he gave the impression that he had materialised them for her especial benefit. Jacobine Hichens I thought everything her book had prepared me for. Lively, attractive, unbalanced and witty. She is of medium height, with no remarkable features except very prominent and brilliant hazel eyes. We found a common hate for Scott and adoration for Dickens. The party was completed by James and Walter Garnier. The conversation naturally turned to religion, not real religion, but that dreadful chit chatting about churches which I so dislike.

On Sunday November 23, I went to see the new Cocteau film 'Les Enfants Terribles' in that tired old Edwardian Louis XIV palace, the Continentale. Extraordinary film about incest and prison, with a very clever girl, Nicole Stephanie, and Cocteau's new boyfriend.

On Thursday November 27, I went down to Bath at Donald's invitation to see Daddy and Mummy. It was a pouring wet day, and I was very little pleased to be taken to see the crescent or whatever it is called under such unattractive conditions. However, Daddy was pleased to see me, I think, and was glad to find him unchanged in appearance, although he looks tired. We went into Bath Abbey for a short time, and although very good-looking to my taste, it seems as a church quite dead with no spiritual atmosphere whatever.

On Saturday November 29th, Gerard and I went off to Shepherd's Bush to a bazaar at Roger Wodehouse's church. On the way we walked through a much larger bazaar, Shepherd's Bush Market. It is certainly a most individual place still. One must imagine a long street made by open wooden booths set at the side of a raised railway embankment on which trains screech ad rattle to and fro. The stalls, hung with clothes, lengths of material, kettles, saucepans, ornaments, china, groceries, jewellery, goods of every shape and size. Nylon stockings flutter on every bar, with winkles, jellied eels and fish and chips adding their smells to the atmosphere. Each stall is lit by a greenish grey gas-lamp, which throws its speckly light on the dense crowds weaving slowly in and out the stalls, attracted here by tortoises from Greece, there by carpets from Birmingham or loud-voiced auctioneers selling things that

nobody wants to everybody in sight. The actual bazaar was a great let-down at first, with two rows of decorous stalls down either side of the church hall. However with the appearance of Roger W. things brightened up as they always do. With colossal enthusiasm, his face rapidly turning purple, froth flying from his lips and nose, he conducted the draw of a raffle, fighting a losing battle against a rising tide of hurricane laughter. The simple people about him understand on the average about a quarter of what he says, with the result that he now scarcely minds how absurd are the things he says for they scream just the same.

On Monday December 1, I went to dinner with Helen King, Pamela Fildes' previous superior at Time and Tide. She is a tall angular attractive person, who has been very careful to cash in on all her attractively ugly features by emphasising them. She has a large nose, so wears a fringe and so on. Other people there were Pam, Professor and Mrs. Bennett's elder girl, of a very dull gym-mistressy heartiness, a tall ratty socialist, poor dear, very disapproving of us both, quite right too as we were in our worst behaviour, me particularly, and her a woman due to have twins the following week. We enjoyed ourselves very much, though I doubt if anyone else did.

On Tuesday, December 2, to dinner with Win, with all the usual niceness. The next night off to the wilds of Willesden for dins with Teddy to find Mike Hall and Michael Edwardes-Evans. Dully evening, but nice (I am sure that I must be leaving out masses of interesting things. It's no good, everything but the superficialities has more or less gone.)

On Thursday December 4 to the Ball of the Chelsea Reel Club at the Chelsea Town Hall. Not much fun, full of Highland hearties with enormous hairy knees. We got lodged into the smartest and most expensive set of all, and were pushed around the complicated evolution of those fearful dances. There was one particular idiot, with a long chin haggard face, wearing the Shepherd's Plaid and Menzies stockings, shambling about everywhere, calling out 'Hoots!' and 'Duke of Perth, everyone!' and 'We want twelve more sets' in a high piping voice pulling distractedly at his straggling ginger moustache. If it hadn't been for Pam M, Diana Craig, and Tricia Durand, I would have hated every minute. The next day a quite heavenly Susan day.

On Saturday December 6 I went out to dinner with Martin Evans and went on afterwards to see 'The Innocents' at the Haymarket. By this time the great fog had come up, and this was its first really bad day. Martin arrived with his nose and mouth rimmed with black, rather late from one suspension of the buses. Out in Kingly Street the gloom was absolute. We stumbled into Regent St., and found we could not see the other side of the road. In Piccadilly Circus it was not possible to see Eros from any of the pavements. By this time the fog was clawing at my throat and closing my eyes. In the theatre we gazed through a misty golden vapour at the stage, turning into an old master of the nastiest kind. When we came out of the theatre, Her Majesty's, we could see nothing but swirling fog and the bright electric light bulbs of the Haymarket Theatre spelling out its name. There were by this time no buses, and all private cars had been turned off the roads.

On Monday December 8, rehearsals started for 'Toad of Toad Hall' at the Interval Club in Dean St., but not before something more exciting had happened. Tennents asked me to go for an audition for 'A Woman of No Importance', which they are putting on with Clive Brook and Diana Wynyard. I auditioned the next day for Michael Benthall and he seemed quite pleased, although there is of course nothing definite yet.

Rehearsals for Toad were very tiring (I have just this moment seen a preliminary announcement of the Wilde play, which almost undoubtedly means I shan't be in it - oh dear! I had to have a little weep about it, but I'm all right now. Rehearsals for Toad were very tiresome and not at all valuable. Mike could teach me nothing after those years at Cambridge, when I knew he had little in him but good nature. The company, who will appear in the ordinary day to day pages gradually are not on the whole very interesting. The nicest thing about it is that Toppet, Toby's sister, is in it. She writes to Nigel every day, as he does to her, so they are obviously really in love. On Wednesday December 10, I went out in the evening to dinner with Mrs. Schonegerel and went on to an Anglo-Rumanian concert in aid of charity at the White Eagle in Prince Consort Gate opposite the French Embassy. The house is pathetically banged about, and on a stage hung with tatty crumpled grey parachute silk, exiled Bulgarian and Romanian nobility, sang recited and played with tepid fervour. Princess Anne-Marie Canta-Cuzini recited 'If' and forgot it halfway through, looking in her confusion with her fuzzy reddish curls and air of startled stupidity, like all the pictures in every post-1918 book of memoirs.

On Thursday December 11, I had arranged to lunch with Nigel at Bianchi. I arrived about 10 minutes late, and found him at a table inside - with Peter Lewis. Curiously I was pleased - yes pleased - to see that he had brought someone else to tide over the slight but undeniable awkwardness of our meeting. I think it only needs for me to get a good job and have some money for us to be back where we were. We had a very gay lunch and then went to meet Toppet at the Academy. We decided we couldn't stand the Dutch pictures and went to see Bob Hope and Bing Crosby in the 'Road to Bali' instead. I spent all my money on the seat, 3/6, and had to walk all the way to Colin and Mary's for dinner and back.

On Sunday December 14 I went to make up a small boy for the Nativity play at the Church of Our Lady in Bryanston Street. The Priest is a typical old spinster in skirts, fluttering and tut-tutting in all directions. While I was taking the child's make-up, as a negro, off, Julie Wilson suddenly rushed through the room, saying 'You were ahl wahhnderful, you werr ahl wahhnderful.'

On Wednesday December 17, I dashed, after a very late rehearsal, to Geoffrey Day's extremely dull party in Elm Park Gardens, in the flat he shares with Cyril Ritchard's brother, Edgar. Edgar's sitting-room is decorated, like all arty pansies, with tasteful grey-striped paper, Stafford tea-pots, vaguely Baroque fire screens and so on and the usual bric-a-brac of a derivatively aesthetic person. He paints, apparently for a living. Gauguinesque pictures of sailors and fisher-boys and Corsican divers. Robin's party was almost entirely Cambridge and something depressing. I found myself standing in a background of young marrieds and working-people, all perceptibly settling down, changing from real people into the people one sees around every day. The little liberty and individuality that Cambridge had been able to instil into them or bring out of them is noticeably fading away leaving them to be dropped, a comfortable fit, into the pigeon-hole they will occupy for the rest of their lives.

On Thursday December 18, 1952, I went to John and Michael Lambert's party at Campden Hill. Very dull Oxford friends there, Michael, heavenly Jane there with whom I went off to Tricia Duran's long talk with all the Slades, and dear Esmond who is so nice and ordinary. I do not suppose he has ever said anything unexpected in his whole life.

All this week was spoilt by the very exhausting dance rehearsals, sweated through in Dyneley's Studios at No. 1 Marylebone High St, Dickens' old house.

Since then I have spent my time entirely on Toad. In Christmas week we worked all day until about 1.30 every night, including the night before Christmas Eve, our first night. After the curtain came down, I rushed to catch the 10.8 to Victoria, then the 11.50 from Paddington, getting to Torquay at 6.48. Mummy of course was down to meet me. I spent a slightly somnolent but lovely Christmas day, and caught the 12.12 back, getting in to Brighton at 9.30 on Boxing Day morning. We then played two shows. I had had no rest except that shadowy nightmare dozing in the hot rumbling garish compartment. With two shows a day, I doubt I shall find time to write very much, but at least I have a chance to begin, and all the people round me will supply me with a starting point.

PAGE MISSING

6, Royal Crescent, Brighton

Toppet is a shortish slim girl of twenty, dark with simple small features of a charming openness and grace. Sincere, oh dear - I can't describe her. 'Jo' Page is fuzzy-haired, so much so that she has had it straightened by the negroid process 3 times, very enthusiastic in manner, like a Girl Guide within a mark of her Trackers' badge. More tomorrow. Ronnie is going to sleep.

Saturday January 3 1953

After sitting up late talking to Jo Page, I am really too tired to start writing general descriptions. Shows shows all day to packed houses, thank heaven. Gerard sent me a letter including a p.c. and a photograph and Christmas card from Dewey Martin.

Sunday January 4 1953

A cold dull day, and I was pleased to find a bright hot fire burning in the drawing-room when I came down at about 11.30. I listened to the wireless, and read and wrote letters, until it was time for me to go off for lunch with Colin Gill, a friend of Gerard's. I found the Vicarage, a largish red-brick house some mile or so from the centre of Brighton. A door in the high wall lead to a flight of steps up to the front door. The door was opened by an elderly woman of respectably flustered appearance, her bright purple cheeks and dim clothes giving out that she was what she proved to be, a housekeeper.

She showed me in to the drawing-room, an ugly pink-washed room, with a small damp log-fire in the grate round which were standing two men and a woman. The woman, dressed fairly expensively in a mustard yellow coat trimmed with silvery fur, had a fixed tightening of the lips as if she had once decided to smile and had never got beyond this decision. Colin Gill, dressed in the usual elaborate XX soutane affected by his sort of priest, was tall, very tall, broad, fat and fortyish. His face with a broad high brow, straight nose and generously folded mouth, might have been impressive had it not been for the complacent satisfaction stamped all over it. His appearance his manner (inviting without coquetry) and his furniture might equally have spelt what next occurred. Into the room came a youth of about sixteen, with eyes of intense blue, and the smudgy long black lashes that only XX seems able to manage. He was introduced as Terence Gumin, and lives at the Vicarage. We had a nice

enough luncheon, though conversation was surprisingly difficult. My fault, I am afraid. I find it almost impossible to talk about anything but the theatre.

In the afternoon David, Jo Page and I went to the cinema to see 'La Cenerentola'. Beforehand David made us walk miles along the 'prom' to find 'a splendid little Italian cafe' for tea. He ultimately displayed to us a Forte's Milk Bar.

Monday January 5 1953

Decided today to write to Michael Bentall about 'A Woman of No Importance'. As Toppet said it can do no harm, and might do good. The new people who have arrived from 'The White Carnation' at the Royal, are all nice. Campbell Singer a hearty fortyish man is so kind, and there is a heavily 'pan-caked' woman who is bliss in a scrawny way. I wish I could be in something good, even as an understudy.

Tuesday January 6 1953

Sent off the letter to Michael Benthal - with many misgivings, it seemed so cheeky. Had a letter from Ju, a long one enclosing the programme of 'Christmas in King St.', and commiserating with me on the loss of 'A Woman of No Importance' in the nicest way, quite wiping out the memory of the last letter. He suggested I write to Denis Carey, and ask for an audition without of course mentioning his name. This I shall do. His show has apparently been a great success, and he well deserves it, for really H.H. did give him a nasty time. All the same, what a lucky boy he has been, to land up in the one place where he could develop his talents in safety! How different my own position has been! Bad luck all along the line so far! Ju says that he is sure I shall have a good patch, now that I have had such a bad one.

Wednesday January 7 1953

Toppet and I went this morning to visit Anne and Peter Armitstead in Queen Square, a pretty row of houses opposite the Unitarian Church beyond the Clock Tower. Both pleased to see us, Anne looking her worst such a pity when she is so pretty. We arranged to meet again after a great deal of cheerful reminiscent conversation.

Performance this afternoon moderately good to a full house. I do what I have to do quite well, though with the disgraceful lack of thoroughness I apply to any part which I don't consider prominent enough. Ronnie Stevens, is, we have all decided, a bad-mannered little shop-assistant. He is so rude to the Theatre Royal people staying here with us. They are in R.C. Sheriff's new play starring Ralph Richardson. One in particular has eyed me like mad - a charmer of forty, with snapping brown eyes, and the heavy pancake I noticed the other day. She said, quite unnecessarily that I had a very pretty name and 'would you mind holding my bag?'

Thursday January 8 1953

Stayed in bed rather late this morning, and was not down until 11.0. Had a delightful talk to the Royal people again, until Ronnie came in, when I was terrified of him being rude to them. Tonight he was rude. As all people of his type are, he becomes intolerably familiar on the slightest acquaintance. I must confer with Toppet and Jo tomorrow as to whether one of us should apologise for him.

Gerard brought Costa down to the show this evening. When I came out of the theatre, I found them standing in the stage-door passage, a living likeness of parson and parish boy. I knew they would not be tolerated in Beste's, so I took them to another restaurant further off. Gerard is one of those people who are impossibly remote almost at once. Unless I live with him I cannot talk to him, because he seems unable to talk except of events and sayings.

Friday January 9 1953

In a great depression all day, not improved by Toby's arrival. I am ashamed that I am so prejudiced against Toby. He always seems to try to deepen a depression I'm in; I daresay he does not, but his buoyancy always has that effect on me. I feel myself at once to be a poor copy of him, less charm, less vitality, less success, because he walks into the directorship of things so easily. Oh! the relief of having a diary to tell ignoble...

PAGE MISSING

...so well.

During the performance tonight Leslie Henson called me in, and said that if I cared to write to Jack de Leon, I would be able to audition for the part Denis Quilley played in 'And So To Bed' in this tour he is going on. And I should be understudying - Webster Booth. I screamed inside. The evening's performance went a little better than usual, with Nigel giggles all through. Afterwards John Barton said secretly he thought I was the best thing in it.

Sunday January 11 1953

A day, which fell beautifully into easy lines. I was up and about by eleven o'clock, to find it a fine sunny day. Toppet and Nigel weren't up, and I decided it would be rather nice to walk to Hove, to the Duncans.

On my way downstairs I bumped into Gillian Howells (for that is her name - not Ann Wilton) going out to meet her little boy, being brought down to Brighton for the week. We walked along the front, the white houses reflecting the sun, the long white curve of the promenade sparkling and empty in the bright yellow light. I felt very gay and silly and chattered away even more than usual.

The sea-front is much prettier than Brighton, with its pretty Regency and Early Victorian squares coming down to the sea unspoilt by the huge coloured hotel signs that mar the houses at Brighton. The Duncans' flat turned out to be enormous, a drawing-room about four times the size of Kingly St., and endless rooms and space and corridors besides. Both the drawing-room and the library were fitted up in a reasonably luxurious way, but with a lack of real taste quite surprising in friends of a person so downright as Diana Craig. The furniture was

comfortable, expensive and obviously well made, yet I can remember no single piece of it. Mrs Duncan is scrawny, grey-haired and toothy, a woman in a yellow twin-set and tweed skirt, transparent stockings and well-polished shoes such as could be reproduced in any upper middle class home a thousand times over in England. Their daughter is dark and round-faced, and nicely negative. Captain Duncan is large, arthritic, with a weakly bonhomous manner. His other guests were all old. I was the only person under fifty in the room. There was a fragile white-haired young beauty of seventy-odd, who greeted me as a contemporary, but I spent most of the time talking to a tall rusty-jointed decaying old Edwardian, with a long lantern-jawed face, scarred and scored all over the red skin with wrinkles, like the skin on tomato soup. His name was Cecil Winter, and he was President of the ADC for two years running in 1908-09. We had a long and very pleasant talk about ADC affairs, past and present. He trotted out his one claim to fame that he once played Raffles at a house-party before it was put on in London. My glass of gin and Italian was filled up again and again until my head was swimming. When we went in to lunch, the dining-room seemed infinitely long, infinitely narrow. I had a terrifying moment when I thought I wasn't there. Fortunately I was.

I stayed until quite half-past three, after a lunch with hock, claret and port (tangerine soufflé delicious) and went to the pavilion to sober up. This riotous extravagance only made me gayer than ever, and, arriving back for tea, I found Nigel and Toppet enjoying some white wine. Had some, went to the pictures, came back and had some more.

Monday January 12 1953

Stayed in bed rather late this morning.

Tuesday January 13 1953

Wednesday January 14 1953

Really I have absolutely no time left for anything to happen to me.

Thursday January 15 1953

Two letters by the midday post. One in the most deliciously childlike writing, a fan letter from a boy named David or John Snatchwell-Smith living at Horsham, and asking me to tea. The other a short note from Jack de Leon asking me to go to the Savoy for an audition tomorrow. I suppose I shall have to sing something. Ronnie suggested 'I Leave My Heart in an English Garden', but I am not sure. However I shall think of something, I dare say. I shall be interested to see Jack de Leon. He might be a help for the 'Q' Theatre. You never know, but really I could scarcely be less excited about an audition.

There was a party for the cast in the circle bar tonight given by the management. I went in and was neither introduced to the management nor offered a drink. There was a small group by the door, the men in dinner-jackets and cigars, the women in black satin dresses and gin and lime. The whole scene, with the tawdry bar, made me feel I was in a second tour of 'No Orchids for Miss Blandish' and I escaped as soon as possible. Not before, however, I had heard Leslie Henson saying that before the Great War, it was possible to go to the 'Met' in the

Edgware Rd. in the gallery, have a packet of fags and a pint of beer, go to Sam Isaacs next door, lovely white tablecloth, plate of fish and chips, walk home and have a half penny change out of a bob.

Friday January 16 1953

Up to London this morning for the audition. Went hot-footing to Charing X Rd and bought 'I Leave My Heart in an English Garden' and went careering onto the 'Relative Values' set and sang it - quite well, I think, after which I was asked to read Humphrey, a Frenchified young man, whom I didn't do well by. Then I was getting my coat on when I was called back and had to sing again, this time with the song put up, unbeknown to me, two tones. My final note was G instead of Eb. Then I read another part and left. Goodness know what will happen now.

Peter Myers and Alec Grahame, the authors of most of the Irving venues, turned up in the theatre this evening. Alec Grahame, a gawky spinsterish young man in a plum corduroy jacket, and Peter Myers, fat, flabby, rather Jewish-looking, stopped sometime talking substandard revue-sketch dialogue. They giggled in the wrong places in the show to prove they knew it was bad.

Sunday January 18 1953

Monday January 19 1953

Away from Brighton in sunshine to a foggy and until the evening, rather dull London. Gerard was away, and I went to see the new Richard Burton film 'My Cousin Rachel'. Richard B. is astonishingly good, rising with grace and power, even over the absurdities of Hollywood period style. When I came back at about 8.30, I was sitting feeling dreary when the bell rang and of all people it was Susan. She inveigled me into going back to her flat, and in the end staying the night. Since then in Cardiff again, of which more tomorrow.

Friday January 23 1953

I have been selfish and bad-tempered and beastly all this week and it's a good thing I haven't written any of it down. No word from Jack de Leon yet.

Saturday January 24 1953

I am sitting in the dressing-room in the Cardiff theatre, hot and stuffy in my costume, sitting and watching the comic policeman having his temperature taken by one of the wicked girl weasels, who is devoted to him.

Tuesday January 20 1953

Torquay

Home - after a lightning visit to Bristol to see Ju's show 'Christmas in King St.' I arrived without telling him, and found my way to the short alleyway leading to the big rattling stage-door of the Theatre Royal. Inside it seems very bare and open compared with some modern theatres, but very much more convenient than most. The stage-doorkeeper was doubtful about my going up, but up I went to astonish Ju very much. He was washing his hands at a basin in a dressing-room as squalidly untidy as only he can make it. He himself looked very

smart. We first went to the managers' office by way of the theatre. On our way back from getting me a place in the gangway, we stopped in the theatre, which must be the loveliest in the world after the Haymarket, the Old civ, the St. James', the Opera House, Drury Lane, and all the other theatres in the world except the Whitehall. The intimacy of its circular galleries, unbroken except by the pros. arch unornamented except for exquisitely simple Georgian swags, gives one more of a feeling of continuity than any of the West End houses. We stopped and looked round. I said for the first time, but certainly not for the last 'Oh how lucky you are!' He took me to meet one or two of the company, James Cairncross, one of his co-authors, is plump-faced, with black crinkly hair, spectacles and an air of sly wisdom. His dressing partner, John Neville, a tall fair exceedingly handsome young man, with perfectly regular, beautifully boned features, and a soft deep voice, is the sweetest tempered of men, I should imagine from his manner and conversation. His acting suffers from his sympathetic personality and it is always too easy to take one's eyes off him.

The show was not brilliant though it was very good. All but one tune out of the score was Ju's, and seven of the numbers in justice I must admit as far as I can be unbiased, Ju's were very much the best, certainly judging from audience reaction they were. The cheers at the end were deafening, though it was a Monday night in the middle of the run. It was something of an ordeal for me to hear two of the tunes written for and first sung by me, raising audiences to great enthusiasm without me. Sentimental of me but I think I could have done as well.

Afterwards Dorothy...

PAGES MISSING

Thursday March 19 1953

Torquay

I am still here. 'And So To Bed' was not, apparently for me. So here I stay, with no money and few prospects, back exactly where I was eighteen months ago, with D's lack of belief with every reason for its confirmation. On Tuesday Ju's two shows opened. The reviews of Stratford's 'Merchant of Venice' were so bad that I am almost glad they did not mention his incidental music. After what every paper has said about Denis Carey's production, I begin to wonder whether I was so wrong about 'The Taming of the Shrew' as Ju would have me. As for his setting of 'The Duenna', I have only seen one review - the News Chronicle. (Of course Bristol does not get universal reviews.) Alan Dent closes a half column notice headed 'Old opera with new music' with the words 'In his way... Mr. Slade is the gayest talent in light music since the deplorable loss of young Walter Leigh in the last war. Nightly the Bristol audience comes away chirping his tunes.

I wish I could be unreservedly unenviably happy about this. I am as near nearer than I could be with anyone else. Ju is so close to me, and thinks so well of me that I almost feel Ju's success to be my own. Of course I wish I were in it! I sometimes wonder if I think or talk too much of what we did at Cambridge, and yet what else can I do; I have done nothing on the stage worth mentioning since then. I wonder too here in my diary where no one can see, whether he will grow away from me unless I have a success soon. I know so little of what he is doing. I am doing nothing here, nothing.

Friday March 20 1953

When Lalla came to call me this morning, she brought with her a letter from Julian short but very loving, enclosing £2, and demanding that I come to see 'The Duenna'. Isn't that wonderful?

I kept it a secret until lunchtime, and even then only mentioned it on the spur of the moment. M. can smear over anything with her lack of sense or taste. Sure enough she did. With starry eyes she said 'Oh! how lovely of him - I suppose he's...

PAGE MISSING

...today.

M. has really surpassed herself in silliness today. She complained to D. that he must clear the front garden from the multiples of Michaelmas daisies, and sat doing a crossword, the children's version, after supper muttering 'Female bird - blank, E, N, - blank, E, N'? We were talking of the stupid 'crooners' and entertainers today, having just heard the American, Johnny 'Cry' Ray, on the wireless, (Appalling, as if he were drunk.) I said 'These people are only paid large salaries because the public want to come to hear them. Television films and radio reach such immense audiences that it is very much easier to make a quick reputation'. M. said, 'But you talk to half the people at the church, they haven't heard of anyone on the radio'.

This sort of half-answer is M's commonest way of entering an argument of the simplest or dullest kind, that she cannot understand.

Oh! God, why am I so pompous.

Sunday March 22 1953

A dull heavy day. D. in a faint panic, preaching twice at Union St. His giddiness is worst in the pulpit. On our way to church this morning Lalla and I saw David Blackler, the son of a mechanic who comes to the church, walking in front of us. A slight awkward figure with a jerky spiritless walk. He stopped to talk to a friend, and grinned miserably with his narrow ratty mouth as we passed. Lalla said 'He's being married on April 1st. After twelve o'clock of course.'

After supper this evening, D. started to talk of his childhood in Caithness as he sometimes does. On each occasion, we get all the old stories and one new one, as the cool reception of the old ones brings them a little quicker. Tonight his new one was really funny. His father, never strict, could get very pompous when annoyed, or feeling he ought to be annoyed. One Sunday suddenly overcome with Sabbatarian fervour, he appeared in the paddock where the children were playing some innocent game, and said fiercely, 'Ah! there you are at your Olympic games.'

Monday March 23 1953

This afternoon I told Daddy about Julian's letter and the money he sent me. He immediately forbade me to go - without a moment's thought, he said, 'You can't do that'. He developed this at length, covering the unwisdom of incurring obligations, of loss of self-respect, and so on till my ears were tired. I went out to post a parcel for Lalla, who at least sent me out with encouraging words. After walking about for an hour or so, I met D. & M. on their way back from a meeting. We joined together for a walk to the harbour, which was invisible under a thick mist. M. left us to take a bus home, and we were alone. Immediately the lecture began again, all most well-meaning, kindly phrased by his standards, a continual paying of lip-service to the existence of my talent but no real conviction behind it, and the everlasting presentation of the lack of security in the theatre, the difficulty of no money behind me, the unversatile nature of any talent, the fearful odds mounting against me getting a part of being able to take up any other job with credit - all this, without apparently any idea of the dagger in my heart (oh! how satisfying to be melodramatic with nobody to remind one that we must face facts) that every word of his must be, when all that he repeats is only what my own conscience and mind have been suggesting to me for eighteen months. I have no argument against him. The only prudent thing would be to abandon the stage at once and take up some other...

PAGES MISSING

...lyrics are a great deal stronger than I expected, neat, well-constructed, with a strong situation and a good scene for every character. Julian's music is easily the best he has written; he is forced to supply the wit always to be found in his own lyrics by musical means alone, with great benefit to his music as a result. It is very varied, flexible and characterised. The performance is vivacious, but rather untidy. The men sing with much less conviction than the women, and the sets are ineffective. All the same, it is a gay charming evening enough, with two splendid comic performances from Dorothy Reynolds as 'The Duenna' and David Bird as the heavy father, 'Don Jerome'.

Ju took me round to Dorothy R's dressing room, where the three of us had a quiet little drink. I gathered that neither of them really found James C. very workable with. What a pity! He's such a sweet person, though in love with Ju, so J. tells me. Today we all had lunch, with J. Hutch-Scott and Michael W. Fun, fun.

Saturday March 28 1953

Tonight, after a blustery wet day, M. persuaded me to take her to the prize-winners concert of the Torquay Festival of Music and Drama in the Town Hall. We went off at a quarter past seven to the hall, a dull cream-washed place, decorated with imitation Adam plaster work and applique pine pilasters. The foyer vestibule whatever is covered in marble plaques thus 'This tablet is to commemorate the use of this Hall as a Military Hospital during the 1914-18 War'. The platform desultorily decorated with flowering plants and palms was sparsely filled with a dog-eared overgrown set of schoolboys whispering and shuffling their feet nervously while tuning up various instruments with startlingly little success. The atmosphere of the Hall was most familiar to me. The gallery and the rear half of the seats were packed with parents and public. The middle section was patchworked and chequered with various little armies of singers or players ready to march up to do their piece. While I was looking around from my seat in the front of the Hall - with the nobs - the doors at the side of me were suddenly opened and in walked the Mayor and Mayoress with other notables to the strains of the National

Anthem. Up we all stood, until the Mayor, a short bald man with an extremely red face and an extremely gold chain, had settled himself and his wife carefully enclosed in black satin and fur, in their seats. W then stood in honour of Queen Mary, and the genteel fun began.

Sunday March 29 1953

A blustery dull rainy day, cold enough for November. The papers are full of pictures and articles about Queen Mary. This evening we listened to the memorial programme about her and she certainly seems to have been a very remarkable woman. I am quite convinced that she would have been as widely-known and possibly more influential had she not been Queen. A nicely dull family called Cusins came to tea today. Bright little boy...

PAGE MISSING

...your account of the occurrence'. Rather fun - like a murder. I saw nobody after I arrived, went to a film, then went round to Colin and Mary. Their 'char' was still in, and everything upside down. However they were most welcoming. Robin and Anthea came to dinner and off we all went to the West End to see a film. However it was so wet, and there were such queues we came home again. Didn't mind a bit.

When I left them in the morning, I was most touched by their insistence, particularly Colin's, that I must not hesitate to come whenever I wanted a bed. I am lucky in my friends. Colin impresses me more and more, not for his charm or sense of humour, which are not in fact so striking as his first appearance leads one to think, but for his most remarkable desire to be and to do good. He is tremendously earnest and with excellent intentions behind every good deed. Finished my packing and went off for luncheon with Susan and Robin. Susan, whom we met at St. James' Park Station is really looking much prettier and smarter. A great improvement. Robin and I, who had walked across the park after a quick drink with Julian More in Brook St., had been held up by the crowds outside B.P. waiting to see H.M. return from the Maundy Service. We saw her swish by, with an elegant and regal gesture from her long-black-gloved arm. Susan was kind, and encouraging, and proposed that we should travel down on the same train that afternoon. I then went off to see Bill O'Bryan at the Alexander Korda H.Q. next door to the late King's old house, 145, Piccadilly. After waiting some time in a marbled hall sadly fallen from former grandeur with paste-board partitions at one end, and a hall-porter's desk at the other, I was shown into what used to be the drawing-room, a splendid high square room with a large bow window. O'B., a smallish, reddish, baldish niceish man, was kindish but tepidish. Thought D. writing a great joke. Came out, down in the, looked everywhere for a taxi and finally got one only just in time, to scramble into the train.

Susan came staggering along to the corner of the corridor I was sitting on, behind the loo door, after about half-an-hour. She brought with her one of the prettiest and one of the most ignorant girls I have ever met. In quick succession she had never heard of Aldons Huxley, Boswell, or his journal, Graham Greene, or Sir Edward Marsh. But as she knew Nigel, she was interesting just the same. Heart-shaped face, clear bright blue eyes, fair blooming skin, heather-honey hair. Oh! fanciful me.

Arrived home late and depressed indeed, and have remained so ever since. Had arranged to meet Susan in Taunton, could not because I had no money. She did not answer my letter for some time, and I thought she was offended. A letter arrived last week saying that she had got

engaged! I was amazed, and still am. I only hope she has not made a mistake. She is so apt to persuade herself into more happiness or misery than...

PAGES MISSING

Friday May 1 1953

Bright sunshine, and heavy cloud. A day of rather squalid bickering. Both M. and L. are on edge and frightened when D is off colour, for then he is extra-crotchety and extra-biting.

When I went out this evening for a walk, the first thing I saw was an enormous bank of blue-grey cloud with across it the full half-circle of the clearest brightest rainbow I have ever seen. D & M, away tomorrow.

Saturday May 2 1953

A happy happy day with Lalla. No complaints, no moans for money, just easiness and quiet and enjoyment of what we have. Oh if it were like this always, how much easier I could face leaving it.

Sunday May 3 1953

A gorgeous sunny day, with intense paint-box blue sky. Walked down to Beacon Cave with L. where we stood and watched the crowds swimming and sun bathing. One, a very young father, with a very young daughter, both very brown, caught our eye.

Tuesday May 5 1953

7.30.

They are home, and already all is awkward, angular, silly, irritating, cramping. a letter arrived this morning from James Cairncross telling me he would write to the Perth Rep. manager from me. I told D., who gloomed about it, of course. I asked M. if she had seen any Coronation preparations. No, why? Well, there wasn't really time.' 'I wanted to and she wouldn't', says D. And so it turns out there was plenty of time, but from silliness and timidity she missed it.

11.30

More petulance and a fresh realisation of how unattractive my own exactly similar petulance and finicky correctiveness must be.

While I was listening to a programme on the wireless called 'Beaux and Belles', I heard Compton Mackenzie interviewing Ellaline Terriss, who must be well over eighty. At the end of it, he asked her if she would sing for him. She said she would, if she might accompany herself, sing a verse and chorus of 'The Honeysuckle and the Bee.' She struck a chord or two, and then in the truest and sweetest voice, and with a most pleasant silvery exact diction, she sang again the refrain that she had made so famous sixty years ago. The break that the wars

and the economic revolution have made in our history, seem to make it impossible that the creator of a song which seems wedged inextricably in the long-distant past, should still be alive, let alone capable of singing it.

Wednesday May 6 1953

D. off to Synod, early. Very sunny and very hot. M. took us to see 'La Fille du Puisatier' at the Burlington Cinema this afternoon. Stuffy little hole, not improved by someone telling someone else the story of the film and everything that was said thirty seconds after each event took place.

Excellent film on the usual Marcel Pagnol theme of betrayed trust in pleasant surroundings. Both Racina and Charpin superb. No further on.

PAGE MISSING

...distress, to ask him whether he would advise his striking out on his own. D. said 'Well, as you can't be much worse off than you are, I would say yes. And I prophesy that you will be driving about in a Rolls Royce before you finish.

They drove up to the front door yesterday in a large grey Rolls Royce. I am glad to say that they remain the same exceedingly ordinary people they have always been. So unlike one! Mr. M. is neat, in grey suit, very light, pale grey silk tie, with large tie-pin, rather crumpled pointed-toe black boots, Mrs. M. short, fat, hair completely covered and squashed by a hair-net, plain blue linen dress, thick stockings, black shoes. He is such a poor talker, that almost nothing emerges. He tries so hard. Mrs. on the other hand is solid, factual, very narrow but very sensible. Still keeps the books of the business. Very much enjoys 'banter' Kissed her goodbye, and she giggled. 'Don't let my husband see' she said.

PAGES MISSING

Thursday May 14 1953

Lalla in bed all today, though better than yesterday. Temperature down to about four thingummies above normal.

I helped M. with the actual housework. I always do the washing-up and so on, but today 'hoovered' the hall, the stairs, M & D's bedrooms, the drawing-room and the kitchen. Not much time for anything else. I've suddenly realised why I never write about books in here. I read so many, I couldn't write a novel about each one!

Monday May 18 1953

Lalla quite better. Can it really be Thursday since I wrote? So little has happened it might be yesterday.

I feel so unreal that I can hardly feel anything no remorse, no shame, no regret, no enthusiasm. Can it be possible I have been dribbling on like this for two years? But of course it's this place that makes me feel like this, this place and these people. It's a bog.

Tuesday May 19 1953

A hot wet unhealthy day, with M. bad-tempered because of a Ring Circle outing to Dawlish this evening.

She returned much excited by the sight of a house (130 years old - as if that was extraordinary) called Medman or something like it.

Oh I haven't the energy.

Bored, bored, bored.

I'm not really, but oh so lazy.

Wednesday May 20 1953

Do you know that nothing happened today again? Isn't it extraordinary? But then I suppose life in nearly every household is composed of small bickerings and long silences.

Thursday May 21 1953

M. guessed today, when I pointed to the pile of my diaries, that most references to her would be derogatory. Poor thing! I am cruelly unkind, I know. Do I confuse unkind spite with truth? I suppose I do. Why is everything such a muddle?

Friday May 22 1953

One of the wettest days I ever remember. Solid heavy eiderdowns of rain all day. D. and I saw M. off all nerves and twitter, to Bath for the weekend. Very flustered at having to buy her own ticket and at the train going ten minutes early.

In the afternoon to the library, one of many many visits. What I should have done without Public Libraries over the last seven or eight years, I really don't know.

Saturday May 23 1953

M. away, and oh! the peace.

A very stuffy close day. In the afternoon we went for a longish walk all around the town and along the front. Since the beginning of the week, the shops and the borough council have been putting up decorations in large numbers, and the general effect is now one of complete festivity. Flags everywhere, huge illuminated portraits of the Queen and the Royal family, streamers, bunting, pictures and designs pasted on the windows, red white and blue designs on the goods, the range of souvenirs is endless. Scarves, books (I counted twenty-seven separate books on the Royal Family and their possessions, besides endless magazines and booklets and Coronation guides), china of every shape, trays, paper-napkins, table-cloths,

playing cards, purses, pocket-books, card-cases, writing-paper, gloves, dresses (one with all the Royal Houses on it), handbag, all with either the Royal Arms or the Queen's Cipher or her portrait on them. The most widely-seen portrait by far is by Dorothy Wilding, en grande tenue, at the opera, though few include the opera-box ledge. A most beautiful photograph.

The town was full of sailors - Canadians mostly from the two large ships in the bay. Really they are adept at winning a Torquay belle. They are hardly in the quay, but they are paired off.

Thursday May 28 1953

M. back, and a bad start. D. and I walked off to meet her, D. seeming to me very down in the dumps. On the way there were waved at by M. from a taxi. We got in to find her hot with guilt at such extravagance. D. cold with disapproval. She launched into tales of Broad St. Chambers the moment lunch was on the table. How 'Bodkin's face - oh, if you'd have seen how it lit up when she saw me - Nana, my Nana' the little mite called, in her Wellingtons. In the evening, on Sunday, went to the Bach Choir Concert'. 'On Sunday?' said Lalla. 'Oh yes', said M. 'Sacred, you know'.

When we went out for a walk after supper, the Torquay decorations which had excited her well enough before she went away, were now all that was paltry and disreputable. 'Oh! if you could see Bath. Milsom St. has had nothing done to it. It's a surprise.' It certainly sounds it.

Friday May 29 1953

Spent most of the morning measuring bits of the church and organ case and buying material to decorate it. At Bobby's, the biggest shop here, the smallest shop ever, I bought six yards of royal blue crepe at 3/6 per yd. Lovely rich silky crepe of a very full and brilliant colour. Also some old gold fringing at 2/6 per yd. Lalla made it up into two fringed banners. Tonight they were put up against the bulgy bits of the organ, with a large coloured crown between. The effect is quite handsome, and dignified. Much good-natured twitting of D. because he artlessly pinned a Scots flag in the middle. Oh the depression of it, and oh the double depression because I suppose I really have no right to feel depressed.

Am reading Bell's 'Life of Randall Davidson', after the Lockhart Life of Lang, and am very much impressed. Most illuminating, clear and profound.

Saturday May 30 1953

So I am to go to London for the Coronation! How strange. A Congregational minister living nearby is going up by car, and has a place for one, as far as Windsor. How very strange.

This present stay at home longer than any for many years, has almost made me feel I was going to the last Coronation. I am of the Queen's generation, so I suppose that it is right I see her crowning. How odd of C. to let me go, and how kind. I shall sleep on the Mall pavement if possible, and hide in the crowd from friends. I wonder what I would do if I were a member of the Royal Family? I almost wish I were. I feel I could so much more easily live up to a

position than secure one. I almost feel like committing myself to some definite job for the pleasure of being made to do something.

Sunday May 31 1953

Two Coronation preparation services today, both from a rather dull Free Church Order of Service based timidly on the Prayer Book. D. apparently disappointed by congregations, which I thought respectable enough.

In the afternoon yet another sad little parade with everybody bursting out of or swamped by, the piece meal uniforms of the various voluntary organisations. All over the gardens on the sea front are fresh instalments of the quite hideous floodlighting which flashes now green, now purple, now scarlet, now blue on what are in daylight pretty enough groves and flowerbeds.

The wireless news told us this evening that five people had taken up their beds on Trafalgar Sq. already. I do hope it will not be too difficult to get some sort of a place tomorrow. I suppose I shall arrive sometime after midday.

After the news service was broadcast from St. Paul's with a sermon by the Archbishop of Canterbury. What a difference from the feeble gracelessness of Union St. Chapel! His sermon was powerful, solid, affirmative and judicious. His most striking moment was his immensely emphatic, 'The weight of the crown which I shall place on Her Majesty's head on Tuesday is physically heavy. How much more is the weight of the spiritual burden of example and dedication.' I still think Churchill's 'The Younger among us can say with certainty that never has the crown sparkled with more brilliance than in these joyous days.' to be most 'me'. I wish I too could convey to the Queen something of what her obvious sincerity and good sense has meant to me. She has all at once convinced me that religious vows are permanent but flexible, that conversion is revolutionary but sustaining. Tomorrow, London.

Monday June 1 1953

Tuesday June 2 1953

Wednesday June 3 1953

(Written on Thursday June 4 '53)

I got up at 5.30, had my bath, shaved, took a small breakfast of tea and toast, and gathered my things together for the journey. D. lent me his old grey mackintosh, and into its very large pockets I packed a huge bag of sandwiches and cakes, my cap, my gloves, a bottle of lavender tonic water and a bottle of my special hand-cream, four handkerchiefs, and 'The Way We Live Now' by Anthony Trollope. Bulging in all directions, I went down to the front gate, where Peter Gordon soon appeared, and off we drove. We picked up two nice nondescript girls called Kendall and Bartlett at the Town Hall and Walls' Ice Cream Factory respectively, and set off again through the silent sunny morning.

I found myself in the front seat by Mr. Gordon, and I had taken the precaution of swallowing two 'Kwells', anti-sickness tablets. I felt pretty sure that no horrible disaster would spoil the day, and sure enough it did not.

We stopped once at Bristol. From the outskirts to the centre, it was covered in flags and pictures and bunting of every kind. The Centre itself was entirely surrounded by the Commonwealth flags on tall white poles, and the gardens, enlivened by an enormous crown in coloured bulbs quite twenty feet high, had been planted with roses, hydrangeas, on everything, all in red, white and blue. The Bartlett girl took us for some nice ordinary coffee with her nice ordinary mother, who presented me with a nice ordinary two and sixpenny souvenir programme of the Coronation which I was very pleased to have.

All the way both before and after Bristol, through country looking its green and dewy best, we passed through towns, villages, hamlets and halts, with scarcely a house without a picture or a flag. I noticed that the pubs were particularly loyal. Cullompton, Wellington, Chippenham (a very nice scheme here, pointed banners of all colours set in painted milkchurns, and what a pretty place), Newbury, until we turned into the Windsor High Street, drew up at the Bus Station, and the first part of the journey was over. The Bartlett girl going to stay with her brother in his flat in Portland Place, and I got into the bus for Hyde Park Corner, expecting to find it very full. It was about two thirds full by the time we were well beyond Osterley. On the great West Rd. we passed many of the great factories, or their headquarters, mostly large square plain bare concrete or gaunt brick looped, festooned, shrouded, hung, with every variety of expensively conventional decoration. A fine display of trouble, but nothing pretty.

As the bus got further into London, the streets became fuller, and when we stepped out, just at the side of the old horse-trough opposite St. Georges Hospital (an old friend which has many a time marked nearly home on long night walks in the past), we stepped out into a scramble and buzz and roar which never left me at least until I was in the train for Torquay the next night.

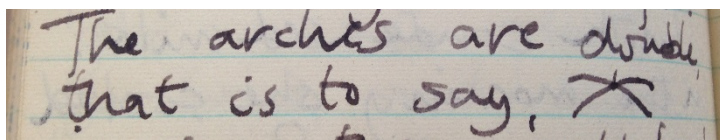
I helped the girl with her luggage into the Underground, and then made my way to the Green Park, and walked across it from Piccadilly. At the time I was too much in a hurry to notice anything but the number of people everywhere. I pushed my way through some people already bedded down for the night, into the park and across to the Mall. I found a number of large tents at the side of the park nearest to Buckingham Palace, which of course I could not see, as the enormous white wall of the back of the stands prevented me seeing anything of the street. I noticed the yellow stripes of the Gentlemen's Lavatory, which I patronised, a long corrugated iron structure, with a creosote trough for contributions. Then I went for a drink of something called Grapefruitade, and having put back what I had taken away, walked underneath the stands into the Mall.

Here an extraordinary sight met me. The only empty part of this vast street was the seats of the stands themselves. The stands, in receding tiers, cover all that part of the Mall to the walls of the Royal Houses on one side and St. James Park railing on the other, which is usually the extension the Row for riding. The asphalted pavement and the gravel next to the roadway is left free on both sides. By the time I arrived on the Mall, at ten past three, the gravelled part of the pavement had already been occupied.

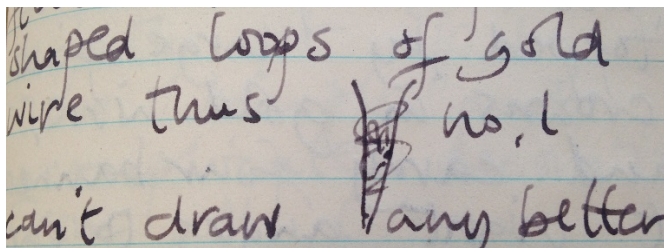
Down the whole length of the street, as far as eye could reach, three deep, sometimes four, on each side of the road, people had settled with blankets and so on, holding their places for the next day. The front row had in some cases been there since the night before. I found a place just on the gravel, on the same side of the road as the Green Park, and opposite Clarence House. Here I settled on my Mackintosh, and was able after a little, to look around me. The

broad road way, usually so empty as to make a substantial stream of traffic look nothing supported with difficulty a double line of cars, frequently brought to a standstill by the crowds. A crowd between six and seven deep, and in continuous procession, moved in front of me in the road, between me and the traffic. I could see on the other side a similar procession. Behind me, between me and the stands, another continuous procession between three and four deep, moved along the pavement, having its counterpart also on the opposite pavement. At first these crowds were mainly sightseers who stopped to ask how long we had been waiting and such other questions, but gradually without their size at all diminishing, their character changed to people, laden with wraps and provisions, themselves seeking space. All four processions went on, absolutely unaffected by time from the moment I first observed them until five or six o'clock the next morning when the pavement processions stopped, but then only because the pavements were entirely filled by new campers-out. The processions in the road became bigger and bigger until at last the police allowed no more in The Mall and the stream of people became a trickle. There were now a few people stranded in the gutters. The police pushed them in among the rest of us, with a good deal of very satisfying grumbling on both sides. It rained heavily once or twice during the late evening, and was very cool through the whole time I waited. Yet I never saw anyone give up their place and go home, and scarcely heard any serious grumbles. I myself sat on a corner of a spare mac of a girl next to me, huddling under my mac, and was very wet and miserable at one point, yet it scarcely occurred to me to do anything but wait. Next to me was a large family party, mother, father, grown-up children, grand-children. Mother had brought whole meals with her. She opened a tin of cooked meat, served it with salad, opened a tin of apricots, served with condensed milk. In the morning she cooked bacon on a Primus stove. They had any number of ground sheets, blankets, rugs and so on, and the women changed into bedroom slippers for the night.

While I had been rather uncomfortably sitting reading and looking during the afternoon, I had had much time to look at the widely publicised arches over the Mall, and the decorative poles in between. Both seemed to me really successful. The arches are double, that is to say



is how they would look from above. Their widest point is their crossing, and on this point there stand the figure of the Lion and the Unicorn in what appears to be Perspex edged or flecked with gold. The open work of the arches which are painted pale blue at their narrowest point where they enter the ground shading to deep blue at their widest point, is filled in with fan-shaped loops of gold wire thus



no, I can't draw any better than I can describe which is a pity.

Slung between them on silver wires, bearing differently sized silver balls along their length, is an enormous but beautifully proportioned princess coronet, carried out in gold wire. The whole effect is one of magical lightness and gaiety. The arches seem to spring up with no weight. The tall white poles are topped by large spindly crowns in gold wire, and carry four banners at right angles to each other, two crimson, two light red, with E and R on one of each pair, yellow on a white ground with a yellow surround. The crimson and light red are alternately on North and South and then East and West of the poles all the way down the Mall, a very pleasing effect of dignified variety. The beautiful double avenues of lime? plane? trees in the Mall have been perfectly set off by those simple and uncomplicated decorations. From all I saw, I must admit the official decorations to be very much the superior of the private enterprise.

About five o'clock a change came over the crowds. By some curious unidentifiable sign, everyone got to their feet folded up last night's bedding and pushed forward firmly into their standing positions for the processions whose earliest signs were not to be seen for another four hours at least. My first signal that the night was over had come even earlier. I was lying flat on my back, my cap over my face, half-waking, half-asleep, dreaming of the procession to come. The Queen was just saying to me in a tone of really hysterical cordiality, 'I'm so glad you came', when through my dream, I heard a raucous shouting. I scarcely knew whether or not it was part of my dream, until it became louder and clearer. I opened my eyes and blinked into the lamp-light to see newsboys coming running with canvas bags of papers slung on their shoulders, calling 'Latest! Latest! Everest conquered! Everest conquered! I closed my eyes again, thinking it must be a dream, yet the voices went on, on and on in their incredible almost absurdly dramatic announcement. Dramatic perhaps, but no playwright would dare such a coincidence. I thought to myself 'What a lovely present for the Queen!', and dozed off again. It was only later that I felt that this at least must be an omen for good.

Now that we were standing, time went slower. Over the trees the light of a remote sun was spreading. It was still cold and damp, the long lines of police and ambulance men came marching up to take their places. The police, stationed about two yards apart, were quite adopted by the little section they ruled. Ours we called Percy; he had a lovely time playing with the three children we pushed to the front, giving them a great thrill by taking them under his cape when it rained.

About half an hour after the police, a band struck up towards Buckingham Palace, and two long files of Guards in the huge bulbous bearskins, like vast wigs, made their appearance. While their complicated way of standing in two straight lines on either side of the road was getting under weigh, the loudspeakers were attacked by a most gentlemanlike voice, telling us which Brigade each detachment belonged to. Finally they were all placed, and except for their light blue capes covering the bright red of their tunics, and the stiff slightly comic figures of their officers solemnly taking a turn in twos and threes in the middle of the road, the processional way was ready.

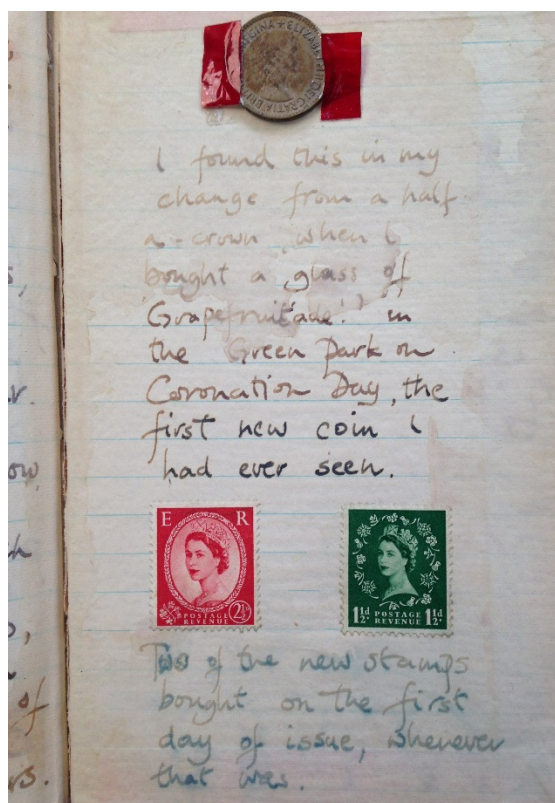
The next hour or two seems in retrospect to have passed very quickly. Cheers swept up the line twice - once for a telegraph boy, again for a bobby bowing graciously from a bicycle. There were continual scattered cheers for the occupants of the stands, making their way rather late to their seats. This was particularly the case if the man of the party might happen to be in topper and tails or the woman in frills and a large hat. A good many of these people had a long walk to make to their seats. I saw one very smartly dressed woman, carrying a very high-heeled, much cut-away pair of blue satin shoes, and wearing an old wide pair of

grey ones. There were many family parties, everyone in their best but with mac or umbrella somewhere near. Only faces I knew were those of Donald Wolfitt, large red and untidy and Rosalind Iden, small, pale, precise and peevish.

Just before nine o'clock a series of large dark saloon cars, bearing, as the programme had it, 'certain members of the Royal Family', rather as if there were hosts of morganatic wives and would-be heirs coming from all parts of the land, swept swiftly down the Mall toward Trafalgar Square. They drew friendly but rather distant cheers. An odd glimpse of red velvet or gold lace, a haughty eye, a scornful mouth, and they were gone.

Very soon after this there was a sound of horse's hooves, and we were all pushing and craning to see a string of carriages escorted by odd-looking cavalry come bowling up the road. These were the Colonial Rulers, Sultans in any quantity, a Tungku, whatever that may be, but little I cared after seeing the Queen of Tonga, Large with a very big smile, and a huge pale coffee-coloured arm waving, she beamed at us all, nodding her grey head with its two long spines with a red flower stuck between them. She was loudly cheered, and indeed hardly any of the others with her were noticed.

Hardly had they gone past, but another mass of horsemen could be seen approaching. I could see, being tall though few round me could, closed carriages these were, Royal Clarences upright, small half-leather, with the Royal Arms on the door, the coachman and footmen of each of the ten, beautifully dressed in black and white. The first of the carriages of the Prime Ministers, as these were, naturally received the loudest roar as it passed me, I saw at the small window a plump square face, rich ivory, with a touch of pink in colour, a protruding under-lip and a chest covered in medals and orders of all kinds, a face, I thought, not far from tears



ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 21

Angus Mackay

Being the seventeenth

From Coronation Day 1953
To September 17 1953

It was Sir Winston Churchill. He was followed by all the Commonwealth Prime Ministers - Canada, New Zealand, Pakistan, (Mr. Mohammed Ali lolling about with a cigar, taking off his fur hat repeatedly to the crowds) Ceylon, South Africa, (Malan was booed) Southern Rhodesia, and Northern Ireland, India (Fandit Nehru, cool, elegant, haughty) and last Dr. Olivier of Malta, who got a special cheer in case he still felt a bit offended. I was surprised to find that all the people round me knew all about the Malta upset, and were eager to cheer loudly to make Dr. Ol. Feel quite nice about it again.

Once this procession, with its Commonwealth escorts, was past, there was no holding back real excitement, for the next procession was that of the Princes and Princesses of the Blood Royal. I can hardly write those words 'Blood Royal' without that curious sneezy feeling at the back of my nose which would mean tears. Now is perhaps the time to say that I hardly know why I feel as I do about the Royal Family except that I feel about them as I feel about the volumes of this diary, that they are always with me, stretching back comfortably into the past, slowing down the dreadfully fast rush of life past one. Past life becomes so much more understandable with Royalty unchanging. Their surrounding panoply, too, is so complete, so assured, so rightly tied to such proper precedent, that it moves me, as any 'complete thing' exquisitely done moves, as the delivery of a comedy live with a full sense of the values involved, moves me. I explain so badly, but it is good for me to try.

Over the heads of the crowds, I could see the bobbing heads of some of the Household Cavalry. Slowly, slowly with the mounting cheers they came up, and passed us. Three Glass Coaches, in the first, the Duchess of Gloucester in her coronation robes, a small sweetly serious figure, trying to keep the interest of her two small boys with her. The elder I thought very striking-looking, with large dark blue eyes very far apart, and a sensitive almost shrinking mouth. I bet he doesn't get on with his father. In the second, the gay happy family of the Kents, the Duchess, surely one of the loveliest women in the world, with her fascinating crooked smile, her small elegant features and genuine air of sophistication. With her the shy young Duke, very like his father now not good-looking but amiable, the hearty Prince Michael, and the newly grown-up Princess Alexandra, who drew many cries of admiration from the crowd, with her generous smiles and waves. I thought her attractive, tho' I noticed her nose in profile to be hookey, good-looking though. In the last of the three were two of Queen Victoria's grand-daughters, Princess Marie-Louise a wonderful old rag-bag rattle at eighty and Princess Alice of Albany, Countess of Athlone, Queen Mary's sister-in-law, still a very good-looking sensible woman at seventy-six odd. It was interesting to note that Princess M.L.'s manner of acknowledging the cheers, though in movement exactly similar, had in it far more of condescension and less of humility than the modern members of the Family. All these last, the women, that is, were dressed in Robes of State of red velvet and miniter with diamond tiaras, and no doubt gorgeous dresses, though them, I could not

see. The whole family is a great deal better-looking than most, and it is by no means the partial eye of loyalty that sees good looks where they are not.

There was now a long pause, which seems now to have lasted for a second and a year all at once. Far away in the distance again came the sound of a band. A bobbing plume appeared, and a H.C. officer bouncing badly in his saddle trotted quickly past alone. Suddenly the troops sloped arms, and we saw some marching men. First came dentists, doctors and chaplains to the Queen (Army, RN, and R.A.F. that is) marching rather untidily, followed in beautiful precision by senior officers of all three services, then the R.H.A. in their frogged uniforms and busbys, tugging their gleaming green guns behind them. They had hardly gone past, and Air Marshals and Admirals on horseback, very uncomfy besides the accustomed generals, appeared then the whole procession stopped for about five or ten minutes, why I don't know. Although the Queen was not yet out of Buckingham palace, I was agonised at such an anti-climax. The Air Marshals' horses bucked and waltzed about, at which they looked flustered and the Generals looked amused. Then on the procession went, and in a moment I had forgotten the hold-up. In the distance a faint roar of cheering. I had begun to tremble as I do when I think of an entrance or a good line, my knees particularly. My eyes were becoming concentrated so that I could only see a few things and then only one. Over the heads of the crowd beyond the plumes bobbing now in rows above the crowd I saw the gold roof of the coach looking like the lid of a magic box with the crown for a nob. It moved very slowly, yet before I was aware I was craning to look into that red-lined interior. High, as on a shelf, very much exposed to my view, sat the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh and around them the cheering. For now the fluttering of handkerchiefs and wildly waving hats and caps were all around; the cheering was solid, shout as loud as I could, I could never have heard myself. I went 'Raaaaah!' as long as my breath lasted. And then the coach was passed, and I found my tears falling, and wished I had the courage to give way to them more completely. I very soon sank onto a tiny patch of ground with the rest of the crowd, and sat huddled trying to swallow the tears away from the back of my throat. I can't describe either the Queen, the Duke or the coach. As for its surroundings I never noticed them, either then or on the way back, tho' I swore I would. I can't describe them because they aren't like anything else. They are; other things are compared to them. It is they who form our ideas of fairy story Kings and Queens. And yet how flatly this leaves my wild hot yearning excitement!

We all huddled down; I suddenly felt desperately tired. So small was the patch of ground I was on, that I must either clasp my knees with my hands or bump onto someone else. I was so sleepy that my fingers kept on slipping and the stones dug into my buttocks, and the rain began again. We heard the roar of others' cheers along the route, and then the service began. There was a loudspeaker in the tree above me, and I am thankful to say that I heard every word without strain. I can say too that I neither heard nor saw any gross irreverence in the densely packed tired hungry and wet crowds around me, and only occasional slight lapses - truly remarkable these days. I thought the service altogether very fine, unusually felt, the Archbishop strong, warm, confident, the Queen still and calm; the music was as beautiful as ever, but the whole service seemed to me more genuinely backed by real spiritual belief than I had expected, exemplified by the crowds around me saying the Creed (rather shamefacedly) and singing the hymns. Ordinary people seem to have made the effort to apprehend something of the nature of what dedication and consecration really mean.

The afternoon was well along before the head of the procession, now greatly enlarged, was announced to be coming under the Admiralty Arch. Up perked the spirits again, and past

went the coloured ranks, each favourite regiment raising a scattered cheer. All the pleasures and glories were repeated with the added wonder of the neat intimate little crowns now perched high on each woman's head, low round the forehead of each man. When the Queen's coach approached this second time, I determined to notice every detail of harness, retinue and attendants. My eyes slid past everything, and fastened themselves on the crowned Queen. There she drove past me, smiling, with the Crown on her head and her sceptre in her hand. Suddenly I realised that here and now was all the long wait worthwhile, for here and now, in one street, was I part of the Queen's Coronation, creating part of the scene which viewers and wireless listeners were only watching and listening to. Without the crowds in the streets there could be no true Coronation. Without television and wireless there have been hundreds.

There police held us in our places for some time after the whole procession had vanished. This the crowd submitted to, only flocking into the street and filling the Mall to the opening where it broadens round the Victoria Memorial, when a roar of cheering in front of us showed that the Queen was about to or had, come out on the balcony however, there was no more holding us. Behind me as far as I could see the whole length of the Mall was solid with people. Their thrust was like that of a piston in a cylinder, and though they were not violent, no police could have held. Sure enough there on the balcony was a long rich row of white satin, crossed with orders, only broken by the Duke of Edinburgh's uniform. Between their parents, the Duke of Cornwall and Princess Anne, two small white figures, imitated their mother's wave carefully then waved cheerfully like any child would, then nearly fell off the balcony watching the fly-past. The Queen was looking more wonderful than ever, her Crown sparkling, her robe worn with a careless elegance over a tiny waist, - oh she looked perfect. Not perfect for Royalty, perfect. The crowd chanted deliriously, 'Long Live the Queen', the Queen waved again, and we all went home.

I walked to Paddington through thick mud and tons of ankle deep mud-sodden newspapers. Went to a news-theatre to pass the time before my train in Praed St. it was full of people who looked as if they had spent the Coronation Day investigating the houses of the watchers, yet they all stood up for both playings of the National Anthem before and after the Queen's speech. Speech excellent, clear, restrained, really strikingly powerful spirit in that girl. She is the same age as I am, and makes me feel ashamed.

Monday June 8 1953

Today we all went to see the Technicolour film of the Coronation. I was much disappointed by the outdoor scenes - the light too hard, the colours coarsened, the music always oppressive and out of time with the troops marching, sometimes not even processional music at all, and no sense except at moments of a procession passing; if one follows a procession all along the route, and what's more views it from all kinds of novel angles, one loses all the suspense, the shoulder-rubbing, the transience, the anticipation and savouring afterwards, which are the essence of a procession. I was extremely glad to have seen it in real life. Inside the Abbey, the film was of considerably better quality, and was able to convey something of the solemnity and importance of the ceremony. I was glad to see that if any small untoward incidents had occurred, they had not been left in the film to raise cheap laughs. I was indeed most impressed by every glimpse of the serene and clearly deeply devotional mien of the Queen. I feel that everyone must feel the spiritual impetus she has given to the country. I hope that we may be granted time and grace to follow it up.

Listened to the first performance of 'Gloriana' on the wireless. Excellent in every way, I thought. Splendid solid story, music varied, broad simple, melodic. Lovely treatment of libretto.

Thursday June 11 1953

Another hot close day. How quickly the hours go by when they are all sunny. New potatoes are in, thank goodness, though cabbage is not yet out, bother it. I read and read still. Bell's 'Randall Davidson', Hesketh Pearson's 'Whistler', (a poor book that, in his usual catchpenny vein) Edmund Wilson's criticism, Trollope's 'The Three Clerks', 'A Distant Summer', all about Queen Victoria's visit to France in 1855, a book about the South Seas whose title I forget, Aubrey Menen's 'The Backward Bride' (all these since last I write, except The Bell.) There I sit in the cool dull dining-room or up here in the slating-ceilinged attic of mine, and the hours strike and strike, the sun shines hot, and soon there is a grocer and his wife for tea. Then down for a look at the bodies on the beach and home to the armchair. The bodies make me envious as much as anything, I realise now.

Friday June 12 1953

To the house of some people called Halsey this evening, up a road between high stone walls, behind the Grammar School. They had asked M. and I to watch the second half of The Royal Tournament on their television set. It is a projector, throwing the pictures on a small screen, and giving very much the effect of a dim and badly focused cinema, only with snow falling, instead of just raining. No doubt television will one day become perfect. But what is the point? Cinema allows absolute control. All well and good, theatre the shared creation. What has television to offer but a tremendously inferior degree of control in the one case or a photograph almost instantaneously relayed in the other? What's more, it is too much to be able to see too much. Surely everyone can see the narrowing of our imagination effected already by the wireless and the cinema. It can only be continued to a worse degree than ever by television. Try as I may, I can get no illusion of immediacy from it, except when someone makes a mistake. Later we had Pandit Nehru, answering press questions very wary and statesmanlike. Am glad to see that he feels very strongly as a human being not as a Prime Minister, about the colour bar.

To a film this afternoon, 'Little World of Don Camillo'. That boy Franco Interlenghi, from 'Sunday in August' Oh!

Sunday June 14 1953

What a dreary day in church it has been! Both preachers are supernumeraries, that is, retired. Both were dull and muddled, though that is of course. Both were particularly stupid. This evening the little man was redeemed by his obvious and even touching piety. I suppose I should be more charitable, but what can I say when a quarter of an hour is expended explaining the various meanings of agnostic, Anglo-Catholic and so on.

Monday June 15 1953

M. away most of the day with cousin of hers, and so we were very quiet and easy and happy. Then in the evening for no or very little reason, a blanket of depression came down on me. I suppose the start of it was seeing in the paper that the O & C Players are to put on their two plays at the Westminster Theatre. I refused to go with them of my own free will, because I knew it would depress. My ego would have suffered, I suppose.

PAGE MISSING

...excellent readable clear-headed book Bell's Randall Davidson is. I have scarcely ever read a book that I have more thoroughly savoured. Every word and sentence seems compounded of every excellence. So shrewd, so balanced, so careful yet so flexible. Excellent. I only wish that I had had the sense to read it before. I am most interested to observe that many of the doctrinal problems which worried people like Gove or Henson, on both sides never presented themselves to Davidson at all.

Wednesday June 17 1953

Off went the pathetic provincial little record of my 'success' today. I see no real course ahead but the cutting off of my losses, and turning to something else and something safe with prospects. Life here is intolerable under such conditions. I should not quarrel with the only roof under which I can shelter, but it is intolerable to have no aim or occupation, and to be deprived of any companions to share the freedom, spare time and so on, that I do enjoy.

Another dull grey windy cold November June day. On the beach the visitors huddle passing with blue feet in the icy wind. There is a bus strike at the moment, a foolish little business. It means for the visitors endless trudges up and down the very steep hills on which Torquay is built. Honestly aren't English holiday resorts hell?

Friday June 19 1953

I wonder whether I shall be interested to read so much about myself later on.

Oh! dear, the constant bad-natured bickering that goes on, largely my fault, I am afraid. I should give way to D. and M. in their house, and I don't. Prudence as well as kindness ought to teach me. To find oneself for ever involved in absurd arguments that lead to more self-reproach and hopelessness than the original point caused one, is silly as well as unkind. Thus tonight I found myself arguing with M. about reading in the bath, quite seriously. All because she says also quite quite seriously that she cannot go to sleep until I am out of the bathroom because she is afraid I may fall asleep while I read and be drowned. Nothing will convince that this is unlikely or that reading in one's bath is common enough. I suggest bathing in the morning, but apparently we can't afford the gas or coal. That is a typical example of the sort of argument I am continually allowing myself to be involved in. Extremely trivial and unrealistic in the beginning, only to be borne by clinching them at the finish. This is never possible for always the clinch involves a change of procedure which involves expenditure which is impossible.

The net result of all this apparent triviality is that I feel wretched with half-suppressed irritation, that is to say, I am most annoyed with myself for bothering about it in the first

place, for probably hurting M. and for worrying about it afterwards. Annoyed with M. for being so stupid. Annoyed then of course with my whole life here and everywhere. Finally annoyed at being annoyed, and deeply ashamed of all my quick temper and anger. I am more appalled every day at the power which tiny things have to torment me, and the selfishness which such power must stem from.

Saturday June 20 1953

Bell's 'Randall Davidson' is finished, and again what an excellent book! I have now a most clear picture of the issues involved in the period of Church history concerned, and on the whole an admiration for the Archbishop for making the best of an almost intolerable position. Who is to compose the differences of High and Low? How are they ever to come together?

A kind and thoughtful letter from Trevor Stratford to whom I wrote about Guildford Rep., and the chances of his brother's influence helping me there. By an extraordinary misfortune, the director who had built it up has died of infantile paralysis, and the new director, his brother, has already almost ruined it. Trevor is very kind about me, and hopes I am not wasting my talents. Ha! I feel more and more as the days go past, that although my heart will always be in the theatre, (even on the stage) it is not to be my future. I cannot believe that so many obstacles would be put in my way. While I still long beyond anything to feel once more the thrill of the audience waiting to laugh, and the satisfaction of bowing to one's partners in a good piece of work, I am conscious that in many ways I am not fitted to the theatre. During the one first-class tour I was on, I was very lonely all the time. All the rest of the company seemed to me stupid, whether in other directions kind or unkind, good or bad. Whether my longing for the stage is just exhibitionism better left unsatisfied, I don't know yet. The longing is indeed strong, and I find it hard to give it up, to crush it down, except by trying to forget it, to pretend that it has never been. I see, too, that down here I am so insulated from all life I know, that I am likely to misjudge the terrible effect that people and plays and music and parties will have on me, when if ever I go back. What would be my position then if I had given up the stage for good? I would be involved in a combination of all the distress and frustration of my times in the Army and at school, with all the memories of happiness to torment me, and none of the bright future to look forward to, which then upheld me.

I see that the letter Ju sent to me enclosing £5 was sent on April 25th and arrived on the 27th. Since then I have written twice or three times and have not heard from him further tho' I asked him particularly what was happening in the theatre there. I cannot think that he could desert me - a dramatic word perhaps. Still! I do worry often that if I am forced or decide, to give up the stage, it will be a wedge between us, gradually pushing us apart. I cannot really believe that it is anything but laziness, business, and apathy combined. I think if he had any real idea of how very lonely and isolated I feel here, he would not leave me so long without a letter. But then, how could he, with his home, know? I have started 'Trollope's Autobiography'. Find it most heartening

Sunday June 21 1953

Midsummer Day, and torrents of heavy rain all day. Down street after street, from lounges and sun-rooms, the wretched visitors gazed gloomily out.

Little wrinkled perky woman called Turner came to tea. I came up here for most of the time. At supper this evening we were discussing these extraordinary riots in East Germany and M. in her usual intemperate way, was prophesying swift annihilation for the strikers, to be followed by the overthrow of all democracy by the unstoppable might of Russia. I said mildly that I thought we could do a little better than immediate collapse. No, she said, because every country is rotten with Fifth Columnists. I said that I thought perhaps we had some spies too, and then there was the unrest of the countries themselves to be thought of. 'Ah!' said M., changing sides, but still, remaining in attack, 'I know East Germany is a seething - er, hm' 'Cauldron?' I suggested 'Yes, she said, cauldron, well, I know it's a seething cauldron, because Mrs. Must told me.'

Continued reading Trolopp's 'Autobiography' finding it coolly common-sense, like his novels, down to earth and understandable all round. He never conceals all that he thinks, never catches you out. Integrity, integrity - such a relief.

Monday June 22 1953

Still a very gloomy day, and in the evening to the cinema to see a really remarkable performance by Shirley Booth in a stupid film called 'Come Back Little Sheba', S.B. a Broadway actress (of course; nobody good on films is anything else, and in my view all but very few films are only a relaying of a good or bad stage performance) is very moving in this piece of pathetic irony, as a fortyish wife who has never grown up.

Tuesday June 23 1953

Mr. Mitchell, D's hearty second minister, came to lunch and very nice lunch it was too, lemon sole, broad beans and new potatoes, peaches and egg custard, not that nasty powder we so often have to put up with these days.

I have been worrying about meeting any of the O & C Players, who are at Darlington Hall just now. Silly and snobbish of me in two directions. It would be awkward, though, and I think I am right to avoid it if I can, though face it if it comes! Have been reading an early novel of Nancy Mitford's, 'Pigeon Pie', about the 'Phoney War', a book which had the bad luck to be published on May 6, 1940. Very much the tone of her later work, but in a much more farcical setting. Some ravishing things, particularly from a singer who is so good, he had 'Norma' re-written for him, and re-named Norman.

Wednesday June 24 1953.

Letter from Christopher C. about my St. Anne's bill, but it's going to be all right, I think. Cross my fingers. That would be the last straw, if it wasn't. I am glad the subject is broached, I hated seeing Christopher. He reminded me of my foolishness.

Friday June 26 1953

Letter from Susan, wanting answer to her last letter. Dear Susan. Still nothing from Ju. What can be the matter?

Very hot, heavy sunny day. Spent part of the morning shopping with M., whose birthday it was. In the afternoon out for a little while, then for a long walk by myself in the early evening. How different Torquay is with all the visitors in their little boarding-houses for 'evening dinner'. Ha! Beaches empty and cool except for a few small boys, local produce, brown all over, chubby with swimming.

Saturday June 27 1953

Another stiflingly hot day, though it can scarcely be too hot for me if I am out of London. In the afternoon to lean on the wall of Beacon Cove, watching the bodies, enjoying the sun and the breeze. Reading my newspaper.

After tea Lalla and I had intended to go out for a walk, and take a glance at the local Carnival on the way. M. decided to come. We went out and into the first crowds, M. refused to go further in case she 'met people'. We were now about 100 yards from the house. I suggested that we go by back streets to the front. 'No', we'll miss the procession.' I said 'It starts at 7.0.' She said, 'Well, it's now twenty to seven, so it must have started by now.' I went off by myself. Really too provoking. The Carnival was an absurdly inadequate affair. Lorries in their heavy lines insufficiently concealed with crepe paper and home-written placards, lumbered past with their load of perspiring enthusiasts, many men en travestie, kicking hairy legs in the air, women flaunting hippy trousers. Most of the costumes were soiled if professional and hopelessly skimpy if amateur. There was a ghastly little collection of elevenish drum majorettes marching about and singing 'The Soldiers of the Queen'. The first prizes were frequent, cups and cards of merit everywhere in the short procession.

Sunday June 28 1953

A curiously happy day. I think because the preacher morning and evening was a good man. Not a good preacher but a good man. He was a missionary named Mellor, a stoutish man heavily tanned, with nondescript features, but the marks of a selfless and tolerant spirit on his face. Both his face and that of his wife bore the same marks of quiet patience, of good sense, and of strong faith. And although he was not a particularly good speaker, he was able to give to the simplest phrase a depth and integrity impossible to anyone who had not tested such simple phrases in real life. It was terrible to hear him tell of the splendid lack of colour bar in Nigeria and the horrible cage it makes of South Africa. The Dutch Church there would not join a Council of Churches because a negro minister would offer a prayer during its inauguration. Terrible.

Monday June 29 1953

A postcard from Ju, who is apparently in Switzerland, with 'Henry V', which opens at the O.V. tomorrow night. I have certainly missed the boat in all directions. Never mind, all I can do is 'chin up and carry on' though to what I still don't know. I wish Ju could have found time to write to me since April. I am so afraid that while I fitted in with his life he loved me and

was fond of me, but now that everything has gone wrong, he will gradually lose interest. Surely he must have known I was aching for a letter from him, telling me all his news. He has not written properly since I saw him at Bristol, only the short note with the money. True it was a great grief to him that I was unhappy, judging by the note. But I have needed him so much the last two months, and there has been no sign. But I must not even think disloyalty.

Tuesday June 30 1953

Another hot stifling day. I am writing at the open window in my silk pyjamas, with a bright yellow, bright orange and grey-blue stripe. The sky is thick with cloud, and the night is very quiet

The summer has always been an unlucky time for me. Indecision overwhelms me, and day after golden day goes by with the haze not dispelled

Friday July 3 1953

Close, dull, and cloudy today.

I often wonder whether I should give way to myself and write in descriptions of all the carnal pleasures of the day. What meaty reading it might be, though they are only in the mind!

The sands and the tennis-courts are such wonderful sources of smooth limbs and sweet smiles that I really wouldn't know where to begin. I must say one thing in my diary always does strike me, it's quite extraordinary pomposity and self-centredness. The funny thing is that I am really quite amusing in company and in letters.

Oh! well, I must be funnier inside too.

Saturday July 4 1953

Hot and close yet again, with nothing to do and nobody to see. Spent a pleasant quarter of an hour picking raspberries, pushing between the thick green stems to find the dark red berries hanging in the thick green cool beneath the leaves.

I shall hardly know how to behave when I see people again.

Have just tried copying out one of the Trollope's letters, taking up almost a page of print, find that it fills a page and a half.

Sunday July 5 1953

A bright sunny morning very hot. At ten-thirty, after my bath, to the shop past the police-station for my morning papers. I sometimes wonder what the many lonely months miles from good talk and interesting living would have been like without these two cheap yet thorough papers. In the Army, when I was broadly speaking completely alone, again at home

before and during Cambridge, and now these last months these are the only means which I can afford of keeping in touch with books, plays, pictures, music, sport, through comment of a decently informed kind. I should like a great many more papers, and far far far more books before I would consider myself at all well-informed, but this is the absolute minimum, and not a bad minimum either.

The services today were particularly trying, very much more obtrusively Methodist, and D's sermons both rather distasteful to me.

Monday July 6 1953

Very close and damp and sultry. really we might be in for a typhoon. M. went out to tea today, to someone who has been ill with shingles, and who is still in great pain. She meant to take some flowers, but left them behind. When she came back for them, I heard her stamp through the hall into the kitchen where L. was quietly ironing, and say impatiently, 'There they are', rather as if somebody had hidden them, and then, 'Why didn't you see them? Standing there ironing when I'm halfway down the hill.'

She tries every night to do the children's crossword in the Evening News. Every night she has to give in, and ask D. or me for every clue.

Tuesday July 7 1953

Damp, cloudy, depressing. This morning Mrs. Shrubsall came to visit us. Mrs. S. an active plump thick-spectacled woman of eighty-five or six, with a large flowered hat, is one of D.'s greatest cap-feathers and the widow of the man who owned most of the Pearl Assurance Company. She belongs to that great class of 'impossible but plenty of money' occupied by Rank. Mrs. Kendall, the Nutts, Philip Jackson, and now the Appleyards. There have been examples in every circuit. Mrs. S. is old and deaf, but still perky. Not perky enough however to notice the proprietary air with which she was regarded by four pairs out of the six pairs of eyes in the room. With her she had brought her present Minister - at Reigate - and his wife, called Dixon, he small, smug, eye on the main chance, she large, bouncing, overbearing, immensely pretentious. D., M., and the Dixons did most of the talking, and very comic, too. They fought a polite battle for Shrubsall intimacy. D. and M. got, I think, slightly the better of it, because they could bring forward nostalgic memories of baby fingers clutching at the pearls and diamond rings, which the Dixons could not match, their son being grown by the time they met Mrs. S. Odious, the whole picture. This afternoon telegram from Tennents-Oliviers. Oh! the pain of trying again.

Wednesday July 8 1953

Off tomorrow, so tonight snowed under with question after question. 'What time are you going?' (seven times) 'Why aren't you taking any sandwiches?', 'Where will you get your lunch?', 'When are you coming back?' 'You can't wear that dressing-gown at Robin's (whom they have never met.) 'Hadn't you better book you seat?' And of course endless questions about the audition itself. It's all natural concern, I suppose, but I do wish that it could on the surface be more casual. It makes conversation so difficult and strange when everything they

say expresses real concern in that incontinent way. No wonder their tempers are so frayed. If I mention how much easier it would be to be a little more casual, it's, 'Well, being casual hasn't got you very far.' which is only too true.

It appals me to think that I have allowed my life to shrink to the permanent proportions of small bickers of this kind.

Thursday July 9 1953

In London - and back in the old drifting. Did nothing - saw nobody except Robin. What is the matter with me?

Monday July 13 1953

On Friday I went along to the Globe for the audition, which was on the usual lines, although the part suited me rather better than most. Read a scene with a small very thin young woman, with reddish-brown hair, a thin pointed face, and blue eyes with thick black lashes. She was vaguely familiar, read badly and seemed nervous. We went out for a drink and it turned out that she was Helena Hughes, the juvenile lead of the Gate theatre in Dublin. I remember seeing her in Belfast, with Michael MacLiammoir in his play 'Where Stars Walk' and very good she was, too. We had a long and on both sides extremely self centred conversation. That is as it should be, I suppose. In the pub we met Bernard Keefe, very genial and prosperous-looking. After a warm invitation from her to get in touch with her at her mother's (she is Herbert Hughes' daughter), I went off to lunch. Found Mary there already, very smart in red and black. Talked amiably until Robin turned up. He always looks untidy. Is he never going to get a new suit? We waited a little for Susan; I went out into Park Lane to look for her, looked to right and left, anywhere except in front of me where she had just arrived in a taxi, very smart in black with a little white hat. We had a merry enough lunch, and when I had arranged to spend the night with Mary I felt more comfortable. Susan and I went off to her bank in the King's Road, which we reached at two minutes to three, and then bought a cake for tea. She had taken the afternoon off to be with me. We went back to the flat, on the top floor of a peeling tired-looking house just at the end of Kensington High Street. Quite airy and light and pleasant. She shares it with two other maddening girls, one Laurie Fleming's sister a tall excitable didactic girl, and Penny something a fair soft insipid amateur singer. She soon rushed away to make up as a Red Indian and sing in the chorus of 'Hiawatha' at the Albert Hall. Susan and I desultorily wasted the rest of the evening talking, (she told me all about her engagement, and I must say it sounds terribly unreal, I shall be surprised if she marries him) and dropping into a News Theatre. We then walked to the old Vic to find Ju. The performance just being over, up we went to his dressing-room, where he was talking to John B. How nice! We all went for a drink at the pub opposite, and then Susan left us and the three of us went to the Lyons (Strand) Brasserie, all bright with 'Spanish' decoration, and a 'Gypsy' band, with (apparently) Margaret Lockwood leading them. Ju, I thought, was looking terrible, his face gaunt and grubby, his hair very long (for the play, I know, but that doesn't make it look better), so that I was almost glad when I discovered next day that he had been suffering from toothache, and still was. He certainly did not seem at all himself, and I was very worried. Indeed he hardly seemed pleased to see me. John B. was encouraging, saying that he would have had me for the Dauphin, but thought I wouldn't like

it. Then I was left alone with Ju, but he seemed very tired, so we quickly walked home. I left him, feeling very depressed at once by his plans and my feeling of being cut off from him.

I had talked so long that I had left it too late to get my bag from the Piccadilly Cloak Rooms, so I slept naked and came down to breakfast feeling very second-hand. Still that does not matter with Colin and Mary. I skipped off to get the bag, feeling very scruffy in the bright sunshine. After a shave and a bath and clean clothes, I was more myself, and went off to meet Ju in better spirits. We found a little more to say, but he still had bad toothache, and we sat not altogether at my ease in the Riverside Restaurant on the Festival site, with the river swirling about at the edge of the table, sitting in extremely odd-cup-shaped modern chairs. After lunch, he went off to his matinee, I to the park and the pictures. Dorothy Reynolds had asked me back to the Old Vic for tea, so there I went at five thirty to the little actors' canteen, for some very dull sandwiches. When these were finished, I went up to sit in D.R.'s dressing-room, with her and Ju. She laid out her long gaunt length on an expanding chair, threw her thick mass of odd tawny hair back, and said that she was going to relax and the best way to do that was for me to pay compliments. She leaves me slightly ill at ease as yet, as very few people do because she does not hesitate to deflate if one thinks it necessary. And with Ju there of course, who knows all my secrets, there is no putting her off. It occurs to me now as it did not then, how good it was of her and Ju to spend all that time, nearly an hour and a half, talking about me, when they are worn out, at the end of a long season and between two shows. She wanted to hear parts of my diary and very funny they thought them! and everything about home. She was most sympathetic in an unobtrusive way, and particularly about the times when Ju didn't write. She said she would write to me about that, because I had truly got it all wrong. All in all, I felt much better. I left them at 7.30, saying my train was 8.50, so that I wouldn't be in their way any longer, particularly on a last night.

Thursday July 16 1953

My twenty-seventh birthday yesterday.

M. while talking about cricket yesterday brought out to D. that she and I had been listening to the commentaries and that we had heard 'duck and slow leg and outside and over and everything.'

Friday July 17 1953

M. a terrible night last night, and felt very washed-out all day. Spent most of the day writing birthday letters, though most turned out to be real letters, so were not so boring.

Have been reading L.H. Amery's 'England Before the Storm', and find some of his chapters extremely difficult to get through, because I know so little already of what he is writing about. What is the use of knowing his opinion of R Kemal Ataturk if you know next to nothing to begin with about K.A.? For the rest, Amery has a most lively and penetrating mind, extremely similar to Churchill in his judgements, though far less massive and stately in his approach. His view is broad but not sweeping. His style is vivid, smooth but by no means contains rolling periods.

Have just attempted to read Stephen Spenders' 'World Within World', an odious book. His generation was certainly an unsavoury sandalled and shirt sleeved affair. They really seem to have believed that they need not believe in anything, that they could live empirically; the result has been that they still believe themselves to be as up to date as ever they were because they are absorbing everything on its merits, while really they have missed the adoption by our generation of a new series of ideals.

Saturday July 18 1953

This morning there was a letter in the post from Hugh Beaumont of Tennents offering me the part of Footman and understudy in 'The Sleeping Prince.' After waiting since November 1951, at last I have a part in a Tennent production. Do you know, I really don't know what I think of feel. Relaxation first, relief of a tension I scarcely knew was there. I am sure that this is a sign to me that I am to go on, but a sign also that it is no use slacking as I have done so much and so long. I am sure that God wants me to be on the stage, but not to drift onto it. That I suppose is why the wait has been so hard and long.

Tonight I rang up Colin and Mary, and Susan, both of whom were very happy for me, and sweet about it I tried to ring up Julian, the one I most wanted to tell, and could not get hold of him. Dearest Ju, dearest of all my friends, now I can feel at one with him again. I wish I could see his television show tomorrow, but I don't think that would be possible. The church might hear of my watching a play on a Sunday and object.

I cannot really believe it yet, and so strange too that it should happen here, where everything has always gone wrong. But I must not be so stupidly superstitious, only thank God that nobody except me knows of those superstitions, and thank D. for what has been in a way a remarkable forbearance,

Sunday July 19 1953

Still the same curious stillness, yet breaking through every now and then are the high spirits that have been held back for eighteen months. Tonight Julian's 'The Duenna' was done on television and done to death, butchered by those wretched cameras and that horrible hard lighting. The worst thing about television to me is that an actor is not in control of his audience, and cannot demand and hold their attention at will. Much of the stage-set business was useless, and should have been changed. Really the only success was the music, which with television's good sound, came through superbly. And very pretty, too! Very odd was the change in weight in performance. Gerald Cross as Meddoza was as bad as on the stage, but far more right for television than the rest of the cast. Poor James hardly got a look-in and Dorothy R was ruined by the camera angles.

Monday July 20 1953

This evening to visit the Miss Todds and Miss Stephenson who live opposite us. Miss. S. has just been ill, but looks none the worse for it. Hearty chain-smoker, great traveller, smart grey hair, firm figure, has lived with younger Miss Todd, sweet, gentle, kind, beautiful manners, and they have been joined by the older Miss Todd, very small, very shrivelled, rather acidulated. They lend us the cheap novels and detective stories.

PAGES MISSING

Mrs. M and I have had already two arguments for stop talking she will not. First was about the theatre in which she is very interested; she has a troupe of girl players, and trains them to perform one act plays for drama festivals. This experience enables her to pass on to me many good tips about production, acting and make up which might otherwise not come my way. This information she inter-lauded with such helpful points as 'It's possible to rehearse too much, you know, and then you get stale. This means that you don't feel it properly.'

The other argument was about religion, conducted on her side at least (I hope) with downright impertinence. Asking me why I wasn't a Methodist, and saying that there was no 'spirituality' in liturgical worship. I said that that was condemning a large and perhaps even the greater and certainly part of the Christian Church. She said, 'I don't care, there can't be anything spiritual about it.' Then she told D. we'd been having a jolly argument.

Friday July 24 1953

Another hectic day, with comings and goings. One of the goings was Mrs. Mitchell, happily for us. One night = a month as far as her tables of measure go.

On the sea-front we met David Ashman and his parents, a nice quiet Congregational Minister and his wife. He came forward to meet me with much the same guarded air as I felt I must be showing towards him, a lack of interest in his family's friends. He is an actor, and at Perth Rep. He is, in a way, good-looking, but rather 'pansy' and somehow limp. I know at once whether I must be on my keenest guard (or no, not guard) on my keenest form, to talk with anyone I meet, because their mind and personality is strong and active. I also know whether they are more or less equal to me or stupider than me. I felt very much in control of him, and felt that he had little with which to impress either the public or an agent.

PAGES MISSING

Thursday July 30 1953

Hot and damp. On our usual morning shopping, I saw a couple of large barrels outside one of the fish shops across the pavement from the marble slab. Full of enormous heaving claw-waving crabs, crusted with limpets and barnacles, looking like fossils.

This afternoon Mrs. Callard and Pauline Callard, Leslie's mother and sister, came to tea. House in an uproar of preparation worth the arrival of the Queen en suite for a fortnight. Pauline C. very typical intelligent (?) spinster. Intelligent enough to know the pass-words. Had met Patrick McLaughlin. Wonder what he made of her.

Friday July 31 1953

By this morning's post, while they were all out at a funeral, arrived a long letter from Dorothy Reynolds. A wonderful kind, understanding letter, telling me that Ju is thoroughly confident

of me and as I have always 'known in my heart' as she says, I am firmly ensconced as a permanent adjunct of his life. I doubted not his love, but my capacity to hold his love when our interests pulled apart as I had been so afraid that they might. I am not quick to believe that I am valued by anyone for myself alone, and it was this lack of self-confidence that led me to feel that failure would lay low all my attractive qualities. But I shall never doubt again. Dorothy, with her perfect taste and timing, has interceded with exactly the right touch. All my doubts and fears are removed once for all never to return.

When I got her letter, it was fortunate that I was alone. I hurried from room to room unable to keep still, my heart beating hard, catching my breath in excitement at every step. I am lucky to have found such a friend, such a friend as is given to few men to find and keep.

Saturday August 1 1953

D. has hired a microphone and rigged up some loudspeakers on the front of the church, and has been booming all over Union St. today, 'Hallo everybody! Hallo! This is the Methodist Church calling you, and hoping that you will all have a happy holiday, especially the children and young people. But don't forget to come and worship, because true happiness can only be found in worship, you see. If you aren't a regular...

PAGES MISSING

Monday August 3 1953

Bank Holiday - boiling hot and crowds everywhere. Except for an uncomfy little walk this afternoon, we drew the blinds and slept.

Really a holiday resort is intolerable when it's full and you live there.

Tuesday August 4 1953

Spent a lot of this evening trying to write to Dorothy Reynolds. Found it difficult, for she is so true and straight that nothing but the most careful vigilance will suffice when writing of serious things.

Wednesday August 5 1953

Tomorrow Donald, Joan and children arrive. What hell really! Lovely for them of course, but oh! the work it makes for poor L. who has had to move out of her room, and as if that were not enough, moved all the furniture round and lugged a great bed down from upstairs. Fortunately this year I was here to help her, but generally there is nobody except M. thinking of novel accidents for the children to have and guarding accordingly. Another stifflingly hot day. I don't mind it, of course, except that one's clothes do get so wet with sweat. I finished my letter to Dorothy Reynolds this evening and was fairly satisfied with it. Had to be calculating about it, because it contained so much that might sound selfish or silly or crude

unless carefully put. Also wrote at long long last to Michael Bishop. The town is full of trippers, wearing almost nothing, their only merit.

Friday August 7 1953

Family arrived. Joan and Donald as ever. Christina (whom I will not call 'Christeen' ugh) taller in hideous brown canvas shoes and no socks, so that she looks like a slum child. After a term or two at the council school, she talks like one, too. Horrible worse than I could ever have thought it. Margaret a dream of little girl beauty, big blue eyes, golden hair, plump and appealing. But I think c. will grow up the nicer and indeed the prettier girl. M. is too like her mother, who spent the evening playing for me, against my will, and screaming bits of the B. minor Mass. She came to the Crucifixus and said, 'O this is a lovely bit. Makes me feel quite weepy.'

Am reading Rose M's 'World My Wilderness'. Very good, so far. Clear, clean fresh, beautifully controlled; the problems of what amounts to a displaced person, and her fight to stay out of civilised society.

Saturday August 8 1953

Armed truce as usual. M. a nervous wreck, feeling the fears for the children that their parents so unsympathetically (to her) do not, sensing part of D's L's and my disgust at Joan's manners, and all her usual fears magnified twice over by lack of sleep because of sharing a bedroom with D.

Monday August 10 1953

1.30 a.m.

Why do I do the disloyal discreditable things I do do. Spent an hour and a half, talking with Donald and Joan about all the shortcomings of D, M, and home. Very wrong of me, especially since I owe those shortcomings the very roof over my head. Apart from that, it's more shaming still that I allow myself to talk at all to them only for the sake of an audience. Shameful, but what is the use of saying that now? It is personally distasteful to me because I don't at all approve of criticism of a person you dislike to another person you dislike; such criticism must only be made at all for the sake of advice or consolation that one is not the monster of ingratitude one sometimes suspects one is, and Donald and Joan can offer me neither. Still it could be even worse. I could talk to D and M about how awful D and J are. This I do with Lalla. How glad I shall be when I am away from all of them but her whom I love better than all! D and J are so very much what they think they are not - products of their environment and nothing else. Of course I think I am not such, and oh! the horror! if I am.

Oh! I am sick of it all, and too tired to write more, tired of all these resentments and cross-resentments which really don't involve me when I am honest.

Tuesday August 11 1953

What a long hot dull dusty month August is! And up through the floorboards comes the sound of D telling M off. All my clothes are frayed. The house is much too full, and there are still three weeks to go before I go to London. I went for a walk tonight with the new

biography of George V to read. Excellent. Up on the Rock Walk a trite arrangement of paths and bushes, Torquay looks prettier.

Thursday August 13 1953

To 'Call Me Madam' which has arrived early in Torquay. Excellent musical, happy, stylish (in the American way.) Just a photograph of the stage show, thank goodness. Ethel Merman a wonderful star, star and star again. Clean, polished, centre target performance with nothing missed and nothing left to chance.

Thank goodness that Donald and Joan are leaving, D. tomorrow, J. the day after. He is so didactic, worse even than me, and so materialist, she so thoroughly ill-mannered, egotistical to an almost pathological degree; she has a most unwomanly bounce and a most unpleasing forwardness, and that most irritating of all conversational tricks, she caps all one's remarks. If something is cheap in Torquay, it is cheaper in Bath, if more expensive it is of much better quality. The new washing powders are better than soap because she uses them, and nothing about the Coronation has been unrevealed to her because she saw it on television. Intolerable.

This is not any form of sour grapes. They hang on every word I say, and scream with laughter at every out of date third rate revue joke I quote them. J. remembers everything I have ever remarked about my friends, and repeats it with odious familiarity.

Saturday August 15 1953

Eight years since the war in Japan ended, and I was at Stratford. Joan went off this morning in a cloud of good-will. The children were with me up here, with the contents of the play-cupboard all over the floor. Sweet but exhausting. Christina cleared up everything afterwards, although she is only six.

Monday August 17 1953

To the Appleyards for coffee. So bored and sleepy I am going straight to bed, but must remember to write about them tomorrow, for they are fascinatingly awful.

Tuesday August 18 1953

I said that I would write about the Appleyards and so I must, although we had Charlie and Gwyneth, L's brother and sister-in-law in, and they are worth pages. However they are here for a fortnight.

Mr. Appleyard, a thin would-be elegant man of seventy-odd, with thin white hair and an excellent set of plastic teeth, is a rich motor-car manufacturer (ret'd.) He already has a very grown up family including a son who wins a lot of those absurd motor races one is always hearing about as going on for days in France. He has married as his second wife (against so much family opposition that they were forced to leave Leeds, the city of their success, to

live here) Miss Jean Whittle, spinster aged twenty-four of Northwood, M'sex. She has already borne him a son, since when he has had to undergo a serious prostate gland operation.

She is tall, with pretty curly black hair, goodish skin, and features all slightly sub-standard adding up to quite pretty. She is a nice suburban girl, and I'm glad to say does not pretend to be anything else. Whether she has married him for pure love, I don't know. I feel she simply can't have. It is certainly true that she treats him most beautifully and all the awkwardness comes from his side. The sight of him clutching at her youth and strength is terrible. He talks of nothing but her and her son, whom everyone mistakes for his grandson. He has put her into this hideous house, stuck on the side of a very pretty cliff, with, I must admit, a ravishing view of a huge love rock, the Thatcher, set in sea that is almost always blue. The house, a horrid little villa, is like a series of Maple windows, with an arid pink drawing-room, varnished red-tiled floors, and masses of flowers arranged with sickeningly good taste. He pays her fulsome compliments whatever the time or company. She passed him a dish of crystallised fruits, and said, 'A sweet, darling?' He said, 'No, thank you, my darling. I have the only sweet I want.' We were obliged to bear the loud confidences of 'Jean's' mother, Mrs. Whittle, an assertive plump harried woman, wearing a black dress that was too young for her, and enormous paste rings. We were also obliged to sit from half-past ten until a quarter past eleven watching garish technicolour films of mother and child. As M. and D. were both so tired that they dropped off to sleep in the dark, I had to laugh and talk for three, which my enemies would say I do anyway!

Christina and Bodkin are very badly brought up. Obedient, pretty, but they have never heard the stories of Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty or Beauty and the Beast, and don't want to.

Wednesday August 19 1953

England won the Ashes today, for the first time since 1926. I wonder if that is a good omen - my birth year - and this year has turned into a year of good fortune indeed. I do pray that I shall be able to go on working for some time. It is no use my pretending that I can work without a job.

Children fractious and exhausting today. Christina needs a lot of love. I daresay the first eighteen months have left their mark.

Thursday August 20 1953

D. and M.'s thirty-fourth wedding anniversary. L. told me today that poor little Christine screamed loudest and longest once when L. said to her over some little misdemeanour, 'I don't want you. You go away until you are a better girl.' A thing which a normal child would interpret as it was meant, and stay the other side of the garden or the beach until its naughtiness had been outlived. C. on the other hand screamed, and in the open road. Which shows, I fear, a lack of real affection somewhere, at best the result of her first unhappy eighteen months, at worst her father and mother's essential hardness and smallness coming out in their treatment of her. I would not like to say in what proportions the cause is made up. I am afraid that this lack is only too likely to be covered by the brazen cheekiness and complete lack of dignity so constantly exemplified before her.

Saturday August 22 1953

It is strange that I have felt more used to home ever since I heard about my job. I suppose it is the natural reaction to a new sphere of possibly frightening action, or perhaps that I can accept it all easier, now that I know I am to leave it so soon. It's a month since I heard, so that I go next week!

Have a pain in my neck tonight and feel slightly 'coldy'. Hope that it is nothing. How awful if it were.

Sunday August 23 1953

I have decided to go to Colin and Mary, if they will have me, on Friday next, so that this will be my last Sunday here. Such a long long time. Nearly seven whole months I have languished.

Monday August 24 1953

Thoroughly out of humour all day.

In the evening went out for a walk, through the twilight, a very dramatic twilight, too, with huge dusky clouds on top of me all the way, giving to everyone the air of being just about to be unwilling participants in a cataclysmic Act of God.

How I shall hate reading this entry in six months! How I hate me today.

Wednesday August 26 1953

Here am I, two days away from leaving for London, and with no excitement whatever. I think you know that this house and these people are insulated against excitement by an immense weight of trivialities. I went out this morning to read all the reviews of Richard Burton's 'Hamlet' at Edinburgh, in the public library. Even such a vicarious thrill sent me away, foolishly shivering with excitement, wanting to skip. Here they talked about the strange number of funerals at Paighton. I suppose that emotion unshared is at once made to seem unreal. Certainly I cannot even by looking at the contract, believe in the good fortune that has come to me.

Still no word about Monday's rehearsal. I see in the Mail that all is to be hush-hush and that Alfred Lunt is to produce. Hope it will not be so hush-hush that I won't hear!

Thursday August 27 1953

An exhausting and irritating day, trying to pack with Miss Schroeder to tea, and a Todd visit in the evening, all on edge was I by the end.

So here it is at last, the last evening once more. Yet again I set out on the road to fame(?) and fortune (sic) I hope and pray that it will indeed prove to be the beginning of a decent and honourable career.

Saturday August 29 1953

Could not write last night. Slept in Colin and Mary's drawing-room, and nowhere to write. Now down at Oxted, where I enjoy myself with old theatrical photos and songs.

Rang up Tennents' this morning and found I was not wanted this week. They might have told me. Still it's done now, and I daresay they may want me before the week is out.

David Hobday played 'Carousel'. How it brought back Geoffrey's room.

Monday August 31 1953

In the Woods' in Tulse Hill. House nicer outside than in, avoids absolute monotony by being covered with ivy from roof to garden. People - Mrs. W., large, kind is a brisk vulgar impersonal matron of a Borstal institution way, Mr. W. affected, weak, Mr. W. jun more affected, weaker, has just announced himself by walking in here at 11.30 and saying he never talks at breakfast. Must try not to get to know any of them too well. It would be dishonest of me.

To Anastasia tonight after dinner with Robin T. (as ever) and Peter Lewis. Really P.L. has a strange fascination for me, partly because he so obviously adores every word I say; that must be taken literally. He loves to hear me speak. A message was waiting for me today - rehearsal tomorrow 10.30 Haymarket. What a thing! Oh dear, almost worse than an audition.

Tuesday September 1 1953

This morning at ten thirty to the Haymarket for the first rehearsal. From beginning to end - fascinating.

My first real focus (my eyes were too dazed to see much at the beginning) was on Vivien Leigh. She is medium height, slim almost thin, beautifully proportioned and exquisitely pretty in everything she does. Her face is arranged in parallels, each jaw-bone running parallel to each cheekbone, with that tip-tilted nose and famous three-cornered smile in the middle of it. She was wearing a dusty pink black patterned dress, dolman sleeves, three-quarter length, with a very full skirt springing from a broad black belt and plain black court shoes. Olivier himself, a tallish, heavy man, with a very slight paunch, and a face whose sullen lines are quite contradicted by kind eyes and smile of great sweetness, was kind enough to greet me and say that I had won the job entirely on my own merit. I still wish D's letter had never been sent. I am sure he will search for signs of Methodism unconsciously. He is not in himself a striking man, but a very complete one. He was wearing a double-breasted light grey two-piece worsted suit and long blue tie, both of rather American cut. Terence Rattigan, to look at a young slightly bloated playboy, came in and sat quietly for a

little while. Martita Hunt, with whom I had a long talk, has of course always been one of my favourites. A tall almost grotesque figure, with a huge bony nose, red hair and a painfully almost frighteningly fascinating smile, she has a crackly voice, ironic and beautifully controlled.

The rehearsal was of enormous interest. On its second day further than I have ever got, and yet just as I would do it, too. No mystery for me, I am happy to say. I can write no longer on my knee. Will continue at C and M's tomorrow.

Thursday September 3 1953

More days of rehearsal, and oh! what a marvellous change from those terrible 'Treasure on Pelican' days! Today V. Leigh, who has to hum and dance a step or two, had William Chappell, Leslie Bridgewater and Vivian Ellis round her, taking her through it. She is fascinating, always catching one's eye (all the cast, of course) and smiling, making one feel 'Ah! she likes me.' The whole production is so efficient, that already we have been able to have a run through. These artificial comedies are no joke, however, having only a sofa, a few chairs and half a dozen characters to play with.

Had a long talk with Jeremy Spenser's mother. He is the brilliant boy who was in 'The Innocents', the only child player I have ever liked. She is hideous, with an enormous broad Jewy face, once beautiful. Jeremy is unbelievably handsome, dark, rather chubby, with a pretty smile. A clever boy, and still looks fourteen at sixteen. What am I going to do about digs?

Thursday September 10 1953

It is now very late at night, in the room Susan found for me in Oakley St., in the flat of an odd warped-figured girl called Jean Wallerstein, who works with her in the F.O. I have just finished a lot of letters, so cannot write all this week's affairs now. Will try to do so at the weekend. Oh! God, the pleasure of it all will be too much for me. I need your help in good times much more than in bad.

Wednesday September 16 1953

(So much has happened every day that it has mounted up to such an extent that I have never felt up to it. Laziness, really. Day by day remarks must go by the board. I will try and sum it all up, to today.)

By now, the third week of rehearsals, tempers are fraying a little, and the glamour is wearing off, showing the far more fascinating reality underneath. My main...

PAGE MISSING

... part with L.O., instead of getting on with acting it. It is wrong technically at the moment - too much of the wrong sort of pace, and too little plugging (or perhaps too little awareness) of the pompous correctness that makes the character funny. Paul Hardwick, the 'Major-Domo',

is tall, thick-set rather awkward high-shouldered build, thick brown hair, nearly black, a turned up nose, and a pleasant smile. Full of gossip, good-humoured, good weak fellow.

Rosamund Greenwood, a sweet woman, is tall, with a tiny head, ginger hair with a chignon and a fringe, no chin, and a long curious nose like a mouse. Her clothes are either dowdy or wildly girlish (she is about 40) white blouses with yellow pinafores, or curtain-material coat and skirt with white shoes. Daphne Newton is the sort of woman who seems to be formidable on the first meeting, because years in the theatre have familiarised her with the correct catchpenny smart answers. She is helpless in a real conversation. Peter Barkworth is a bit of a 'stodge' - nice but a 'stodge'.

The evenings have been full of play and films and happy meetings. Last night was particularly happy, when Nigel, Toppet and I went to see 'Roman Holiday' an enchanting film. I was in very high spirits all night, when I don't think I am very nice, but they laughed a lot so that was all right. Another night, the 9th, I think, was John Wilders' last. It was faintly spoilt for me by Robin, who made a beastly remark, but the talk with John was delightful. He is much improved by this decisive break in his life, and I hope America will do more for him than drifting on in Cambridge has done.

Altogether I wish I had written every day to note down all the little things that are what diaries are here to record. How L.O. sneezed enormously, emerging from behind the handkerchief to say...

PAGE MISSING

... real old prodder. Big bags under his eyes, hearty good-time boy. Nasty.

Rehearsal today great fun. Lunchtime met Geoffrey again in the 'Golden Lion', and Julian came in. Had a long talk and a lot to drink. He is just the same, very nice and jolly, but all his ideas remain tepid and second-rate. As far as I can see at present, I should say that he will never have any real success in the theatre. Heard today from Mrs. Spenser that there was a little lunch-party at the Buckstone, with Martita Hunt, Peter Barkworth, Richard Wattis and Paul Hardwick. When I first heard of this, I thought 'Oh! dear - left out.' However, Mrs. S. said it was a bitchy one, and when I asked Peter B., he would not say anything. I dropped a word to Paul H. that Mrs. S. was rather a gabby girl, and he was grateful, saying that the lunch had been insanely indiscreet, and he had not said a word. I noticed that Peter B. defended the Buckstone, as if I had blamed the Buckstone for the bitchiness. I am glad that I never became a member when Ken Tynan mentioned it. Julian tells me that K.T. is now rather a sad figure, all of whose friends have deserted him. I must go and see him. I noticed how three 1/2 pints of beer knocked me out today. What a long abstinence can do!

When I came out of the theatre, V.L. was just ahead of me, an exquisite figure in an enormous tent coat of cream and brown check tweed. She stepped into her enormous Rolls under a huge umbrella held by her chauffeur and, with a brilliant smile, called 'Good night, Angus!'

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 22

Angus Mackay

Being the eighteenth.

From September 18 1953

To December 13 1953

PAGES MISSING

Thursday September 24 1953

10.40 a.m.

Yes, it was booze really, though Barry Carter was nicer than I expected, to me, that is. Looking very smart and at-the-bar-ish. The runthroughs were more like dress-rehearsals. Everyone dressed, and I must say that the women's clothes are bliss. Vivien Leigh's one white dress, of which she has two spares, is of dead white crepe, with a simple draped fichu bodice, lace insertions on the shoulder hanging down on the arm with little tassels, the waist swathed, below a corsage filled in with lace, a full flowing skirt, hanging in a straight Empire line at the front, slit, with a fine edging of ruffled lace, to show an accordion-pleated petticoat beneath; the skirt, which has a fish-tail train is edged with pearls and rock-crystals. She wears with it, a baby blue silk stole, and has a blonde wig arranged in a Grecian-Empire style. I forget that hanging from four big buttons at the waist behind, is a long rectangular panel of crepe, double, hanging over the train to the floor. This girlish ensemble would be not easy to carry over at twenty-five. At thirty-nine, it is a triumph and a real tribute to her make-up, her acting, and her self-preservation that never, or almost never is there a shadow of misgiving about watching her in it.

Martita Hunt has three outfits, all outre and sensational. Her first, worn with a bright red wig dressed a la Alexandra, is of magenta satin with jet embroidery, and a wine velvet cloak. The design of the dress is full and flowing in the style of the period, but of course depends for its effect on the daring clash of the three colours. Worn with a high tiara of emeralds and diamonds, and a choker of eight or nine rows of pearls, an enormous emerald and diamond necklace, with pavure, bracelets and ring to match, she is an astonishingly regal figure, carrying off the vulgarity of it all in exactly the way that Royalty does. Her coronation dress is less of a surprise, because one expects her to appear in another dazzling affair, and she does. Bright yellow this time with a long orange-yellow shoulder train, as well as a long train on the dress. For the last Act, her travelling-clothes, are dominated by a magnificent blue straw tricorne hat, with six osprey plumes rising from the brim. With this she wears a long tight harem style skirt of blue satin, with a tunic coat, very full of blue velvet. Her ladies in waiting wear real dresses of the period, deliberately nondescript, with vast beehive hats, and long trailing ostrich feather boas. Miss Inescourt's costume is almost the greatest triumph of

all. Looking like Julia Neilson, Ellen Terry (in her later years) Zena Dave, and Lily Langtry, all rolled into one, she appears in a tight skirt of magenta silk, with a very full tunic coat of deep purple velvet, fastened at the hip with silver embroidery, this coat ornamented at sleeves and throat with extremely full organdie accordion-pleated ruffles. On her head is an incredible hat, of burnt straw in picture style, quite two feet across, heaped with almost a dozen enormous artificial roses, the whole balanced precariously on a wig of artfully tinted gold hair.

The men all look smart, but are of course all wearing predictable clothes, even Olivier's uniforms giving the general effect of reality, only the details allowing for imagination.

After the rehearsal, (which was rather spoiled for me by Peter Barkworth being away, making me seem to be full of mistakes) I had something to eat and, then on an impulse, went to the Apollo to try and see Peter W. I arrived...

PAGES MISSING

... cleverly (though without meaning to) exactly as the curtain came down, and we went out for a drink. We drank not very much, three or four pints each, but Younger's is strongish beer, and I am out of training, and tiddly I was a bit. We had a long long talk. He is far more open than he used to be, far more reconciled to himself, and much better for it. I think on the whole that drunk as he and I were, I got more out of him than I would otherwise have done, and than he did out of me. He told me all about his time at Cambridge, and all one's suspicions were fully confirmed. This openness of his is an improvement in one way, but a degeneration in another. He seems to me to have become meaner and more greedy, disillusioned without having turned his disillusionment into real experience. He is a typical unsuccessful actor, back-biting and believing in his own gossip. Or rather, no longer able to distinguish the real from the false. That is where I have always felt a division between me and so many like him. I adore gossiping and I think I'm rather good at it, but I never think of myself as a bitch because I almost never say a nasty thing about somebody, unless I believe it. It does not seem to me to be bitchy to use one's utmost powers to describe a bad performance, any more than a good one. We walked all the way to Palace Gate, where I caught a forty-nine.

The perilous danger of the position of such people as Peter, is that they always pretend there are things and people who are outside the debunking range. As the years go on, they become just dictaphones of chitchat. Oh God! send me Ju soon. He and I must cling together.

11.30 p.m.

I have finished up here this evening rather depressed. I wish I could trace its various stages. It may be just depression from tiredness. Let me say at once that it is mainly because of Peter Barkworth. He seems completely unimpressed by me, is himself somewhat self-satisfied, I think, and in my usual silly way, I find myself defending myself to him, and of course saying the wrong thing. In the dressing-room tonight, for example, he asked in a flat expressionless voice, whether I had learnt my understudy part. I said that I had tried, but found it very difficult without rehearsing it. Without changing his tone or expression, he then said, 'By the way, what have you done before?' Having got the whole sordid little list out, he made no comment whatever. This, analysed, is I think the absolute centre of my depression. I must say that it is a source of sadness to me how very unsuccessful I seem to be with theatre

people. Except at Bristol, where of course they were told what to think of me. They are such sheep, and as usual I am reading too much into too little, particularly at the end of a long hard dress rehearsal in which I was very little prominent! It always surprises me though what a success I am when People have heard a bit about me, and how exactly the opposite happens when they have not. Particularly as in my own life I am never affected by anything but the person.

The rehearsal went very well, really, though my make-up was too heavy. (Another little source of depression!) The small invited audience, including, among others, so I was told, John Gielgud, Sybil Thorndike, and the cast of 'Anastasia', laughed and applauded bravely, and few material things went wrong. The pace was slow, though, and the laughs of course threw people a little. Oh dear, I am sure I know as much about it as Peter B., but he doesn't think so. I wish I could think better of myself.

Friday September 25 1953

More depression at the rehearsal this morning. Felt myself very stupid with a tray of glasses on which an important movement depended. I see more clearly my own foolishness over this as the years go on, and I am glad to say that I managed largely to throw it off, by facing up to it, and seeing that it is all egotism. Whenever I see people whispering and laughing in corners, I think it must be me that they are guying. When I do something wrong, I feel that everyone must be looking and Olivier thinking how silly he was to give me the job. More and more I am full of admiration for Olivier. He works for the production so hard, and really all the wagging tongues wag only for themselves. If it were left to the, the play would be only self, self, self. It is only because Olivier is as unselfish as he is that they can make any effect at all. I must control my absurd...

PAGE MISSING

Saturday September 26 1953

So tomorrow off to M'chester. How strange, and yet I take it all for granted, and find fresh ground for complaint, as I knew I would. Restful day today, with Peter Lewis for lunch with whom I talked a lot of nonsense, and then to see Win and Kin, as nice and kind and ordinary as ever. Ken has never been to a cinema since 1930.

I found out that No. 11 Orange St. is the Pomilly Club. I must find out about it from Paul H. Still having foolish romantic thoughts which will be all gone when we come back from the tour. In the M. Guardian appeared a little note saying 'All Seats Sold for 'The Sleeping Prince.' How lovely.

Some of my nonsense to P.L. was about romance. I long to have a real go at some vice to get rid of it. I can't possibly get married for years, so why not?

Sunday September 27 1953

Manchester.

Oh what a sooty dreary ugly dismal place! My digs, in Princess Road, are quite clean and not too bad, tolerable, bearable, but I wouldn't come back if I could help it. Bed all right, but room bare, and no coat-hangers nor towels. Oh to be rich and be at a big hotel in comfort!

Quite bright and happy, though; dress rehearsal went smoothly, but was a terrible performance. Got my wig and make-up right and my glasses and tray. The journey down was long, hot and stuffy, but passed in heaps of shop with Maisie Jacobs, Vivien's Leigh's dresser. Her sister was Tallulah Bankhead's dresser for twenty years, and started at Drury Lane when Herbert Campbell and Dan Leno were still doing pantomimes there. She chattered of Winnie Melville who drank herself to death, and Margaret Bannerman, who never quite made it, and pinched everyone's husband because of it.

Dorothy Blythe tells me that it is quite definite that V.L. is a nymphomaniac.

Monday September 28 1953

Up at nine o'clock, and a beastly raw day, with rain pushing its way through the soot. I went out at half-past eleven when the rain stopped, and walked around the streets. I did find a delightful old eighteenth-century chemists' with heaps of old remedies I had not seen for years. Otherwise I thought it all very dirty, dull, and progressive.

Dress rehearsal again smooth but dull. Peter B. told me he had sent telegrams to the Oliviers and T.R. and cards to the other principals. I think that's pretentious. He is so smug about it, saying it in such a way that he makes you feel you should have done it too. I asked plump old Dorothy Blyth, and she reassured me very much, as did Paul. Well, so here we are at the first night. I wonder if it will be thrilling! We have arranged ten calls.

11.30 p.m.

There were seventeen calls. A great many calls of 'Author!', which weren't answered, and a long speech from Olivier. It was a compendious speech, everyone was thanked in the proper order, and there was the usual kiss of the hand to the audience at the end, which he has always done whenever I have seen him from the other side of the footlights. The play ran smoothly, with a good deal of applause and laughter, and was obviously very much liked. I am not sure that it is an absolute smash with tonight's audience at any rate. The actual playing time went in a flash, but there was a peculiar five minutes before the curtain went up, when everyone was standing around quite quiet and listening to the hungry roaring of the audience. I looked around at everyone, and thought that it was odd that for the moment we were all equal, that even Olivier could do no more than wait like the meanest understudy. The most unreal part was the bowing to a wildly applauding house, and feeling that one was still acting - in front the dusky 'facey' house, and the dazzling lights, and beside one, all the people who had tramped in and out of rehearsal.

Peter B. said tonight that he had been, as he called it, 'sending me up' (oh dear, he is so careful to use, and keen on, all stage slang and superstition), and that it was absolutely necessary for a reason which he would explain later. Such impertinence! Really it is about time such people made some kind of bridge between real life and the theatre.

Wednesday September 30 1953

After the understudy rehearsal on Tuesday morning, Peter B. said that we must have a drink together, and he would finish what he had started the day before. Well of course, I knew it would be unpleasant, so that I braced myself to maintain an unbroken front, and not to attempt any defence. It turned out to be all the usual things, behaving as if permanently at a cocktail party, unprofessional behaviour (talking too much) too University and so on and so on. I suddenly realised that I was not feeling at all hot or hurt as I had expected, and was pleased to think that I have developed sufficient self-confidence to withstand such an attack. If I scarcely spoke to anyone for the next fortnight, all would be right, he said. It is fascinating to me how such critics know so well what other people think, and are so ready to pass it on. He did it nicely and kindly, and I scarcely resented it at all, because I know that I have made no mistakes of a social kind but of a purely theatrical sort. Incidentally he had been talking to Peter Firth, who probably gave him grounds for feeling that I needed to be taken down a peg. Oh dear, if he but knew! Why is it that people like me, who are quivering with self-distrust, are always being taken down, while the Julians of this world whose self-confidence is of a perilous kind, seem to have it always reinforced? However, it is all over now, and I am surprised how little I have thought about it. Peter B. needs perhaps himself a teeny lecture on priggishness and complacency, for he is in danger of confusing what he does not like with bad behaviour. I wonder whether he has ever considered my opinion of him.

By the way, I dare not think what Peter F. told him about me. I imagine there is a certain amount of resentment lingering there, why, I am not sure, but I daresay there is. I suppose that now he will tell all my Cambridge friends how badly I behaved in this company. Oh! well, no rest for the wicked! How I see the point of Gerard's dislike of censoriousness now!

On Tuesday evening after the show, which had been a charity performance, we were all invited to the Buffet Supper, given by the charity concerned, the Linen and Woollen Drapers, at the Midland Hotel, where incidentally the Oliviers are staying. It was quite a good supper, but with rotten champagne. We all had a merry time, in spite of my unpopularity, particularly merry was Miss Elaine Inescourt, sitting opposite, is a tall extremely grand, extremely skittish lady of seventy-odd, who plays the Arch-Duchess Ferdinand. In her youth, she was a stately Julia Neilson or Ellen Terry beauty, and has still a beautiful carriage and the ruin of a lovely face. She calls up infinite eternities of cheaper and cheaper bed-sitting-rooms, the bagging skirts, the thinning furs. At dinner she summoned the wine waitress with a majestic wave, and said with an arch ringing tone designed to make the whole of Romano's take notice, 'Fetch me a whisky and soda.' One almost added for her, 'Let's go to the devil together Algy! Later after some surpassingly dreary speeches, the chairman proposed the Royal toast, and immediately afterwards, his voice, very loud and rather out of tune, came over the loudspeakers singing the National Anthem. In that whole vast room only Miss Inescourt joined in. With truly patriotic fervour, and an imperial vibrato, she warbled her way to the end, quite undisturbed by the purple faces and half-strangled giggles around her. The Anthem over, she marched solemnly away in her printed silk dress and ankle-strap sandals to get her tweed coat from the Ladies'.

Today has been full of matinees and things, with no time for anything else to happen. I wonder if I should tell Ju about Peter B. or not?

Friday October 2 1953

Things run along with quite pleasant rhythms, and tonight a little spice was added with the news, particularly interesting to me, that David Langton, whom Peter W. is understudying, has gone off to Montreal. How odd, as odd as Eric Porter leaving the stage for good just as he was getting some real offers.

Manchester I do not like. It is so black, so grimy, and so determined to beat London at its own game, and not all that good at it. Or rather, like all Lancashire and Yorkshire, never knows how good it is being at it.

Since telling me off, Peter B. has been much nicer. No-one else seems to have been any nastier, so for the moment the status quo has been preserved, even improved in some ways.

Saturday October 3 1953

Peter B. congratulated me today on the transformation, and said that everyone had noticed it. I, as far as I know, have gone on exactly as usual.

Sir Lawrence began his curtain speech after the matinee, with the words, 'We are all extraordinarily fond of Manchester', in a tone of such marked sincerity that everybody laughed, even the audience. Tonight his speech ran, 'Manchester has given us a wonderful week, and tonight your generous reception has been not the least wonderful part of it. Thank you from all our hearts, goodbye, God Bless You, and au revoir.

I wish he wouldn't say 'God Bless You'.

Parl Hardwick tells me that the Romilly is the poor man's Pockingham. That is to say, as queer as queer can be. What do you know about that, Mr. Ken Cantril.

Sunday October 4 1953

On the train.

We are now drawing in to some industrial place on the Scottish side of Penrith. I cannot yet see the name. It is strange to be going into Scotland, stranger still how much happier the circumstances are this time than the first, and strangest of all that I should have seen so very little of what nobody will believe to be my native land.

Conversation very funny and amusing, though I could not join in, as I felt very cold, though wrapped in my rag, and rather queasy. It's Carlisle - too silly that I should call it 'some industrial place'.

11.30 p.m.

Rather chilly in a great big double-bed, so will not write long. Digs delightful all polished brass and home-made scones; houses arranged like chambers, or sets of rooms at Cambridge. Mrs. McDonald a dear sweet old woman.

Out this evening to the Penfield St. Church to hear Rev. Leslie Hope. How good these Scottish ministers are!

Tuesday October 6 1953

Enjoying myself very much in Glasgow, which is a large open handsome place, full of tall old stone houses. This one is arranged like lawyers' chambers with brass name plates on doors, up a wide distempered staircase.

Today I found seven letters in the rack, among them a note from John Holmstron a very pleasant surprise. We met, and had a long long talk. He is not an easy person to talk to, but fortunately knows it, and so we get on all right. He is like me in that he is capable of enduring endless boredom and frustration, and emerging the same at the end of it. We are meeting later in the week. Tonight was a rather stormy one. Miss Leigh was apparently in a temper from the beginning because of a spot on her dress. Jeremy Spenser cut, or attempted to cut, one of her laughs, and when I passed her afterwards, she was letting fly at poor Jeremy, who I admit, had been naughty, her pretty little face all twisted and ugly with rage. More and more my instincts tell me what a beastly little person she must be underneath her cool crisp smiling public self. Martita Hunt, by contrast, was in the wildest good spirits, winked at me just before one of her entrances, and 'corpsed' me completely. When she came off all be-ospreyed, she suddenly adopted a boxer's crouch and tried to punch me - excitement at Miss Leigh's fury, I suppose.

Peter B. very down, because Nicola Delinan, the little girl of fifteen, has gone round saying that Peter has been interfering with her performance because he hasn't got a part of his own. Oh! the folly of over-sympathy, particularly when it is disguised busy bodying. Peter shut the door carefully, and confided his distress to me alone. How amusing, after all his schoolmastering of the other day!

Wednesday October 7 1953

Oh! so full of matinees. How dull to tell afterwards are the little touches that turn an actor's life into fun. The dropped syllable, the faltering step that seem so funny in the tension of the theatre, are nothing in the cold light of the bedroom afterwards.

Over supper had tremendous religious discussion with John Bryning in my digs and the silly old John Moore. How odd that it is so vieux jeux to be agnostic!

Thursday October 8 1953

After an understudy rehearsal, met John H. at 12.30. A nondescript figure, very short, very well-brushed brown hair, an oval face, a rounded nose, a curious shrinking personality of surprising strength, he is a person of striking integrity. I know him much better now than I did when we were at Cambridge. We had more excellent talk, mostly of general things in terms of personalities. Round and round George Square we wandered, under the leaden eye of Queen Victoria and whoever all the others are, some Georges of one sort or another, I suppose. He is most anxious to meet Jeremy Spenser - would you believe it? Oh, Peter Wood's affair sounds hellish! No promiscuity for me! But when I think of the valuation my friends give me, I am furious to think of the patronising impertinence with which Peter B. approached me. Incidentally he is most gloomy and depressed, quite silent. I wonder what is the matter.

Friday October 9 1953

This afternoon a photo-call. Three closely typed pages of calls, and fifty-eight photographs in all. Out of the fifty-eight, I suppose at least fifty included Miss Leigh. They were taken by Angus McBean, a tall spinsterish bald-headed ginger-bearded man, dressed in thick green tweed trousers, creased down the side of the leg. He stood on the stage, continually fiddling with a large and expensive camera, popping into a box for a quick shot, popping down into the auditorium for a slow one, and calling to 'David', his youthful brown-armed plump-seated 'assistant', to move one of the many huge dazzling 'spots' from place to place. We did not have to suffer much of the appalling heat and continual posing, though one of the four pictures we were in, was of Miss L. on our shoulders.

Sunday October 11 1953

The Lido Hotel turns out to be a respectable house in the neat crescent facing a very pretty garden. It is among all the squares, crescents, and places, that lie behind Princes St., just off the road in which the Anglican Cathedral stands. How quiet and grey and solid these streets are. (The wireless is playing a sloshy song that I heard so many times in those dreary months at home.) Edinburgh is certainly beautiful. Unlike Sauchiehall St., which one approaches always from above, Princes St. is spread out in front, and on every side of you; I think I know why I was disappointed when I first saw it. To English people, a fine street means two rows of fine and dignified houses or buildings facing each other. It is the situation of the actual roadway which makes Princes' Street so beautiful. As for the Castle, no, I can't venture on anything.

The situation in the company, or rather my situation, is so fluid that it will need further working-out before it can be put on paper. Peter B. was certainly premature and interfering to speak to me. People must just take me as I am, except for the professional mistakes. Everyone does, I am sure, take me as I am, as I do everyone else, except the little Tennent group. Even then they don't dislike me. I think it's all Peter B.'s absurd young thing about everyone behaving the same way. Anyone would think he had spoken to me again, but it is just that I got on so well with the people in my compartment, and also quite well with Daphne Newton and Richard Wattis at the taxi queue, that I was particularly annoyed when Peter B. dismissed me with 'See you tomorrow' quite obviously because he was afraid I would ask to share their taxi. Really! But also, I notice that R.W. commented on the LOP (Laurence Olivier Prod) lot driving off, classing us four as Tennent. That worried Peter B.

Monday October 12 1953

Oh! how beautiful Edinburgh is! though with a lighting rehearsal taking up most of the day, I have not seen very much of it. I must try to get to Holyrood tomorrow. I so love it.

I saw that new book 'Persona Grata' today. It has a vitriolic though hooded attack on V.L. by Ken Tynan. More hate. Really Peter B. and Paul H. can be most snubbing by simply scorning one's remarks and laughing gaily at each others. The funny thing is that when Paul had gone, Peter was trying to be awfully nice, saying how much he admired my behaviour

and telling me a lot of stuff about him and Norah Swinburne, in an attempt I suppose to make me feel not out of it.

He is a child, and his absurd thing about Norah Swinburne; he is worried 'because it's gone too far'. If he says he's worried for that reason you may be sure that the real reason for worry is that it hasn't really gone far enough to make a good story.

Tuesday October 13 1953

Pouring with rain. Stayed in all the morning cosily by the fire, and wrote letters, in a dim 'Lounge' with two huge leather-quilt pouffes and a lot of French novels. After a delicious Cauliflower au Gratin and pineapple sundae went to a film I had seen before to while away the time. I have purposely, ever since Peter B. spoke to me, kept away from everyone, and asked no one to go out with me. I think that was best.

I still think it seems as if he made more impression than he really did. He made a momentary impression of horror, but since then, since I have seen how poor his judgement really is, how indiscreet he has been over Nicola, and Norah S., I really never return to it, even in my mind. Tonight after Paul had gone, he was talking about my diary - such nonsense. Saying that a friend of his whom he knew would one day be a great author had said one must never write anything except for publication. Really such silliness. Still I am writing about him. Why is it? Because I am thrown into contact with him, and have nobody else much to 'pal up with' I suppose.

I hardly know why I 'go on so' about such boring personal things. I am an egoist, of course, a big one, but I have a certain streak of honesty, which if it doesn't always get into this book, is always present, weighing up everything I do. Why do I care if people I don't respect don't like me? Why do I care if people I don't respect are liked by others I respect even less? I don't know, but I do.

Wednesday October 14 1953

Today has been almost entirely spent in the theatre, with an understudy call at ten thirty, a matinee at two thirty, a rehearsal at five, and an evening performance at seven thirty. Consequently I have felt strongly all day this absurd grudge go on.

I realise that it is a dual thing, partly I am really shut out by their (Peter's and Paul's) common acquaintance and knowledge, partly by my own absurd imagination. In a way I hope I never am a success because I shall be consumed by egotism where now I am just nibbled. Of course I never behave to others as they behave to me because I always turn everybody into an audience. And how do they behave to me? Perfectly ordinarily, except that they make my remarks seem stupid because I can't join in with what they're saying, and when I do say anything, it can only be either banal or irrelevant. Why do I behave in this absurd way?

Thursday October 15 1953

(If this entry is a little depressed or extra self-pitying, it must be put down to the fact that I have gone to bed without any supper. My landlord is repairing a water pipe with a blow lamp, and nobody noticed me come in.)

This afternoon I walked up to the Castle, past Ramsay Gardens, with their pretty little fluted balconies, and through the very much restored keep. The Castle itself with all its different levels and blank bare stones, is a hard and unyielding background, but the view from the battlements is matchless. Away beyond Queen Street was all mist, the city only able to poke up a church spire or a factory chimney from its drowned streets. But who is to describe Edinburgh? I walked away down the Royal Mile, stopping in that cold quiet military museum of a church, St. Giles, for a moment, where I liked the pretty enamellings of the coats of arms in the Thistle Chapel, and moved on to Canongate Kirk. It was being repaired and restored, and was shut. Further on, a fifty or sixty-yard strip of the old tenements had been pulled down, and work was going on to build it up into, I suppose Welfare State flats. I passed lots of small mean shops, open stone archways chipped and worn dark with rubbing shoulders, giving on to dark and dirty-smelling yards and alleyways. Reid's Court, a square patch of dank grass surrounded by dilapidated houses, was empty except for a child in a filthy pinafore, its face and hands and legs thick with long-left dirt, sitting on the doorstep of a house marked 'Free Kindergarten'. All this, and then on to the provincial glories of Holyrood House. It is a small and unpretentious place by English standards, very much smaller indeed than the average English country house, nothing approaching the size of Castle Howard, or Blenheim, as you might expect from a palace, and indeed not as big as Sandringham, from what one can tell from pictures. The curtains were up in the Throne-Room still, and I must say, do make most materials look like tissue-paper. I went through the Historical Apartments again, and very mean very small and very dull they are too.

Still there is one thing that Edinburgh cannot be denied - Quality, stamped firm on every stone, brick and man, woman or child.

Friday October 16 1953

At 12.50 met Raymond Johnstone, whom I had bumped into on Wednesday, and we had lunch at the New Club. Edinburgh's Athenaeum, In & Out, Senior and White's, Brooks and Boodle's all combined from what I could see of the members. In the large dark brown rooms, hung with large dark brown stuffed animals, we drank dark brown beer and champed dark brown meat, surrounded by large dark brown members. Raymond is nice, rather unmemorable (not even completely forgettable, you see) and lives a life about equally divided I should think between boring work and only slightly less boring pleasure. Did not like the play much, said so, and thought it wouldn't run in London. So there we are. He's wrong, I think. It'll run on names, I should think.

Two men passed me in the hall as I was waiting for him. 'Hello Scruffy', said one. 'Hello Buster' said the other.

Sunday October 18 1953

Newcastle.

Too tired to write last night. Triumph in the dressing-room, was graciously permitted to join a quotations game, which they were playing, and did not do so badly at it.

Silly of me to say 'permitted'. I daresay they have never thought of excluding me. It has rather cleared the air for me. I am so much nicer and more charming if people think so.

Newcastle not very nice, though 'digs' good. N. loud and vulgar.

Monday October 19 1953

Have stayed up until 1.30 talking to a Mr. Hughes. Small, cheery-looking, fortyish, stocky, old Rugblian, ex-Navy, full of stories of the world. Been everywhere, seen everything, pretty boring really. Kipling type of story 'When I was in Yokohama' stuff. I liked the bits of pornography, though, particularly a wild orgy in a basement in Liverpool.

Tuesday October 20 1953

Whole network of cast relationships subtly altered for me by Peter B. telling me yesterday that he had hurt and annoyed Daphne Newton by asking her if she built up her nose for the stage, and found that she did not. Him confiding in me was new, and at tea I was joined, against their will, by Paul Hardwick and Richard Wattis, who were quite openly anti-P.B. for the moment. P.B. is really very difficult at times, so irritable, not unlike me. But I fear I shall now never really get on with him. He is too prickly and really too smug. He seems to have no idea of how little he knows, and brings one often almost to the point of claiming more sophistication than one has, because he so blandly assumes one has so much less.

I saw an enchanting short film, called 'Sunday by the Sea' with no background except Victorian music hall songs sung by Joan Sterndale Bennett and John Hewer. She is superb.

Wednesday October 21 1953

An odd day. Misty in the morning, which turned to fog later. I slept the morning through quietly in an armchair, to be rudely awakened by the kind of lunch I hate, two huge chops swimming in fatty gravy, boiled potatoes and lightly done cabbage, followed by prunes and cornflour. Arrived at the theatre feeling full - a very dull house, stupid rather than apathetic. The first excitement was the arrival of Jeremy S. only just in time for an entrance, with tears rolling down his cheeks and sniffing violently. Poor thing! (Careful now.) Then Peter B. said, 'Are you having tea with anyone?' I said 'No', so he said 'Have it with me.' And proceeded to tell me how beastly Daphne N., Paul H., and Richard W. were being to him. I knew if I waited it would all adjust itself, and it has. We also talked about Richard W. and his unsuspected depths, tho' not unsuspected to me. Along came the evening performance - more drama besides the legitimate one. Martita Hunt was sick on the stage just before the curtain went up on Act II, Scene II. I always watch that scene through a peephole, and saw Vivien Leigh rush to the table, and was vouchsafed the extraordinary sight of Miss Leigh, magnificently begowned and be-jewelled, holding a large silver ash-tray for Miss Hunt, if possible even more magnificently be-g. and be-j. to be sick in. All very curious. On she

went to the end of the show, with wonderful courage, feeling terrible. I think she has the 'flu. Before her last entrance, she stood holding on to a flat muttering, 'Oh God help me, help me!'

As if that were not enough, we saw in the evening papers that 'Sir John Gielgud' had been arrested and fined for importuning young men. Oh dear the squalidity - gave a false profession and everything. Oh! dear, he must feel terrible about it.

Thursday October 22 1953

Met Bill Thomas at Tilley's, a large cosy comfortable place, reminding of cafes as they always seemed to be in my youth and never seem to be now, cane-bottomed chairs, vaguely classical decorations, and a three-piece orchestra on a little balcony suspended between two floors playing musical comedy selections. Bill T. as every comfy, coarse and kind. Seems happy and settled. Pat Legh, Sir L's dresser, a small grey-haired frail little thing, with not many teeth and always dressed in purple, joined us and did nothing but put down Miss Leigh. Peter B. said scornfully when I told him, 'That's because she is in love with Sir L.' I don't suppose she is for a moment, just adores him, that's all. Afterwards went off to tea at the Pettit Vicarage quite smart it is, unlike the usual queeny priest establishment. I was telling him of L.O.'s and V.L.'s matrimonial situation, and he said 'How much nicer to be one of us!' I wasn't sure that I like that awfully.

Poor little Nicola was sick tonight, though not on stage. I am sorry for her, to be pushed into all her silly affectations by circumstances so young.

I must say I am a mad un-success with most of the company. They are always going out with one of the others, and I never do at all. Perhaps they just don't know me. It is strange, because I am quite often quite liked by strangers whom I meet at parties and so on,

Monday October 26 1953

What a relief to be in Brighton! So clean, so fresh, (almost too fresh at the moment, a great gale is blowing, huge breakers crashing almost against my window, which seems as if it might blow in any minute). Too exhausted at Newcastle to write another word. Had a long talk with Ian Pettitt on Saturday morning. He is Vicar of St. John's. Very sensible, tells me what I want is scriptural Catholicism. Funny how what I want, according to vicars, is always what they specially provide. They are just like butchers begging for one's custom. Agreed to go to see Charles Edwards in London. Play tonight a success, though not a great one. Lots of cheers, loudest I thought for Martita Hunt, and quite right, too. I sensed what a Tennents' playground it is. 'Binkie' is up in Liverpool with Sir John G., and the rest of titles, I suppose. Not a very pleasant set-up when you look at it honestly.

Wednesday October 28 1953

Last night Noel Coward came to the play, sitting in the third row of the stalls, with a Chinese mask of a face, throwing up his hands in admiring amusement from time to time but never laughing.

The weather has been bad ever since Monday, endless rain and wind. We have also had rehearsals most of the time in preparation for next week, so that my attention has been once more fixed on the company. My own position has been much improved of late. As I have recovered confidence, so I have got on with people better, chiefly Paul and Daphne Newton. Rosamond Greenwood being in my 'digs' has helped a great deal, too; more of her later. But Peter B. again turned to me, about Richard Wattis, who is apparently again cutting him dead or being very rude. It seems to be extraordinary that Peter B. expects me to sympathise with him suffering in reality what he made me suffer by report. However he does and as he is obviously very unhappy about it, there was only the course of uttering as many sympathetic words as I honestly could. But oh! dear, what the North of England has to answer for in the way of inferiority complexes, He abused Richard Wattis' performance, quite truthfully, I think, and I could join in equally truthfully. I think it a dull and at times crude performance. But then I think Richard Wattis, always very nice to me, a dull and rather crude person, which Peter B. does not.

Thursday October 29 1953

An extraordinary fine day which we had to spend indoors. The performances today were dull in a way, comparatively. But I am fascinated by the change in me which can be bored by an experience I would have given my ears to have undergone two months ago.

Rosamund G., whom I had told about Peter B., (and very shocked she was, too) told me that she had mentioned it to Daphne N., who had said that she did not think that Peter B. would ever make an actor, as he had none of the milk of human kindness in him. Rather true, I fear, at the moment anyway, but I am sure, or almost sure that it is immaturity rather than an actual lack. He has, after all, met so few people, except stage people.

Rosamund, whose husband was a Catholic, told me that some nuns she met at the time of her marriage said in amazement, 'So good, and yet a heretic.' This became a family joke. She does not see how true it is. She is a very good person.

Friday October 30 1953

To lunch, in a terrific shower of rain, with the Duncans at Palmeira Square. Their huge and beautiful flat is such a relief after all the dreary 'digs'. He has been ill and his hands are nearly paralysed, poor man. They are nice rich unprincipled people, who really make a wonderful audience, have a chef who produced the most lovely lemon soufflé and are probably very bad for my already enormous ego, but I loved them.

Monday November 2 1953

Back in London, and in dear Mr. Pottle's, where I feel so at home I don't think about it at all. On Saturday night after the show, I went to see Peter and Anne Armitstead. She is just as pretty and badly-groomed and nice as ever, he just as nice and dull. They gave me a delightful welcome, and I basked in it to such an extent that I stayed until three o'clock. I came out into a blinding gale, with a little rain sizzling about it. I felt quite drunk with talk and laughter, particularly as I had felt I had been a success, always an intoxicating thing to

me. I fought my way back to my room, which is so much on the front, that really the noise of the wind at least hardly lessened in doors. My bed shook and creaked and rolled, and I thought that the front of the house must be coming off.

Tuesday November 3 1953

Tonight we gave a charity performance for the St. John Ambulance Brigade. It was attended by Princess Margaret. By the time I arrived 'at the half', as it is called, (that is to say, at five to seven for seven o'clock) the taxis and limousines were already turning out their 'bejewelled occupants', as the evening papers always describe them, and the theatre was soon full. A good thing, too, as HRH arrived five minutes early, and threw the orchestra into consternation. They fumbled their way from the middle of 'The Merry Widow', to the National Anthem. The performance went on its merry way, and the audience seemed to like it. I watched the Princess through a crack for a bit, and although she was fidgeting a good deal, she seemed to enjoy it. At the end, it gave me a very curious feeling to bow first in the direction of the Royal Box, and then at the rest of the audience, and to see the other members of the cast do the same.

Wednesday November 4 1953

Such a dull 'house' tonight. Some Jewish charity. Too boring.

I wish I could write more, but I am too tired and too 'drifty' to write more. I shall be better when I have found somewhere to live.

Thursday November 5 1953

Our first night and a very curious day. My sense of excitement has become so personal that I am almost insensible except when I am literally and figuratively in the centre of the stage. After a very late breakfast, I went to the theatre and found two telegrams already, one from Martin Evans. Most interesting. I walked through rather slimy streets to meet Nigel for lunch. We went to a pub and had a few beers and a nice enough talk. He is a dear, and just my sense of humour. In a pleasant glow of beer and friendliness, I went to see a film at the Cameo - Polytechnic in Upper Regent Street, an odd programme, a French comedy, with Fernandel as a successful coiffeur, and an Al Jolson picture from 1933, all about tramps and a rich man's mistress. I went from this to the Lyons 'Help Yourself' counter in Tottenham Court Road, had some scrambled egg on toast, a cup of coffee, and a doughnut and went to the theatre. The poor doorman was quite buried in telegrams, and inside in the little lobby were piles of presents, acres of parcels and plants and bouquets. Outside Miss Leigh's room, which was already a mass of flowers, lay seventeen bouquets. I myself got a button-hole (from Constance Spry) from the Oliviers with a note in his own writing, another button-hole from Jeremy Spenser. A book (the new Edward Lear) from Terence Rattigan! A letter from Bill Thomas, and twenty-two telegrams. A triumph, I think, and far more than Peter B. incidentally, which very much surprised me. He gives the impression that he has heaps of friends.

As for the performance, the big fact for me was that Martita Hunt's performance was startlingly good, a model for me indeed, and a thrilling comic experience. She caught so

many laughs in the Second Act that I went on with tears in my eyes. The reception was very good, with cheers and fifteen curtain calls, but no speech. I do not suppose that we shall get 'rare' notices though. Sir Laurence shook hands with me before the curtain went up and said 'It's good to have you in the company.'

I wish I could make Martita Hunt believe how good I thought she was.

Afterwards Colin and Mary, she looking ravishing in blue velvet, came to see me. I went to a snack bar alone, and am back here to snooze. All the others went to the Caprice!

Friday November 6 1953

The notices which I read with Peter Lewis in the 'Golden Lion' are all right, but rather tepid. Ken Tynan is, as usual, the only one so far to produce a notice of real interest and liveliness. We now await the Sundays and weeklies.

In the afternoon I went to see 'Julius Caesar'. Pedestrian but for Hollywood, good. No comparison with 'Henry V' or 'Hamlet'. Only Marlon Brando, amazingly overcoming his accent, gave a performance with real vigour, and a natural though untrained feeling for style. This naturally excludes John Gielgud, whose voice, presence and experience make it laughable that he should appear on the same screen with such incompetents. That the greatest living Shakespearean actor should play on equal terms with British players forced to fly to Hollywood where their mediocrity would become superiority, and with American performers with no imaginative equipment to allow them to grasp a classical tradition which their country does not possess, seems to me artistic magnanimity of the highest order. All the virtues of this film except for those two performances, are negative.

Oh dear, this will never be a proper diary till I once more get a room of my own.

PAGE MISSING

Monday November 9 1953

A lovely surprise! In this morning's post a letter from Ju to say that he had come up to London and was coming TO SEE THE SHOW tonight with his mother. I was very excited all the afternoon, and almost in nervous giggles all through the performance. Afterwards they came round and also came John Lambert and Christopher Pym rather unfortunately making too many in the dressing-room. However it all went off very well, and the Slades took me out to supper afterwards - at the Brasserie in the Coventry St. Corner House! There we sat amid the would-be Spanish decorations and had a long and most enjoyable talk. Ju is still looking tired and worn-out. His mother looked radiant. I must hear all his real news tomorrow, for something has been troubling him, I can see.

PAGE MISSING

... amount to much. A lovely walk through the park to Harrod's, to see Martin Kenyon, very brisk and smart among the books. Met a paralysingly typical young Guards Officer - completely frozen and freezing. How cramping to one's inside it must be always being

forced to behave like that. Martin in nice, but oh! so superficial. He will come a cropper one of these days. Went for a drink with Susan Kilner, or rather Raven. Very well, and the baby is sweet.

Thursday November 12 1953

To the Beaux Arts Galleries today, for the private view of the new Francis Bacon show. The same gallery where Elizabeth Prink had such a success. Remet Werner Albersleben; asked me to ring him. Ha! He is the one who has to have a sailor every night, so Gerard tells me.

Pictures most interesting. Cruel, darkest midnight blues and ghostly off-whites. A threefold portrait, in three different moods, the mouth gaping blurrily. A brilliant yellow and purple ape-like following of a Velasque Cardinal. Terrible pictures in the real meaning of that word.

Marion H. and Liz J. came round after the show tonight. Gushing from both. Liz so nervy and jumpy. Marion the same old self. Would like to see her again, I wonder why.

Probably will anyway.

Friday November 13 1953

Spent the whole day with Susan. One of the very last of many exhausting late-for-everything days. No, that's unfair. I really did enjoy it very much. I met her at eleven thirty at the Green Park. Off we trudged through drizzle to pick up a tiara from Paris House, a rather scruffy little shop in the South Molton St. Then to Goodyear's, the florist, which, although it is the Court florist, and displays pictures everywhere of the tables laid out for the Coronation banquet at B.P., is untidy, unsmart in appearance and vague and inefficient in the extreme in service. Mr. Goodyear, a large fumbling superficially good-humoured man, radiates distinguished patronage, but the moment any ordering is to be done or carried out, screams for 'Miss Jones' the only one in the shop who can remember anything. Off again to Helena Rubenstein's, a large and 'phonily' palatial house in Grafton Street. Through doors of plain glass with no frames, may be glimpsed a staircase of Deron marble going apparently straight up into what could only be the attics. We were 'attended to', as they call it, by smooth young girls in white coats, who skilfully palmed off on Susan a few pots and bottles adding up to over £5, and containing creams and powders probably worth £1 without the fancy wrappings and the percentage of overheads added on. My theatre make-up isn't a quarter as expensive and just as good. Off again to the Phoenix where we arrived too late for me to get my money which was probably a good thing, as I should have felt obliged to pay for some of the taxis Susan took everywhere. After calling at the Tottenham Court Rd. Lyons for a brief visit to Angela Murphy, Personnel Officer there, and a quick lunch, we taxi'd off to Paddington, picked up two enormous suitcases, taxi'd them off to No 2 Walton St., Knightsbridge, where she is staying, until she moves to her uncle's house in Cadogan Gate, from which she is going to be married. We immediately left again to arrive at her dress-maker's, Angela Lynne, in Pont St., ten minutes late for an appointment at three o'clock. There I saw the dress, and met her aunt, a thin sharp angular quick woman and her very forward little daughter, Mary Plum. The dress is pretty enough, white lace, very simple lines and a long train. But Susan never looks nice in virginal things. Off again at three forty to Peter Jones, where we wandered round buying things on a casual account that came to eleven pounds, until five, when we had tea. Then back to Walton St., a quite pretty basement flat belonging to people called Rees, to see her trousseau. Not very impressive. Bitty, some nice underwear, but dresses horrid, particularly off-white one with fur collar and cuffs. Just in time for the half. I love her, but what a relief she is getting married.

Saturday November 14 1953

More Susan. Wasted whole morning and afternoon. She will not hurry, and consequently I could have no tea before our 5.30 - 8.30 marathon.

What a little complainer I am.

Oh! so tired and footsore!

Monday November 16 1953

Don't know why I wrote so acidly about Susan. Didn't really feel it so. It is strange to think that she will be in someone else's care forever now. I wrote to her this evening, wishing her happiness, and saying how much she had meant to me. She has, for all her difficult side, been a true friend. And what fun we have had, what laughter, what little asides and shades of humour that nobody else would have caught! It is the first break in my really intimate circle. It is really very strange and uncomfortable. What good times we have had.

Wednesday November 18 1953

Last night I did not get to bed until five and with a heavy day today, thought it best to go straight to bed. Tuesday was spent mostly in bed. After arranging with Martin Kenyon to go to the Midnight Matinee at Drury Lane, I thought it might be sensible. Slept without trying until well after two, and did not leave the house until four. The performance was made memorable by the news flashing round the company that the Queen was there, in the Dress Circle, quite unexpectedly. By a lucky chance, the whole show went off exceptionally well, with roars of laughter and applause, the company enjoying the whole evening as much as the audience for once. As it was a private visit, there were no special calls. However the orchestra strained every nerve during the National Anthem, and there was a round of applause and a burst of cheering as the Queen left.

Joseph R. came to visit me afterwards, looking his old untidy self, and we went out for a cup of coffee at that place Cyril Ray was writing about the other week. He is quite easy and as ever, full of weak jokes and strong gossip. Preparing to slay Francis Bacon in his next article. Walked with me to Drury Lane. I pushed my way through the crowd of people mostly in dinner-jackets and short dinner dresses, to Martin. There he was, his blond hair piled high in its immaculate waves, his OE tie in a very small very tight very neat knot, his velvet-collared overcoat very well brushed, and his prominent bright blue eyes busily searching the crowd for celebrities. This search went on all night, taking sometimes rather embarrassing forms. We pushed ruthlessly through each of the three bars, walked through the stalls, circled round the reception rooms, and all the time blandly staring into every face, hoping to catch the features momentarily composed in notoriety. The performance itself was sketch to a degree, and only the parts of it taken from current shows was really passable. Redgrave's Shylock was a wonderfully powerful exhibition, but not really very subtle or interesting.

Muriel Smith was the best thing of the night to me - she's so lovely.

Wednesday, with a poor little night before it, has been difficult. It began with an understudy rehearsal, as usual. Not quite as usual this time, because I had to play Richard Wattis' part for the first time. By a wonderfully lucky stroke, Peter B. was not there. I got through it fairly well, but should not have to do it just yet with Miss. L. and Sir. L. The dreariness of acting under such conditions. After this two performances, and after the last performance, Ian Kellie and his girlfriend to entertain. Very nice, but oh! the sleepiness.

Saturday November 21 1953

Oh! for a settled home. I take notice of so little without it. I have gone to four places today - all no good.

Sunday November 22 1953

This is the end. Spent hours wandering to find a cinema to go to, just like the old days of despair and gloom. I must find somewhere permanent, that allows me to save money, or I shall go potty.

How bestial London is on a Sunday. Full of terrible raffish girls and ugly scruffy petty-thief-looking men. All scuffed suede shoes and black and white pullovers.

Tuesday November 24 1953

This afternoon to see a matinee of 'The Two Bouquets', by favour of Bernard Keefe, who is taking a small part. I thought him excellent, one of the few who were, with a well placed voice. The show as a whole was vulgar and crude, not daring to trust the delicacy of the writing. Afterwards tea with him and a great deal of 'cat', which was very pleasant. He is a nice dull chap with short legs.

My relations with Peter B. are strange. For the last three days or so he has been most affable and forthcoming. Tonight after a chatty enough talk while we were changing, he said 'How odd it is that our two best friends should know each other', rather forgetting that I know both of them as well. He told me of his visit to Oxford to see Peter Firth. Poor dears! the culture they expose themselves to! They read Dylan Thomas and The Song of Solomon out loud to each other.

Wednesday November 25 1953

Once again Wednesday has been a full and tiring day, in the theatre from 10.30 in the morning until ten-thirty at night.

Peter B. and I were once more talking affably, and I heard his lines in this new Sunday night play he is in, and at the end of the evening, we were discussing various bits of gossip, which led me to say lightly that I was not stupid as Paul and he might imagine. He said, 'No, indeed, I have often been impressed and surprised by the acuteness of your observations.' I said that I might seem stupid, because, I could not bring myself to talk in that extraordinary

debunking aggressive style that they call 'sending up'. I went on to dilate on this, rather boringly, as I fear I have often done in the past, too often. I did have the sense to admit that I was bad at it, too. Peter B. then started to 'send me up', answering my still serious remarks with 'Yes, Angus. Yes I know', in strongly ironical tones, adding that I was such a good subject for 'sending up' because I looked and sounded so pained. Now his teasing upset me for the moment, (and particularly as he left immediately after it, thus leaving me vaguely wondering whether he had not been 'sending me up' all night) and because it is a great fault of mine, I want to find out why.

Certainly not because it's Peter B. He is not in fact a person who makes much impression on me, though I think he has nice points. Nor is it only because I simply dislike being made fun of, though I do. I have more or less grown out of that. Is it very priggish of me to say that I hate it because it is cruel and childish? There have been many times when Peter B. has wished to be serious, and I have felt his matter hardly deserved to be taken seriously. I could not bear to answer 'Yes' in the way that he did to me, or if I did, I should have to take it back at once to show that I didn't really mean it. When someone doesn't take me seriously when I am taking myself seriously, I feel that they are expressing a sort of contempt for me as an individual. Of course there are degrees of manner to be thought of in combating priggish seriousness of which I am obviously guilty, but plain mockery is useless. To put in once more in practical terms, if Peter B. meant to show me that I was talking about the childishness of sending up too much and too often, he was going the wrong way about it. All he made me do is freeze up, and feel frightened of saying another word.

Now, what does all that add up to? More self-confidence needed for me? Less unkindness or rather more sensitivity from him? And from anyone else who tries it? My mind will not really find the real reason for my hating it so. All I know is that I don't mind in the least a mocking answer, followed by a re-cantation, so that I can feel that there is a core in that person that responds to what I am feeling, and that I mind terribly if I come up against what is to me childishly malicious bottomless mockery. And I am thinking now of the whole 'me and them' theme of life at school and talks with Gerard. One thing is certain - 'sender-uppers' should never want to be serious, with their 'victim'!

Thursday November 26 1953

A very dull day.

Sir Lawrence has water on the knee. He limped onto the stage with a heavy stick, hardly able to walk, wincing with pain at every step. On his entrance he threw away the stick, and walked with only a slight limp.

When the moment for his last entrance was approaching, he was late. He jumped up, ran past me hitting his knee 'Oh, shit!' said Sir Laurence.

Friday November 27 1953

Met Timothy O'Brien, with Peter L. and Robin T. for lunch, at, I am afraid, the Strand Palace Hotel. Decor and food chromium-plated and nasty. Conversation and company far from nasty. Peter L. is of course one of the best listeners in the world, and draws good from

everyone. Robin curbed himself nobly, and I tried to speak as little as possible, managing to stay silent at least a quarter of the time. Jim talked better than I have ever heard him. Whatever America has done, it seems to have brought him out. He made me feel what was it like to go to America, or rather the United States, more clearly than anyone has ever been able to do. One of the things he said struck me very much. 'I found', he said, 'that I ate half as much, weighted a stone lighter than, and had twice the energy and animation of American men of my age.' From some people that would mean little, but from Timmy O'Brien, sitting there with his finely-boned, small-chinned pale face, looking at us like a clever and charming small boy, T.B. who was always thought at Cambridge so shy, retiring and yet so talented, it was quite a bombshell. If he has twice the animation of the ordinary American, what about me? I'm far more animated than he is. Heavens! I shall blow New York in half, if I ever get there. He said he found that he was embarrassed by British half-heartedness by the time he had been there for a little while. I don't think I should be, except inferior half-heartedness. What Americans so often do is to mistake a sense of style for faint-heartedness. He had much to say on New York, that it was exhilarating, yes, but not all that American. As the Times curiously says in almost the same words on this same day, 'New York is closest in Europe physically, spiritually and mentally, and miles away from the Middle-West in every sense.' I do not know when I have enjoyed a conversation more, particularly as, for all his praise, he confirmed all that I fear to find in America.

Had a little talk with Miss Leigh tonight about some exhibitions she has been to see. Hates the Portrait Painters (not surprising) all except one by Annigoni? Loved Tooth's, and the Fishes thing at Powland, Browse and Delbanco. Must go to Tooth's, I think. Got my things from Jean's flat at last.

Saturday November 28 1953

What an exhausting evening Saturday is these days!

Paul was telling us last night. (I quite forgot to say) a few tales of Clair Bloom, whom he played with at Stratford in 1948. They went to a party together once (she neither drank nor smoked) and she asked him what made people cough when they lit a cigarette. He said, 'Oh well, I suppose that the smoke gets into the tubes and irritates and mucous membrane.' She went bright pink, and said 'Oh Paul! Why must you bring sex into everything?' and rushed away. Quite recently, apparently, she was driving home from the O.V., with Richard Burton and his wife, when in Parliament Square, the Burtons decided they wanted to piss, which they did in the precincts of the Abbey, the only piece of earth available. On returning to their car, all that could be seen of C.B. was a pair of heels vanishing into the distance. She rang Mairhi Russell up. (friend of Paul's who understudied Vivien Leigh in the 'Cleopatras') and said, 'I must see you at once Mairhi. It's Oh! I can't tell you.' M.R. calmed her down, said 'You can tell me, dear', all woman-to-woman expecting rape confidences, and that was all it was.

Sunday November 29 1953

A rather dull day with Guy Hitchings, who was manly and decent and clean and nice but a bit slow; lunch was revived a bit by John H. coming too, but three was, I am afraid, a crowd.

Guy and I went, in the evening, to the Academy to see this new film of John Ford's 'The Sun Shines Bright'. Certainly a film made for love, every image and moment dwelt on almost to excess, but such a sweet-tasting film, sweet not as sugar is sweet but as clean linen and well-brushed hair, as lavender and properly polished leather are sweet. I was soothed and pleased by it.

Monday November 30 1953

Slept most of the day, reading 'Edith Wharton's brilliant 'Age of Innocence' when I was not sleeping. After the show went to look at a house in Draycott Place, advertising rooms to let in the 'Times' this morning. Looks distinctly possible, and is just round the corner from Robin, whom I must remember to ring.

Coming back on the 'tube', I walked up into the huge space of Paddington Station, and tried my luck in the Refreshment Room for a cup of greasy tea. It was served to me by a mulatto girl, who scraped up the sugar lumps with short dirt-grimed fingers topped with long black-rimmed nails; the man behind me, in a shiny blue suit, cut very long, and a 'crew' hair-style cut very short, leant over and kissed her, adding a familiar pinch under the arm-pit. When I came out of the station, in a doorway to the left of me, a tall blonde tart wriggling in excitement, was 'tossing off' a sailor.

Wednesday December 2 1953

Too exhausted last night to write. Tuesday saw me engage a room at Draycott Place, a smaller room than this, but better furnished and much nicer, and more convenient district, and a guinea cheaper. House really quite smart, and bathroom very clean and bright. Will keep me up to the mark much more than here. After the show yesterday I was changing in a dazed way, (fortunately I had a suit on, which I easily mightn't have done) when the door opened and a voice said hesitatingly 'Angus?' And I was able to march across the room, saying as I have always longed to do in real life, (So Edwardian), 'Freddy!' And so it was. Freddy Nicolle, as spruce and engaging as ever, accompanied by a fair boss-eyed woman, fashionably dressed in black. She said 'Is it smart to come back-stage like this?' 'Yes' I said, 'and the really smart thing to do is to praise the actors'. So she did, and we got on famously. She was a little odd, German, by the sound of her, and very over-sophisticated, heavenly dotty all the same. I was on good form, I think, and chattered away like anything, hardly knowing what I was saying, but making them laugh helplessly. All I really cared about. After I had changed, we went down to see Martita, who meets her at the 'hairdressers'. They had a nice little chat, then off we went, all crammed into the front seat of Freddy's car, with the two of them arguing away hammer and tongs about which flat we should go back to. Personally I should have liked Arlington House and all the waiting food. But C.B. nearly went mad about it, and so off we went to Kinnerton Street, with her saying, 'Trust me this once, Freddy, just this one, trust me to give you a reasonable explanation when we get to my house, I promise you' and so on, and so on. When we got there, it turned out to be a very prettily fitted up little mews flat indeed. Two rooms open out of one another, both with white walls and wall-to-wall mushroom grey carpet, very thick. The first room is hung with draperies of a large green ivy pattern on white, and contains a very large Decola radiogram in light oak and almost nothing else, except a hair in plaited raffia on a wooden frame. The inner room has a long table down one side, very low, perhaps six inches from the floor, with very

tall cacti and ferns and palmy things on it. There is a huge sofa, in red and white with vast elephantic arms and back. More slatted chairs, in the flattened, dent-in-the-middle-of-a-flat-surface that modern chairs go in for. The wall is all window, covered by full length grey silk curtains. A very pretty Clave hangs over the concealed electric fire. All night we played the quantities of records she has just brought over from Paris. Among them a lovely song about a coquelicot, and a heavenly Lesbian girl called Jacqueline Lourier or Lourrier. The conversation was not very distinguished, but we ate pounds of smoked salmon, drank two bottles of white wine and one of red, some cherries and cream, biscuits and brie, finished with coffee and a wonderful liqueur called Calvados (is that right?) Quite tiddly, and oh! the indijaggers.

Thursday December 3 1953

Lunch with Timothy O'B was an event. He had just had a bonus and went all gay with a bottle of Liebfraumilch. He was in high spirits because his set designs are on show in Mather and Crowthers, and after lunch he took me to see them. He has done a splendid honest Baroque set for 'Winter's Tale', all grand staircase and niches. His designs for a ballet on 'The Planets Suite' nearly knocked me over. I have never seen such a riot of pure colour as in 'Uranus' or such a stillness as in 'Venus' with its brilliant clear-yellow. He showed them off very quietly, but obviously seemed proudest of his 'Macbeth', a set of Craigean craggy monoliths, not to my taste, except for a superb banqueting hall hung with tattered banners.

Rang up darling G. and invited John H. with me on Sunday. Find that Michael Davie and Christina Muir are coming, too. Couldn't be better.

Friday December 4 1953

Installed in Draycott Place, tiny room, but what furniture there is, is good. Cannot say more of it yet.

Lunched with John H. today, rather a nasty lunch bless him, but oh! how nice he is. And how pretty his room is now! Television and everything! Afterwards I looked at a scrapbook of his time at Camb. How it brought things back! Morris for one thing. Then he showed me his scrapbook of 'boys', just heads mostly, all between about ten and sixteen. A lot of Jeremy, too. We met Peter Wood, looking rather smart in a over-smart way, and went to some Mr. Magoo's in an atmosphere of faint Wooden disapproval. And Wood came back with me to Paddington. Then here.

Peter B. bundled in gloom and bad temper all night. And seems to think that telling people so makes it better. Poor boy! he has no manners at all.

Saturday December 5 1953

Had my nib changed, and something has gone wrong with the ink-flow. Maddening. This afternoon to Desire again (I can't think why it's called that - it's not all that sex-ridden) with Peter Lewis this time. He enjoyed it very much, and is off to a church social this evening to prove it.

Most exhausting evening, though cheered up by rather heavenly invitation from Diana Craig to dine with her boss, Dudley Griggs.

Sunday December 6 1953

A full and enjoyable day. What a pleasure in the morning to come down to breakfast to find my morning papers by my plate! The first time in my life that this has happened to me.

Off to Earl's Court Road. Lunched at a rather for me expen. place, talking of old friends again. There is something about John H. that is curiously attractive. A fundamental honesty, for one thing, and an inability to cheat himself. Showed me a pathetic sad little letter about his poem, from an 'English' don at Wisconsin university. Poor little unfinished M.C. Otto. A sad little letter. After lunch we went on to Gerard's, finding there to our delight and surprise, Michael Davie waiting for us. As nice and kind and thoughtful and genuine as ever, I cannot find words enough to praise him. We walked over to Cranford, to St. Dunstan's and I attempted to reproduce all that I had heard from Gerard about it. Without much success, I fear. As I was also in my most bouncy high spirits, it seemed to me that I alienated everyone, Charles Monteith, Christina E-M, Michael D. the lot. I hope that that was not so. I suppose it is selfishness that causes it. It is certainly very very annoying.

Rushed away at 5.30 to dine and drink with darling Diana C's boss. Nice dull business man of thirty-eight, looks twenty-eight. Olive Gregg, cherubic actress, nice perky girl. Was very drunk and rather an unsuccess there too.

Wednesday December 9 1953

Have not felt too well the last few days.

Relations with Peter B. came to slight crisis. I told him, I hope calmly, that he must not be so critical and so much want to change people. Haven't I learnt my lesson well? I also told him, again calmly, that I thought we must just make the best of circumstances throwing us together, although we did not in the least suit.

I will write no more till my pen comes back.

Friday December 11 1953

Yesterday a hectic little day. (It is so little pleasure writing with this pen.) In the morning went a-walking and met Margaret Heathcote (now Phillips) in Eaton Square. I thought she was looking a bit puffy and wearing rather a shapeless coat for so famous a model, and so was not surprised to hear later from Nigel that she was having a baby! She won't enjoy that very much, I shouldn't think. I went to David Davies at long last for a drink. Nice comfy dull flat in the Presbytery in Bourne St. We had a pleasant enough talk. I have still to find out exactly what it is about him I like. Five glasses of sherry - faintly tiddly and late, so that I had to 'taxi' to Savile Row. Down in the canteen we had a wonderful businessy lunch, with

me talking too much as usual. I enjoyed it anyway. In the afternoon we went to the Leferre Galleries to see the John Minton show. Very ordinary picture postcard stuff, bold, crude...

PAGE MISSING

...bodies, of various shapes and colours all doing the same thing, of which I and they never get tired, on and on and on it goes, in the half-exciting half-funny way that lust works, lust so funny when you aren't feeling it yourself. But oh! the ache when you are - the unbearable longing for a hand to touch you that is not your own, for a voice to say words that you can cheat yourself are true and sweet. If I can't have love, I think I might be allowed 'lust'. But oh! it's so silly.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 23

Angus Mackay

Being the nineteenth

From December 14 1953
To March 9 1954

Monday December 14 1953

Oh! the relief of having my proper pen back!

Today has been full though dull in places. With a great effort was at Grosvenor St. in time to meet Julian More. He works at Pemberton's Advertising Agency, which is in Disraeli's old house. The house, which is tall and thin with a four-tiered spiral staircase, has pretty panelling, now all alas! cream-painted, with Wedgewood medallions, and many Burne-Jones - William Morris tapestries, all too carefully preserved behind glass. It is a sad come-down for it to feel so dead.

Julian came down the stairs, followed by a tall lank figure, with curly black hair, yellow-olive complexion, and snub sly features - Mark Boxer. I haven't seen him for years, though what a figure in my life he once was. His talk was amusing - confiding that a doctor told him he had Jackson's disease. 'Not Heinrich Jackson?' said Mark. 'Yes' said the doctor. 'How did you know?' 'Well', said Mark, 'He was my grandfather.' We were joined in the pub by a little dark man, pleasant, innocuous, an art manager or something whose name I never caught. We had a lot of amusing conversation, Trevor Howard tottered in walking with the careful insecurity of the drunk, and Mark rushed away to confer with the Art Editor of the 'Daily Express'. Julian M. was brighter and gayer than I have seen him for many a long year.

In the afternoon met David Miller, son of some people at home, who turned out to be one of the most boring people I have ever met in my life. Ugh! Pleasant, I suppose, but oh! the yawns.

After the show was swamped by the largest number of visitors I have ever had. First came Monica Craven, darling pretty Monica, with a stout red-faced man called Tony Hitchcock, then Pamela Fildes, with Joseph, followed by Robin and Julian M. None of the pairs knew each other. Peter B. had one visitor, a girl called, I think, Anne Robinson, now Wigzell, whom I met when she was going around with Jeremy Hawk, at the time that the Lyric Revue came to Cambridge. And she said that she thought that I had a very nice voice. Oh! dear. I wouldn't dare to sing to such people now. Am I so wrong about all this subjective actor stuff? I suppose I must be. Well, well.

All my friends seem so much brighter. Out to supper with Julian and Robin. Great fun, much laughter. Talked a great deal about our futures. I am sure that Ju's shows did click in a most significant way, and will, I am sure, do so again. Julian M. not so sure, but I remember the extraordinary hold that Ju and I had on Cambridge by the time we went down. How odd! I've just remembered that an American magazine called 'Look' sent down a photographer to

snap three representative undergraduates, and someone chose David Jennens, then very famous as a stroke, Percy Cradock, and me!!

Wednesday December 16 1953

Today so full and exhausting that I went straight to bed yesterday to be sure of getting through it.

Yesterday for a drink with David Davies at 12.0, to give book back, and tell him that I have some tickets for him for Wednesday (that is tonight.) We had another guarded talk, I got rather drunkish again, and hoped to be asked to stay to lunch, but alas! no luck. Back home to refreshing sleep, and out at four o'clock to tea with Hedley Hope-Nicholson, who was coming too. Hedley began by saying 'I am ill. I have been poisoned by my son-in-law, who gave me bad garlic. I also have fibrositis in the neck from a visit to Roger Wodehouse's disgracefully draughty house.' (long demonstration of exactly how the draught hit where.) Room as wombly as ever, all red and gold, with a little model, like a Victorian peepshow, of the Chapel of Saint Charles, the Martyr, which, I suppose, he hopes to see built one day. Gerard arrived, looking rather tired, and was not able to find the top of his form. It was on the whole a dull tea-time, Hedley being quite awful when he isn't being absurd.

Afterwards when we got away, we walked about for ages in Trafalgar Square, while he told me his troubles. His troubles are not very subtle or interesting or even in one way, moving for they have no pattern or style at all. That does not make it any better for him, indeed worse, adding yet another reason for humiliation. He has more or less decided to give it up. Costa never turned up for the play either, and I had bought them two such nice seats. However darling G. saw it, and if it cheered him up a tiny bit, it's worth hundreds of guineas.

Today has been all play until 5.30, when off I went to Robin's party. Alas! I had to leave just as everyone was arriving. Not quite.

PAGE MISSING

Thursday December 17 1953

Every day is still an adventure, so I am perhaps not growing old yet. But what a pity I have not a little more money! I should so love to entertain, and see more of my friends.

Today I have been alone all day - not unpleasant, but I would not have had it that way.

I don't write very easily on this tiny table. What a pity!

Scrappy today. Dull. To start putting down the interesting things takes so long.

Friday December 18 1953

Up and grooming early and extra carefully to take Monica Craven out to lunch. She really is the best-looking girl I know. Met her at enormous temple-like Ingram House, a small lobby opening into an immense domed hall, with a hideous fresco of Victorian classical figures.

Was extrav. a bit, taxied her to Franks', and we had a simple little civilized quiet meal. She is so restful, so quiet so normal and such beautiful manners. We agree on everything. What a pity Andrew thing is so persona grata? She has smooth reddish hair, a straight clean-cut nose and a fascinating fullness at the cheekbones running down to a pointed chin. She is not unlike a Richmond drawing, or the drawing of Florence Nightingale by her sister. A very good figure with no starting points except its utter rightness. She is intelligent, but not so intelligent as I am. She dances well, is more interested in the theatre than in anything else, is always smart and a good housewife. If I had any money, I would marry her tomorrow.

Except of course that she wouldn't have me, and I wouldn't feel anything but the mildest interest in kissing her. The rest of the afternoon was wild shopping, and wilder card-addressing and stamping. Vivien Leigh, on hearing that two boxes were empty said 'I'm not going on', in elaborate burlesque of a star.

Saturday December 19 1953

After a pleasant and happy day with Peter Lewis spent wandering around the shops, lunching, and seeing a sweet film called 'The Kidnappers', into the theatre for a long grind. Days with Peter are always fun, because he is willing to amuse or be amused and consequently never requires one to force one's conversation. The town very full and bustly. We met Martin Evans in 'Better Books' and dressed in an old wind-cheater, motor-goggles over an old tweed-cap, and a large piece of sticking-plaster no, cotton-wool on his chin.

After the show, at eleven o'clock, bitterly cold and raw, I made my way down Charing Cross Road, across Cambridge Circus in front of the Opera House, and into Shaftesbury Avenue. Everywhere were crowds of people, talking, laughing, shouting, singing, being sick and kissing in corners. Some of them had just been turned out of the pubs, some come from some distance in a charabanc party, were waiting for...

PAGE MISSING

Sunday December 20 1953

Raw, cold and foggy. In the morning Robin rang up and proposed himself for tea with Gerard. I was worried, but it turned out quite a success. When we arrived, Anne and James were there; in the long dusky green-walled room. We sat and talked for about an hour. The long slim over-bred bulbous eyed elegance of Anne James was telling us of a visit they had paid to a very odd night club called 'The Sunset.' A negress with nothing on at all but a lot of oil, did madly sexy dance, and then a pansy crooner got up and sang, 'I Caught Daddy Kissing Santa Claus'. Gerard at last came in, in fine form, and we chattered away about the J.B. poem newly reprinted in the Sunday Times.

How to Get on in Society

BY JOHN BETJEMAN

*Phone for the fish-knives Norman,
As cook is a little unnerved;
You kiddies have crumpled the serviettes
And I must have things daintily served.*

*Are the requisites all in the toilet?
The frills round the cutlets can wait
Till the girl has replenished the cruets
And switched on the logs in the grate,*

*It's ever so close in the lounge dear,
But the vestibule's comfy for tea,
And Howard is out riding on horseback
So do come and take some with me.*

*Now here is a fork for your pastries
And do use the couch for your feet;
I know what I wanted to ask you—
Is trifle sufficient for sweet?*

*Milk and then just as it comes dear?
I'm afraid the preserve's full of stones.
Beg pardon, I'm soiling the doileys
With afternoon tea-cake and scones.*

This authoritative but oft misquoted guide to gracious living is here reprinted by kind permission of the author.

James very funny and pompous about not calling 'a dozen of everything' a 'canteen'. Anne taking it all rather seriously. Gerard sitting between them in a high old red damask chair, in his cassock, wrapping and unwrapping round his neck a bright scarlet cardigan used by his sister Dawn for gym at Cheltenham Ladies' College, squealing with giggles, hiding his face in the wool, peeping over it winding it round his head. He told us he had been offered a nativity play entitled 'When the Littlest Camel Knelt'. Gave him my present, 'The Brudenells of Deene', some tea, sugar, and chocolates. When the others left, after tea, we had a little talk and then went off to church. Very misty. Church icy, service to me very dull, Gerard's sermon definitely bad, but Gerard himself as loving and faithful as ever. The youth-club afterwards was intolerably boring - ghastly blush-making charades and carol-singing. When we came out, fog thick clinging; after supper fog much worse, quite destroyed the shape of everything. The bus felt as if it was always turning the wrong way.

Monday December 21 1953

A day entirely dominated by money. None for me until Thursday - isn't it sickening?

Mrs. Eastman rang up this morning and asked me to lunch on Thursday. A drawly unexpectedly nice voice.

Very cold, and I have not really had enough to eat.

Tuesday December 22 1953

Had to walk from here to Earl's Court for lunch with John H. He forgot to meet me here, and so gave me a large lunch there - very late, and fortunately for me, very large.

He is absolute integrity. I am a broken reed to him in that respect. He pays me compliments whenever I say anything self-deprecating. I suppose he thinks I'm fishing.

Sunday December 17 1953

I am surprised to see that I have written nothing since Tuesday. It does not seem so long, since I have done so much. On Thursday I went to Paddington for my ticket, bought all my presents, and had lunch with Mrs. Eastman. Mrs. E turned out to be garrulous, and rather American-looking, with a suspiciously large nose, expensively unattractive clothes, and a largish niceish flat, with photographs of Ronald Colman all over the piano. She is amusing, kind-hearted and obviously lonely, but a person with very little time or sense of fine feelings. She entertained me to a very hasty meal in the restaurant in the basement of the block of flats, Chiltern Court, which she lives in. She plays bridge with Lady Barton. Well now!

Present-buying was simplicity itself, for I had long since decided exactly what to buy, and simply walked into Harrod's and Hatchards and bought 'The Reason Why' for Daddy - 15/-, Elizabeth Arden's 'June Geranium' for Mummy - 12/9, with some writing-paper - 14/6 too, the repaired pan and a smart diary, altogether 18/6 for Lalla, 'Back to School' by somebody with her drawings by Ronald Searle for Donald. Yardley's Lavender Water, 14/6, for Joan, three 4/6 hem-stitched handkerchiefs for Ada, 'The Baby's Bouquet' (10/6) between the children, with a paint-box for each (2/9), and one of the Beatrix Potter books 'Jeremy Fisher' and 'Jemima Puddle-Duck' for each. Neither child said 'thank you' to me for any of the gifts. They received any number of trashy painting books of the crudest kind and a hideous enormous 'Mickey Mouse' paint-box, with cheap brittle colours, horrible doll's tea-sets, and a cooking-stove that really cooked. All the books they had were without any quality of any sort but vulgarity, not even vitality. Christine poked at the 'Baby's Bouquet', whined that she did not like dust-covers, and pushed it away. And I went without lunch for a week to buy it. Oh! well, she's very little and her mother sets her such a gracious example.

The journeys down and up might have been a good deal more hellish than they were. I wrapped myself in my rug and was as warm as toast; with the blinds down and the curtains drawn, the resemblance to a carriage is very striking. Saw nobody and nothing in my compartment empty except for a short visit by thick hearty grubby man, going to visit a film producer in Cornwall. 'Can't resist Polish vodka old boy'.

Monday December 28 1953

F. Tennyson Jesse's 'A Pin to see the Peepshow'. She has let her imagination range over the facts of the trial, facts thoroughly mastered, and the novel emerges as a fictional plea for Edith Thompson. Very touching and true, I thought. I was struck by the vivid way she describes Julia - Edith's vitality, suddenly welling up intoxicatingly, at the stimulus of a new interest or a chance meeting or a small success. It is one of my most common sensations - a

heady overwhelming feeling of happiness, of being here in this present moment, of loving the person I am talking to, of wanting to give him or her all the thrill of joy I am feeling. Intoxicating is the word. So few people seem to understand it or make allowances for it, and seem to find it tiresome. Just as I did I suppose in Gerard and James. How a tale of irresistible physical love affects me. I cannot bear that they should be separated. Can it be wrong to feel so much?

Wednesday December 30 1953

Went yesterday to see this new film with Norman Wisdom. Has obviously a great deal of talent, but is still disorganised, and makes errors of taste, comic taste, again and again. Sings two sentimental songs quite delightfully, though they are out of place in the film. Has no precision, and so can't make fun either side of a precise mean. Humour is proportion, and he's still all out of proportion.

Thursday December 31 1953

The time is twelve-thirty, and it is now, I suppose, 1954. Looking back over 1953, I cannot pretend to myself that it has been a very happy or successful year. The six months from February until July were probably the most genuinely unhappy of my life, representing as they did my first real experience of indecision. The terrible reproaches which came to me as I wondered whether I ought to do what I knew I must do, were disintegrating.

But what a lot of pleasures the year has held. The thrill of pleasure in which it ends for me - with a job living in London again, blessed with so many nice friends - the Coronation, for me unforgettable forever, the continual passage of world affairs, never more fascinating than this year with the death of Stalin, the speed records, the end of the Korean War, the Royal Tour with its revelation of unemphasised loyalties; oh, yes, 1953 was wonderful in its own way, as every year in my life till now, thank God, has been wonderful. Almost too wonderful, tempting me to forget everything but enjoyment.

I do not believe myself to want very much. Certain financial securities, safety from absolute want, yes, on the practical side. I would wish to be a success - passionately so, on the other side. I am not envious except for one thing - I have nobody near me, who needs my love.

Friday January 1 1954

Lunched with Jessie Faber at the Kismet in Kensington High St., not the 'chicest' of rendezvous, but quite reasonable. We had a long gossipy talk. She is nice and dull and looks as if she had been brought up on chocolate creams.

Sunday January 3 1954

Felt dizzy, sick and very tired all yesterday, and have not felt at all the thing today. Cancelled lunch with Guy, Tim O'Brien and Sandy Dunbar, and the day with the Hards! Very awkward but couldn't be helped. What would I have done without the telephone today,

much as I hate it? Yesterday miserable. In such an elaborate and heavy costume, every wave of nausea was made doubly awful and every movement a burden. I was most touched by the kindness that dear Rosamund Greenwood showed. During the interval she sent up a cup of tea, some plain biscuits, some glucose tablets and an air cushion to soften the hard kitchen chairs which are all we have to sit on. Really thoughtful kindness, and the only person in the cast who showed such kindness. Peter B. is auditioning for a part in the new Fry play, 'The Dark is Light Enough'. Hope he gets it, tho' I will be sorry to see him go.

Monday January 4 1954

Quite well today. An Icy cold day, with a wind whipping round corners straight through the thickest overcoat. In the bus going to the theatre tonight, someone had left one of the side windows open. How people stood it when buses had no tops, I can't think. Trams are bad enough now. My bus was almost empty, and so was my side of the road. Every now and again we would stop, and I could see into buses going the other way, the rush-hour way, packed. I was going to say from floor to ceiling, because the people really seemed to be standing on each other's heads.

Michael Bishop arrives tomorrow. It was perhaps foolish of me to open up again what was an almost dead friendship. I am afraid I represent it to myself as unselfish sympathy for someone who is all muddled. It is much more likely to be concealed vanity, a desire to condescend to be admired.

Tuesday January 5 1954

Michael B. arrived, looking better, trimmer and less spotty than of late. Improved in mien as well as face. Conversation was not in the least difficult, I was glad to find, though he does go on a bit. He has realised the false and conventional nature of some of his attitudes. He must be taught what are the fashionable ones, or else he won't know how to be different or conventional! Rather a dull day in one way, rewarding in another...

PAGES MISSING

...and conceal that I had noticed it, in the same moment.

There was a wonderfully camp trio, Peter Wood, Dickie Baker, and John Merriman, who kept retiring into the kitchen. I liked joining in their conversation for a bit, but really had to leave them every so often for a refresher course in real life. Mary Steele was sweet.

Whether I did my duty by Michael Bishop remains a moot point. I hope he enjoyed himself. He left before I did.

Friday January 8 1954

Yesterday spent trudging round in an icy wind with Michael B., talking, I think for his benefit. He seemed pleased with it all, though it seemed to me that I had done little or nothing for him.

Today spent in delusions of delicious grandeur. On from all day, drinking with David Davies at his club, the United Univ., in Suffolk Street, going on with him to the Royal Exchange where we met Christopher Pym, and waited freezing for John Lambert who never turned up. Someone passed me, wearing a top-hat, with ordinary clothes. After a quarter of an hour, we trudged off down Cornhill, away from the large grey anonymous cliffs of buildings around the Mansion House. Suddenly Christopher popped down a little alleyway and turned two corners in near darkness, pushed open two glass doors marked George and Vulture Chop-House, and we found ourselves in a medium sized squarish room, divided into segments by chest-high settles, packed from end to end and side to side with young middle-aged and old gentlemen all without exception dressed in personal but slight variations on the theme of dark single-breasted suit, white-starched collar (invariable) coloured shirt and tie, black shoes, and a bowler hat and umbrella somewhere among the rows dimly to be seen through the blue smoke rising from a spit and open fire against one wall. We had three glasses of sherry each, a couple of lamb chops a bottle of claret some Stilton cheese and a glass of port. Christopher, a tall gangling pleasant-faced young man, is off to Malaya on Tuesday. Poor him! He is not looking forward to the separation. Leaving the City in a glow of good will, I ran into Nicola Delman in Piccadilly. We brisked through Hatchard's for a couple of books, in and out of Fortnum's and Simpson for the sales, bought some socks, and ran into John H. We all had the gayest possible tea at the Tea. C.

Saturday January 9 1954

Trying to write my talk for tomorrow, and terrified of it. Expect they'll hate it.

Pleasant day with Peter L. who is always so kind and thoughtful and unselfish. I know he must be unselfish because I wouldn't like being with him so much if he weren't.

Sunday January 10 1954

Monday January 11 1954

Sunday would have been a delightful day, but was spoiled by apprehension. At lunch with Colin and Mary, was most interested to meet Heather Brown again, who had come along with her husband and baby. When I arrived, Mary was getting the lunch ready in a pretty little apron, smart as paint, and had just sent Colin out to buy a bottle of sherry. Heather and hub. carried the baby up all those stairs in a 'Karry-Kot' as they are I think repulsively called, a box covered with washable American cloth in pale blue, with large strong handles. The baby, a tiny damp-haired transparent pink morsel of six, or seven weeks lay sucking its fingers, fast asleep. Heather looking rather pretty, was wearing a yellow sweater, yellow socks, dark purple slacks, very narrow, and black moccasin-type shoes, a get-up that consorted very badly with Jeffrey Brigstock's (her husband) conventional grey suit. She really doesn't look like a wife and mother, but seems a very good one. The lunch was indifferent as Mary's meals generally are, no love in the cooking, as it were, but I enjoyed it. Colin's talk has got worse. In his efforts to be entertaining, which he can be very, if only he didn't try so hard, he has got into the habit of saying 'the whole time' at the end of almost every sentence very odd at some points.

Rushed away to finish writing my talk, and had written about 2448 words, when I had to go off to Cranford. When I got there, I was so glad to find that there was nobody else there for tea - I should have hated there to be anyone else who really knew about things but Gerard. After church, I went over to the Youth Club, and talked nervously to the few that I knew, including that nice boy, Roger Sanders. My talk began, and I dashed straight into it, having asked the chairwoman a plain nice dull girl, not to introduce it formally. Never have I made a success of a talk in public before. Never before have I heard myself speaking fluently, and yet saying what I wanted to say. They laughed and laughed, and listened and listened, and when it was all over, I found that I who had been afraid of not being able to talk more than ten minutes, had spoken for over an hour, and had attracted questions for another half an hour. I felt myself very pleased, but not, I think in the least proud. I have always felt so ashamed that someone with all the advantages which I have had, has not spoken more often. Round to the Sanders after a drink. Mr. S. large 'What the public wants is a good story' A.R.A., who paints very very after the impress. Mrs. S. Ipswich intellectual.

Monday has been a restful day. Lunch with Jimmy O'B, and Sandy was pleasant, though Sandy is such a curious person. Very pleasant on ordinary talk, get him on personal issues of any kind and he becomes uncomfortably unkind. After lunch went off and saw 'The Moment of Truth' with Michelle Morgan, whom I adore. Film not half as good though as 'Brief Encounter' which it very much resembles. Supper after the show with Timmy again and Guy Hitchings. Talk turned to the terror I inspired. Isn't it extraordinary, when all I feel is how good I've made someone laugh, and am quite surprised that people listen. Most of the talk was about the play, which they had just seen, and had been much entertained by. Guy is a simple good soul, with a slow-moving mind and an unambitious spirit, which puts him at a disadvantage among some of us, but doesn't make him one whit less nice a person.

Tuesday January 12 1954

Lunch in a dull cabbagey pub in Great Marlborough St. where Phineas Finn lived. Dull lunch too, with Robin and Mickey Miller. They are both so depressed.

Tomorrow Sir Laurence watches the understudy rehearsal for the first time. Visions of him saying 'You are sensational. I am dismissing Mr. Wattis, and want you to take over at once', or, much more likely, 'You are appalling. Take a fortnight's notice.' Have a bad cold.

Wednesday January 13 1954

We all arrived early for the understudy call, and stood around in our best clothes, in the darkness of the draughty wings. We made nervous jokes as if we were at an audition. Sir L. was late, coming in with his hat on, saying how busy he was and arranging some talk over lunch. He seemed in a bad temper. The rehearsal went, I thought, badly. Paul Hardwick and Greta Watson (Sir L. and Miss L.) both being dull and fumbling. I did not feel that I did so badly, especially with the two Northbrook scenes I played, for the first time and with props. At the notes Sir. L. said to me 'Very good, but more authority'. Just exactly it. I'll show him next time he comes. Because if I can't give it authority, who can? Ah!

Rest of the day streaming cold and exhaustion. What a nice couple of children Greta Watson and Nicola Delman are! Michael Plaister came round. What am I to do with him.

Thursday January 14 1954

Stayed in all day by the fire, reading, writing and sleeping, and feel better for it. My cold has dried up a lot. When I went into the theatre tonight, Diana Boddington was standing in the lobby talking to a smallish pale young man, whom she introduced as Michael Redington. He struck me as timid and nervous, not as anyone might be before an audition, but permanently. Also a certain smack of cringing in his attitude.

Friday January 15 1954

Lunch with Michael Plaister boredom itself, though he is nice, he has a perversity which is cramping to him, and useless to a conversation. Takes everything one says almost literally, and yet makes nothing of disagreeing with one. Left him at two thirty, and went to see 'How to Marry a Millionaire'. Oh Dear the boredom, though Marilyn Monroe is certainly quite absurd.

Saturday January 16 1954

Must write first about the party last night. It took place for some reason in a comfy little flat at the extreme Finchley end of The Bishop's Avenue. So extreme that I had to get out at East Finchley Tube station. There was dancing, whisky, beer, cup, and dull talk. I met one or two old friends, (James was there I forgot to mention, at his tightest and most absurd, introducing me to everyone as 'the Angus Mackay') among them Lionel Abel-Smith, Mercedes Shaw, Pru Bennett, but all pretty dull though nice. Sub. funny, unoriginal wit. Not wit at all in fact. I met and talked to most of the time a nice girl called Catherine Cowley, a first cousin of Gerard and James. She is sweet and very unsophisticated and rather a relief. I remember dancing cheek to cheek with her for a long time without thinking about her as her and having to say to myself 'This comforting body so close to you is a girl called C.C. who may very well be thinking you rather like her.' I asked her to go to the Dufy show with me. She accepted.

This morning I went round to get some of my books back from Toby, who has so sweetly looked after them. House small but will be pretty. His room large square and soothingly bare. Stayed until lunchtime had some sherry, Toppet came in, Mike Young and Roderick Cook, we had some good talk, and I talked too much as usual. I swished off in a taxi to home with the books and whisked off again to the Tate. C.C. was slightly late. In the foyer stands Le Baiser waiting to be saved by our contributions. How I love it, but sex not art as what I love about it. At least I suppose it is. Dufy show so full that the cloak room would take no more coats. Show entrancing, so gay, so gay, so snobby and so gay.

Sunday January 17 1954

A day of lazing and reading and a cinema. Having left the day purposely empty, I was glad to relax. I again saw 'Come Back Little Sheba' with that amazing performance from Shirley Booth. When I say that I cried, I do not even quite believe myself, and yet tears ran down my face and dropped off my jaw. Surprises even me when I think of it. Nobody else seemed to be crying.

Monday January 18 1954

Laziness is not good, for I have been lazy today too, so it must not happen again that I waste a day as I did yesterday. I am twenty-seven, and just beginning to understand that life is really short. If only time would stop rushing past, so that one could think of the present for only a second. But no, it is all past and future, and both seem a long way away.

Lunch with Timothy of which I will write tomorrow. No, I won't. I'll write tonight. After all, why should I put off writing about the only really selfless and interesting thing that's happened today simply because I've been sitting up reading a bad novel, 'The Loved and the Loving' by Nigel Sligh, for purely erotic-pornographic reasons, and feel that I may be too tired to get up in decent time in the morning if I write any more?

Timothy talked a great deal about set-designing, making as his principal point, the feeling that he has that a set does not merely, or sometimes does not actually provide a realistic or even symbolic background for the play's action, but simply completes it, in the way that the elaborate borders and wings and trompe l'oeil and vista effects of the Baroque stage 'completed' the trumpery little masques enacted in front of them, so a good 'Lear' set will be bare and unmemorable. Also why a normal 'drawing-room' play is so bad because both play and set wallow in insipidity.

Have also read today a very good novel, or rather a very amusing one, Jecelyn Brooke's 'Passing of a Hero'. Excellent Waugh-Beerbohm-Sitwell fictional 'real-life' biography, witty and penetrating. Though the uncommitted air the narrator preserves all through, rather breaks down in this day and age when the succession of new attitudes and reactions has broken down and thought is needed.

Tuesday January 19 1954

Have just begun this morning 'The Prime Minister' fourth novel in the political series. Oh how sensible and wise it all is! How well blame and honour are distributed! Went out in the morning and bought a large crisp white loaf and a pound of Gouda cheese, altogether three shillings and a ha'penny. Which has already served me for two meals, and will do for at least two more. How restful news-cuttings are!

Wednesday January 20 1954

Up and out at 11.0 to meet Adrian Slade, Ju's younger brother. He rang me up yesterday - big surprise, and said we must meet. I went round to the flat and was greeted by this taller broader younger Ju! So like him in voice and mannerisms has Adrian become that I felt all the time that this was a reunion with Ju that wasn't going off very well. Not that I didn't get on with A. very well,...

PAGE MISSING

...pictures'. I was very amused, and was only trying to laugh them out of such affectation, when D.B. snapped out in a nasty display of temper. I am glad to say that Miss Leigh and

Richard Wattis, when I told them privately what Nicola had said, were as amused as I had been. Richard went on about Peter later in the evening, and horrid tho' it was of me, it was pleasant to me to hear him abused. He said that P. was self-centred, pompous, boring, and a creeping Jesus. After listening to a good deal of this with pleasure, I tried to salve my conscience by saying that I thought the selfishness and so on, were not self-conscious and deliberate, but the result of completely wrong values. That this is true I am sure after sharing a room with him for so long. His life has been so narrow and his friends so like himself, that he has intolerantly been able to resist broadening his mind or expanding his standards.

Out to luncheon on a cold clear sparkling day in the City, with Bingham Core, someone whom I scarcely knew in Cambridge, but who apparently remembers me cordially enough. Lunched in the Falstaff, a largish inn in Eastcheap. I can, between the enormous cliffs of buildings, and roundabouts of crossroads of the city, get back the feeling of seeing London for the first time. All the bustle, all the traffic, all the size, but strange. A long talk with Rosamund, Good.

Saturday January 23 1954

Still very cold, and while I was hogging it over the fire in my room, after a cosy lunch of poached eggs and hot milk at the ABC across the road, Michael Woolley came in, to ask me to come round for a drink tomorrow. We sat talking and in the end I went back for tea. Flat - the new one - very pretty country wallpaper, huge radiogram, nice roomy place, good for parties. His rather odious young brother there, not really odious, just at the bossy stage.

Told Peter B. tonight a few little things about my career. Could not bear him to leave the company thinking (and perhaps telling others, though that hadn't occurred to me until now,) that I was a gentleman actor.

When I came in tonight, a letter from John Barton, quite a long one. What a pleasure. Must write now.

Sunday January 24 1954

Monday January 25 1954

Yesterday was a day full of exhibitionism and fun. Lunch with Michael Woolley and Peter Wood. Full of gaiety. New Lindsey Revue with Peter L. and Robin Tuck. More gaiety. Long long talk from ten thirty to 12.50, with Robin all about me, I am afraid. Even if it's home truth, I prefer it to be about me. No question of him starting it. I asked for the whole thing and got - not very much. Nigel and Toppet had said something about me being intolerant or something. Really didn't worry me - I'm always saying rude things about whoever isn't there. What I can't understand is that people seem to like me better when I'm feeling depressed.

Tuesday January 26 1954

Reading and writing all day. Now what have I been reading today? Isn't it strange that I never, or almost never note it down? This morning galloped on with two hundred or so pages

of 'The Duke's Children', last of the political series I have been enjoying so much. Tasted a couple of second-rate novels 'Asphalt and Desire' by Frederic Morton, a messy realistic lump - American, and a fuzzy over-sensitive English book 'Infidelity' by Richard Chase. Something in this last, but it's a first novel and a muzzy one. Wrote two or three letters, and started on another novel, 'Player Piano' by Kurt Vonnegut Jnr. (Why Jnr.? Whoever's heard of K.V. Senior.) Very angular futurist book with science-fiction overtones, an awkward style, may have something, but I doubt it. Too determined to be fresh. On Sunday I finished Truman Capote's 'The Grass Harp'. Loved it, so atmospheric and delicate and decadent. Very un-american

Tonight Peter B. started to talk after the show with far more animation than he had shown during it. Worried about Richard Wattis disliking him so much. Said it was because of Jeremy, whom R.W. would otherwise have 'taken to'. I said yes probably, allied to the fact that Peter B. not being queer, was enjoying a normal friendship, thus making R.W. much more furious (in my opinion) than if Peter B. had bedded down with Jeremy every night of the run. So well did this talk go, he actually asked me out for a glass of beer! Sensation! So I went. More talk - eliciting, among other things, that J.S. may very well be queer after all the attention of that kind that he has had. P.B. now thinks all cordial between us, I dare say. He is too self-centred for me - and so unseeing about people.

Wednesday January 27 1954

To Michael Woolley's to see how his cold had gone, but it hadn't. His audition had fortunately gone well. Weather exceedingly cold, every tiniest puff of breath turned completely into steam. All the stall holders along the King's Road were warming themselves at braziers of hot coals, holding out their purple fingers sticking out of old leather gloves with the fingers cut off.

Poor David Davies in bed, with his housekeeper looking after him.

Thursday January 28 1954

Again to David Davies, a little better this morning. The cold is worse than ever, the wind like flame on one's skin. I bonked at the Sloane Square fountain with my umbrella, and could hardly chip off a bit. To M.W.'s a chat and lunch, then out not to 'Twelfth Night' alas, because it was an LCC children's mat., but to 'The Big Knife' very exciting, thrilling and 'phoney' (an American word, meaning false, I suppose.)

Saturday January 30 1954

Today Martita Hunt's birthday. She invited me into her dressing-room at the end of the show for a glass of champagne! Oh! what fun, and a taxi home with Richard Wattis and Daphne Newton. Little bolts riveted in there. Conversation at party centred after a while on the Edward Montagu case with Martita saying plaintively, 'Are they going to accuse all our friends?' culminating in her saying 'Well. we're all so queer I don't know how they...

PAGES MISSING

... cold, however, even with two gas radiators and a gas fire on full blast, in a smallish room with thirty or forty people in it, was intense, our breath all white in the room. My feet were burning with the cold.

Today I had to go back all the way to H. to get a book and my umbrella, which I had left behind! James hauled me off to supper, lovely long talk with him and Anne, who have fixed their wedding for the 24th of July. Then forgot Peter W's address so no lunch. Frustrating, very, and I fear I may have caught a cold from waiting on those odious stations, far more draughty than real ones, which are served by 'tube' trains but are not actually underground.

Tonight lost my temper for a brief 'mo' with Peter B. When one is making conversation because he is too unmannerly to do it himself, he really must learn not to mock! Long talk with Nicola D. tonight. Oh, she's so young!

Tuesday February 2 1954

Still intensely cold. The temperature never rose above 27 deg. F according to the papers. Everything one touches is so cold, even the legs of one's trousers if one stands still at all out of doors and then suddenly moves.

Went round to see M. Woolley, and stayed for lunch and tea. I find now that there will be five for lunch on Thursday, Greta, Timmy O'Brien, Michael W., Robin tuck, and me, the three men having invited themselves.

Wednesday February 3 1954

Still intensely cold, and my basin still full of dirty water.

All day in the theatre, read Wayland Hilton-Young's 'Now or Never'. Clever, too clever, too sensitive little novel. A small, ingenious over-educated talent. Started Violet Trefusis' Autobiography. Very silly and amusing. Lunch and Greta and the boys tomorrow afternoon. How will it all go off? Strand Pal. too. O Romance!

Thursday February 4 1954

A successful and delightful day. Lunch went off well, quietly but well, and the play was a great success with both of us. I wonder if I shall ever get my notices up to date. It seems a pity to lose all my first impressions as I have done for the last years or two. Still, I must think about it.

Mary Steele, dear pretty girl, entertained us to tea, and during the show tonight. I talked over tea to Martita about it. Daphne was there, too, and agreed with me absolutely. Peter disagreed with me absolutely, needless to say. I wish I did not allow myself to feel irritated by him so much. So stupid and petty of me.

Friday February 1 1954

Out early to dull old understudy rehearsal, particularly so this morning with Michael thing to be 'cued' in to all his business.

To lunch with Norman St. John Stevas in Harley St. It is certainly curious that he should have come back into my life. At Cambridge he was a figure of dazzling talents and brilliance - so people said. Of them I had no experience except one or two witty speeches in the Union and an extremely animated and to me delightful quickness of tongue. Vivacious is the word - very. He is still only twenty-four, and his industry makes one ashamed - a book commissioned, on Ford's, a novel in preparation, a lecturership at King's, London(?!), tutorial work at Oxford. Everything of the most social mental qualities. He is tall, with a slight stoop, red-faced, long-nosed, loud-laughed with a very broad smile. His flat is my ideal, large sitting-room, bed-cum-writing room, with a resident housekeeper. The sitting-room is lined with books, pretty china everywhere, all the new reviews out and about, all the half-cleared up material lying everywhere, everything in tidy and attractive chaos. All one needs is money. I'm sure I have everything else. Ah! we got on splendidly because we both talk fast.

Hear lent me 'Heart in Exile'. My dear, the boredom!

Monday February 8 1954

Two days spent more or less alone reading, writing and cutting out, though on Saturday I did go to see 'Pygmalion'.

Today has been much warmer and wet. Lunch with Michael W., and after a little shopping, went to see 'Belles de Nuits', a fantasy, which we enjoyed very much. Deliciously light and silly.

I found a letter from Ju waiting for me in the theatre. Letters from him are such a stir-up. They inspire me all over again to want to act all sorts of things. Money is the worry to me. I hope I can still act. It's so long since I felt that wonderful intoxicating sense of fun welling up. No scope for it in this. Ju says there is a part for me in his new show, and I must try for it in Bristol, or in London if not in Bristol.

At the beginning of the First Act tonight, during the laying of the supper table, Miss Leigh slipped and fell full length. She was obviously in agony, for when we carried her off at the end of the Act, she burst into gasping sobs the moment the curtain was down. Nevertheless her first objective was to test the telephone for Act II, to see if she could use it with her right hand. Her glove would not come off the wrist which was swelling badly. A doctor was called who thought one certainly, two possibly bones were broken. She played to the end of the play, perspiration running down her face, took her curtain calls with a smile and went to hospital.

Tuesday February 9 1954

Wednesday February 10 1954

Two full and heavy days. In the morning of Tuesday began at long last my letter to Ju, but had to abandon it at lunchtime. Lunched with Michael W., and told him all. He was fascinated. On to extremely boring and tiring rehearsal, naturally for us, because it was only a performance without costumes lights, or audience. Greta got through it well, and even better at night. Of course her performance was really poor, but she herself has a great deal of charm, and is a simple sweet girl, and the audience must have sensed this for they gave her a big reception. She had the star dressing-room, the star's dresser, took the star's place right up to having her own call, all to herself. Lots of flowers and reporters and her picture all over the papers this morning. She might get a film offer out of this.

Today has been even fuller. Understudy call in the morning, attended by Sir Laurence, was marred for me by my not knowing a move of the Major-Domo's. Suffice to say that it was about equally my fault and Diana Boddington's that I didn't know it. Nevertheless it depressed me. Even more so was suddenly having to do a bit of Northbrook which I had never done, and consequently did weakly, and it can be seen that my morning was not happy. Off to Lyons' C.H. to see if Angela Murphy was in her office. She wasn't, so I lunched alone. The matinee went off, dramatically speaking, well, but I put my tiny hoof in it once or twice more and was further depressed. All was satisfactorily cleared up in the evening and finally blown away by the arrival in the dressing-room of Colin James, Teddy F., Francis Baden-Powell and two unknowns with them. We talked and laughed and joked, and had supper in the mad sophisticated whirligig of Lyons' Brasserie, and I enjoyed myself like anything and damn Robin.

Thursday February 11 1954

Today to lunch at St. Mary's Rectory with David Davies. The Rector was also there, a sandy haired man called Langton, completely preoccupied with the Prodigal Son.

David Davies talked of generalities and personalities until about ten minutes before I left, when he gave me some papers to read. What do I think myself? Only that Christ is the Way, and not very strongly at that, which has never seemed enough to begin on. He says that it is only laziness that I have not begun before, but there is an element of diffidence there, too, which is why it has never been in the forefront of my mind. I suppose I am a living exemplar of someone who is living on the spiritual capital of his fathers. Anyway, to the papers.

Miss Leigh returned to the show tonight with her arm encased in plaster, all wrapped up in chiffon with a bow on top like a rather pretty parcel. After the show Peter B. said...

PAGE MISSING

Saturday February 13 1954

Met Peter Wood at the Apollo for lunch. His play 'Seagulls over Sorrento' closes there tonight after umpteen performances. Over fifteen hundred times anyway. We went to Bianchis for lunch; he had some minestrone, and then we both had chicken and mushroom vol-au-vents, and a glass of red wine.

He went off at about two-thirty to comfort poor Toby Robertson, whose production of 'Alice Through the Looking Glass' has not been the wildest success. Poor Toby, though my nasty jealous side is pleased. I went on to a News Theatre, the one in Piccadilly Circus, and saw the Royal Tour of New Zealand and another instalment of 'Wuthering Heights'. How strange to see Sir Laurence all young and ardent still, and come into the theatre to find a thickening disappointed-looking man. It was Peter B's last night with the company, for which I am now heartily sorry. Now I remember all the times when I might have been nicer and haven't been. Again, though, my nasty jealous side can't help feeling that I shall have more attention from the company now that he's gone. But that's a horrible thing to say. Nevertheless I must admit to myself that the blight he cast on me at Manchester, and which despite his attempts to do so, has never properly lifted, will now fly away from me. For example, apart from the obvious one of Jeremy, I now feel I can talk freely for the first time to Daphne, Martita and Paul.

Sunday February 14 1954

To South Croydon to spend the day with Ada. I caught the 11.53 from Charing X, getting a day return ticket costing three and sixpence, and after rattling slowly through Waterloo, London Bridge, New Cross Gate, Anerley, Forest Hill, Goodness Knows Where, East Croydon, Penge, I got to South Croydon at 12.30. The day was bright and clear and not very cold. Walking down the hill outside the station, I found myself in Selsdon Road, wide and busy with traffic, lined with plain mean Early Victorian houses.

Ada's semi-detached, is from the road just a small piece of dirty brick wall with two rectangular windows in it. Up a squashy soggy gravel path I went to a cheap green-painted door with two frosted glass panels in it. Ada opened the door, being obliged to go up one step of the stairs to open it wide enough for me to get in. It opens on to a small square space of exactly its own width both ways. On the side of the square opposite the door the stairs, a flight so steep and so narrow that I was forced to set my feet sideways on each tread, go up to two doors leading to two bedrooms one on each side of the flight, with no landing of any kind. The other two sides of the 'hall' just big enough to hold a door-mat, lead into the drawing-room or front parlour, and the living-room. The parlour is small, about twelve feet square, with three or four ill-assorted chairs, and a sofa covered in light curtaining material. In one corner is a large glass-fronted book case of cheap stained oak, filled with the late nineteenth-century editions of Walter Scott's (the publishers') book-club, all in mint condition, that stand on junk-shop tables marked 6 for 3. Heavy cloth-bindings stamped elaborately in gold, of John Halifax Gentleman 'The Last of the Mohicans' Forster's Life of Dickens, and so on. Over the mantel piece is a large coloured photograph of a very young man, in all the rosy freshness of youth and the photographer's paints, whose springing hair and confident body still give out enough of the radiance of youth even from behind the genteel mask of suburbanity, for it to be a shock to hear that he was killed on the Somme and has been dead for nearly forty years. I suppose he never thought, as he looked at that camera, that he would be killed. The living-room is the same size, with a large open grate, a cheap veneered table, some pretty Staffordshire ornaments, a bakelite wireless set, and a lot of kitchen chairs home-upholstered in rexine. At the back is a lean-to scullery. There are no other rooms. There is no bathroom, the lavatory is outside. There is only one tap - at the sink. Now they have electric light as well as gas but that is a comparatively recent innovation.

Ada herself is white with years of poor eating, too little sleep, too little exercise, too little pleasure. Her journey to London starts at 7.45 and lasts until 8.45, often standing all the way in crowded carriages. Her hip is now affected by something or other, and she walks with a stick. She is a competent accountant, but may at any time have to retire through ill-health, and has nothing to retire on. She is very bald and has lumps on her head. Her step-mother is over 80, small wrinkled and frail. Does all the work, and that although she dislocated her elbow in a fall, didn't know, developed arthritis in the now permanently disabled arm, which is constantly wracked with pain. May die and leave Ada with more than ever to do, more reasons than ever for retiring and less to do it with.

I suppose my going cheered them up a bit. Any visitor would. I can't do anything for them. Even if I had any money they wouldn't take it, as they have more than me at present. But how sad!

Monday February 15 1954

A very dull lunch, in every way, with David Simpson, amid the huge grey walls of the City. Back to spend the afternoon with Michael W. most simpatico.

Tonight the show a tiny strain because of Michael Redington, but he will soon get into it, and is, I think, well-intentioned. Peter B. was in the theatre all night. I knew he wouldn't be able to keep away. Paul had told Richard W., and both agree with me. Borrowed 'The Military Orchid' by Jocelyn Brook, from Michael. Charming and graceful little book, which gave me an hour or so of gentle pleasure. Must to bed to after recording that Susan Raven with Mamma, who is not very well-balanced. Imagines that Susan is trying to show up her ignorance all the time, this is uncomfortable for a guest. Susan is much more bossy with her mother there, too. Mother is very like Susan, crisply waved and dressed, determined to keep her body trim, whatever her mind does.

Tuesday February 16 1954

A dull yellow day. Called at Chatham House for Teddy Fraser. It has the sad air of a grand house that is too grand to be rebuilt into offices, but must have all its office equipment in detachable parts. Horrible.

Lunched at Quality Inn in Leicester Square. Very ordinary cheap food, but with the menu peppered with delectable adjectives. 'Deep Fried Fillets of Plaice, with French Fried Potatoes', 'Grilled Stowmarket Pork Sausage with Creamed and Seasoned Potatoes', 'Aunt Mary's Home Made Apple Pie' all sounds much more particularly appetising than Fish and Chips, Sausage and Mash, Apple Tart.

Back here for a while, and then off to the Moores for tea. Odd little house, sandwiched between a pub and an antique shop in Church Street. Mr. Moore the same dusty old Roman head I remember, a Mrs. Pennell, a dull and rather prejudiced, but lively and warm-hearted old woman, and Mrs. Moore. Mrs. M. is short and rather sweet-faced, and may once have been pretty. Now she is very faded and not quite clean. She wore a dress of rough Della Robbia blue stuff, with leg of mutton sleeves and pointed cuffs, open down the front, from bodice to hem, to show an under dress of elaborate embroidery of a Morris wall-paper kind.

Her hair, in flat waves around her forehead, was held in by a fillet. Whether it was my vanity, I am not sure. They seemed thrilled that I should bother to talk to them at all, and poured out floods of reminiscences whenever I asked for them. Old Moore himself actually imitated Irving for me. He saw him in 'Faust', 'the Merchant of Venice' and 'The Bells'. He went backstage and saw the bells themselves, a circle of wire with the bells on the bottom of it, held in one hand, the fist it made then being hit with the other. This method could produce extremely subtle gradations of volume, on which Irving set great store.

Wednesday February 17 1954

All theatre. Lunch with Patrick was rather a frost, Peter Glenville crying off as I knew he would. A very nice perky chirpy little woman came, tho', now playing the Salvation Army woman in 'Guys and Dolls'. Very bright, and imitated Sarah Bernhardt doing a speech from 'Cleopatra'.

On to the matinee, with loads of 'cat' going on about Peter B. Paul now says that Mrs. Spencer told him (Paul) that Peter B. had been told by Binky not to see so...

PAGE MISSING

...innocent. His emotions have all been warped and withered before they have properly developed.

Lunch with Susan Raven had been slightly uncomfy. She is a governessy girl, given to smart raps of the tongue, and a nasty pub lunch, too. After the show to see Michael W. and talked until 12.30 about me. Telling me my faults, but oh so nicely, so that really I was able to bask in lots of me-centred talk, so bad for me, I suppose, but so delicious.

Today has been again a little tiring, and I shall be quite glad of a free day. Went down to Stepney to see Colin James, who is a curate at St. Dunstan's there. Taxi-driver had no idea where East Arbour Street was, but we finally found our way amid the slum houses, rubble and council flats, to a large dilapidated house in entirely uncared-for grounds, in a little street of two storey houses, very clean and neat. The door was opened by a 'woman' in fur boots, an apron and a scarf round her head. I announced myself, she looked blank and called 'Father', whereupon appeared not Colin, but a young man not unlike a younger version of Sir L., with a strong square chin, firm straight mouth, tufty eyebrows, and a decided and forthright manner. His name is Ronald Gordon, and he is a co-curate of Colin's. When Colin took me to the Church, I was most surprised by its beauty. Fifteenth-century, very well kept, many beautiful marmoreal tablets, white-washed walls, and some very unsuitable Hugh Easton windows of young men of doubtful virtue. Full of people collecting for a wedding, all the men in bright blue suits and bright brown shoes, all the women in powder blue. The church seems to belong to another life altogether by its proportions alone. On our way to my bus stop, passing a cinema called 'The Ben Hur' because, so Colin tells me, that is the name of the man who owns it, we called in at one of the flats in one of the new large hideous blocks put up since the war. A young family from the church had just gone to live there. The father, a man of about thirty or thirty-five, wearing a grey shirt and trousers with carpet-slippers, all spotted with grease, was sitting listening to the wireless and watching his aquarium, a very pretty green tank, electrically heated, lighted, and aerated. All the enchanting little fishes dashed to and fro while we were talking. His wife, in a very grubby pink sweater and grey skirt, made us some tea and brought it onto the table in this bare undusted room. She tried to keep in order two children, little girls with smeared dirt all over their faces, hands and clothes. The passage from the front door to the rooms, their 'hall' I suppose, is only wide enough for one person, and all the paint is dried up and peeling already. Yet they are very proud of it all, and obviously completely happy. He works in the famous bell foundry nearby. Pushed back to what I call reality and what to them is make believe.

Sunday February 21 1954

Quiet peaceful day; out to lunch with Mrs. Schonegerel and Patricia. Lovely for me to have them to talk to; they like me, I think. Indeed Mrs. S. on our way back here (she was going to tea in Easton Place) said as much, that I had stimulated her, made her feel happier. For me, otherwise it has been a dreamy dozy day, and I am glad to go to bed.

Tuesday February 23 1954

Di Goodman came to the play tonight, and told me that Ju has been in London since Monday. I wish he had told me, but how lovely he's here anyway. I shall see him tomorrow perhaps.

Friday March 5 1954

Rushed off on a number eleven bus round past the Airways building with its enormous thirtyish statuary, up the cosy ugliness of Victoria Street, along Whitehall past the dreary block of the Cenotaph, and the scarlet thrill of the Horse Guards, to the Strand and lunch with Timothy O'Brien. He was as ever full of projects, among them the near-certainty of his being taken on as a Resident Designer at Lime Grove. He had suggested the meeting because he said I stimulated him into looking at things from a new angle. We talked mostly of 'Hamlet' and its problems for the designer. I said that I had always wanted it to be played in a very definite atmosphere of a whole castle. That apparently was Timothy's idea, too, to make the castle much more shut in and more luxurious, 'With', I said, 'the closet as the enclosed 'womby' centre of the whole.' This pleased Timothy.

PAGE MISSING?

Today has been delightful. Timothy O'Brien's birthday, and he and Michael W. and John H. and I lunched at the Strand Pal! Very gay lunch followed by John and I going to see - wait though when I say 'very gay lunch', I wish I could catch the intimacy, the half-finished sentences that all four could finish, the accepted standards that need not be mentioned as so often and so tiresomely they must be. So gay, so gay and so sweet.

John H. and I went to see 'Le Salaire de la Peur' at the Academy. A terrific film - literally. Terrible, harsh, hard, choking, sickening, but somehow uplifting because it is so superbly made. I found at the end of the 2 1/2 hours which had seemed like five seconds that my hands, tightly clasped, were all wrinkled with sweat as if I had done a week's washing.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 24

Angus Mackay

Being the twentieth

From March 10 1954

To May 17 1954

Wednesday March 10 1954

A tiring day, with the temperature up a good many degrees, which makes one so sleepy at this time of the year. On my way to the theatre bought a copy of 'Picture Post', which is selling like hot cakes. The story of Robert Cowell, the racing driver who turned into a woman and who is now Roberta Cowell, is quite hypnotising to almost everyone. 'She' looks rather extraordinary, like a very clever female impersonation.

Lunched with Angela Murphy in 'her' Lyons. Rather constrained talk. She is not a happy girl, and deserves to be so happy. Pretty and gay and bewitching she could be. Life has said no, and stuck her in a frowsty little office.

Larry tomorrow.

Thursday March 11 1954

A beautiful bright wild spring day. Just as I was looking forward to a quiet letter-writing morning, the telephone rang - David Davies to ask me to go for a walk with him. Off we started at ten thirty from Sloane Square, along the polite bustle of the King's Road, full of cultured house-wives bravely coping with the Brave New world. Up Anderson Street, along Draycott Avenue, across Brompton Road into Pelham Street, and now we found we had to loosen our scarves and undo our coats in the warm sun. Past South Kensington Station, and the elegant curve of Pelham Crescent, into Cromwell Place and ahead the enormous yellow and blue mass of the Natural history Museum, still completely Sunday afternoonish as I suppose it always will be. Out into the wide dreariness of the Cromwell Road, along the Gloucester Road, Palace Gate, and then Kensington Gardens and the Park. The grass was so green and the sky so blue, and the riders in the Row so pretty, a football match with lots of nice young men in red, and I felt as if I could act in seven plays at once, write three new novels, start seven new affairs, talk for hours with hundreds of new people and dance all night for seven nights running.

Lunch with John H. in Soho. Pub lunch. Then he wanted to walk to the Tate. 'It's such a lovely spring day. Oh! do let's'. So we did. Walked for about two hours, I suppose round the galleries, which I very much enjoyed. He had fallen for the red-haired boy standing at the front of Frith's Derby Day. But we quite forgot about such ignoble thoughts! wandering around among so many pretty things. I showed him one of my favourites, a portrait of a girl in white, sitting at a window, by Constable. Also...

PAGES MISSING

Monday March 15 1954

To lunch with Bobby Chapman in his flat in Clarges Mews, very attractive flat, though furniture a little unadventurous. No mon. I should think. Rooms on different levels. Dining-room acid green, drawing-room acid yellow, bath-room acid blue. Bobby C. who was vaguely about at Camb. and whom I always wanted to see more of, is extremely urbane and intelligent, deliciously smooth and witty. Sweet. Also there brother Dick, young with slightly serious air, which he wishes away, I think. Great charm of a quiet kind. Ben something also, tall, dark, handsome in an aquiline lean way, also charm of a slightly objective held back kind. Held forth in my most odious vein. I enjoyed myself. It's like a drug, if people laugh I can't stop. We went on talking till four, and I was late for the Moore's tea-party. Really if he were Old Moore himself, he couldn't be duller.

Tuesday March 16 1954

This morning we were allowed to attend a dress rehearsal of the Midnight Cavalcade for the Actors' Orphanage next Thursday. What a piece of luck.

I met Greta outside on a cold windy street, and we made our way round the dull concrete wastes of the Palladium stage-door, pushing past the keeper, who, poor man, was sitting in a haze of unknown visitors. In the maze of cold stone passages we ran into Margaretta Scott, smoothly dark and handsome; this first taste of even minor stardom set our pulses going, and sent us through the passdoor in an inspired burst of path-finding.

In the enormous chocolate-varnished spaces of the stalls, Nicola D. was sitting all alone. Nervously we joined her, shrinking down beside her, watching the knots of people collecting in the stalls nearest the band. The conductor was running through some parts of his score in the fussy 'music is all that matters' way that musicians have, and against a background of broken musical phrases and 'no, boys, there's a build-up there' or 'boys, there's no third tag here', we goggled at the stars. Jack Hawkins, enormous in a pale grey suit, with leathery hair. Margaret Lockwood as a circus clown tramp doing a song and dance rather well in a coy girlish way with John Mills - who looked like a Dickens figure - Bob Cratchit or Newman Noggs - at one moment, and Disraeli at another. Vivien Leigh who came in a mink coat and a little rust-coloured hat, and refused the offer of a grand seat to sit with us and giggle at Sir Laurence tap-dancing. Jack Buchanan in an exceedingly tight smart double-breasted blue suit with a pearl grey trilby and a red carnation buttonhole, asked for a picture by one of the twenty-seven cameramen hanging about, he grabbed Miss Leigh's cup of coffee, sat down at the end of the row, crossed his legs, held the cup to his lips as if he was drinking, smiling broadly - the camera flashed 'Right, old boy' said Mr. Buchanan. 'Thanks ver' much', said the man. By this time Sir L. had made his appearance, rather nervous I thought, in top-hat, white tie and tails, ready rather early, I thought. As he turned up, the orchestra noises died away, and the first sketch began. This was from the Lyric or Globe Revue, of a play that will do equally well for British or American audiences.

The cast was deliciously starry - Emlyn Williams, Gladys Cooper, Paul Scofield, Richard Burton, Vivian Blaine, Margaretta Scott. The sketch went reasonably well, Gladys Cooper being especially good, making a delicious entrance in a cloud of cigarette smoke, drawing desperately at a weed taken from a box prominently labelled reefers. She gave all through the

impression of having taken trouble over even such a tiny thing as this, without the slightest hint of either pomposity or intolerance. They were followed after an interminable but fascinating interval by John Mills and M.L., who were in their turn followed by Muriel Smith, singing with thrilling glowing intensity. Then at last came Sir L. the couple of quite dazzlingly immaculate figures glided and twirled in front of a pale gold cloth, Jack B. idly running through a dance he had just thought of. Sir. L. faithfully carrying on the sacred torch of drama. Sir John Gielgud's big production number 'Mad About the Boy' from Coward's 'Words and Music' came next, and with Sir John wandering helplessly about the stalls giggling whenever anything went wrong, which it did all the time, was a hysterical affair. Four women, - a society woman, a street girl, a school-girl and a maid, played by Valerie Hobson, Muriel Smith, Hermione Baddeley, and Dora Bryan - one by one sing the same tune with different words, about this film-star they adore. The number is a little slow and is difficult to catch on to suddenly, and the production is slightly under-rehearsed. Valerie Hobson appeared, very tall, very thin, very stately, dressed in a low crowned sponge-bag turban made of white beads which flopped up and down as she walked, and a very tight very plain very well-cut black jersey suit. By the side of the sofa on her little bit of the set was an enormous stone vase of flowers with a thick white wire leading to a not-very-hidden microphone. Sitting there talking coolly about wild passions and singing politely about mad ones, Miss Hobson's elegantly varied nods and waves of the head were not timed as well as they might have been, and her voice came over as if over a transatlantic cable, like a high wind, in terrifying gusts. Muriel Smith was thrilling again but wrong. Dora Bryan was quite funny. Hermione was quite absurd. Not a line did she know, not a note of music, but kept us all laughing all the time. "Oh, really, Queen Casual, isn't she?" said Sir John, between giggles. After it was over, he sat behind Vivien L. and they compared their 'Times' crosswords. Close to he is younger, skin very clear and pale, with the smallest tint of pink. Little hair, few lines, (very striking this, and none of the peevish look round the mouth one associates with so many of his pictures) clothes faintly unsuitable, shirt-collar narrow and cut very low with long points, making long lean neck longer and leaner, and altogether unkind to an older face. Brown suit, undistinguished and ever so faintly American, (patch pockets, I think) buff waistcoat, which looked too arranged for collar and suit. Frankie Howard and Margaret Rutherford now came out and did an exceedingly under rehearsed sketch which I found too embarrassing to watch, and so watched the stars instead. Richard Burton looking dirty and dishevelled, hair almost to his shoulders (for Hamlet, of course) but unbrushed and unwashed, too, I should think; a thick stubble on a paper-white face, skin pock-marked and spot-scarred, with heavy smudges under the eyes, no tie, an old corduroy jacket spotted trousers and scuffed and undusted shoes. Paul Schofield sitting beside him, wavy hair very well brushed, clean, tidy, extremely handsome and respectable-looking. And of course R.B. is far away my favourite actor of the two.

We all came out of the theatre together, and I thought 'Well, we're all the same age'.

Thursday March 18 1954

Michael W., still flying about London seeing about jobs, has bought the 'Boy Friend' record. Fascinated to hear it. Man, Anthony Hayes is certainly exactly like Jack Buchanan, and girl, Anne Rogers, exactly like Binnie Hale. Rather worrying I should have thought. I can't imagine anyone ever saying I was exactly like anyone, and I hope they never do. What pleases me about it is that the songs...

PAGE MISSING

...written around his falling asleep while smoking in bed, and burning a large hole through sheets and blankets - all this during a weekend he spends with the professor who can extend his appointment as lecturer at the provincial university where all the action takes place. Personally I found the scene partly irritating, and the depression of a novel where everyone is second or third-rate, while yearning hopelessly or blindly for the first rate quite spoilt for me the real pleasure in the acute observation and narrative gifts that are certainly displayed as well. but not a book to make me laugh - certainly not. By an odd chance, I had read the other books the same week, with certain points of likeness between them and 'Lucky Jim', William Cooper's 'Scenes from Provincial Life' and Anthony Powell's 'A Question of Upbringing'. I've read W. Cooper's latest book, 'The Ever-Interesting Topic', and found it flat and rather dull. This earlier one I thought excellent in a small-scale way, lacking all the unreality that makes 'Lucky Jim' ring so false. But to either I far and away prefer 'A Question of Upbringing', quite a different kind of novel, but oh so much more my kind.

To Tricia's after lunch at about three-thirty when we drove out to Gerard's. A nice blowy fresh drive, with the sun-roof open on Tricia's nice old dusty car. Door opened by Mr. Hyde from across the road - rather a shock. He and his wife getting the tea ready for Gerard. We went to meet him, and met dear Patience O'Leary on the way, all tricked out in a little straw hat, check coat, pink gloves and a long umbrella with a Wedgwood cameo top. Soon the rest of the party gathered. Christina Erskine-Muir again, in a white sweater and a bright blue skirt that was too tight. Charles Monteith, enormous elephantine juicy-mouthed figure, talking of Stocker who died in Balliol the other day at the age of 100, who had never left his rooms for the last 15 years, and whose fellowship was senior to Pater's, Roger Sanders, the nice dull stage-struck schoolboy, who has profited a lot from his visits to Gerard. After service we were joined by Jean Livingstone-Learnmouth, an odd-looking girl, tall, with a large bony nose, untidy auburn hair, good clothes and a great deal of personality, whom I remember coming to Kingly Street. Still rather disorganised remarks, only nineteen or something, she is, and has yet to phrase her bobby-dazzlers properly. Trying to be shocking is difficult and uncomfortable. To be deliciously incongruous which is what she wants to be, needs practise in delivery rather than content. And in a few years she'll be devastating. Christina I am very fond of. Warm-hearted simple and intelligent, what a nice combination.

Monday March 22 1954

Rather a hectic little day. Rushed back from Gerard's who insisted on taking me shopping in the morning, making me very late. To Michael W's flat at 1.0, lunch with him and Robin. What an old fuddy-duddy Robin is, and what a dear! Back here to write letters, and out again at three thirty to meet Michael, and go to tea with Harold Thesen? First of all we went for a walk in Ranelagh Gardens, not particularly pretty in themselves, but lovely today, with the bright freshness of spring everywhere, crocuses under the trees, and the faint dusting of green on the branches above.

When we got back we felt so gay and fresh that we could not go to tea with Harold, so we stayed in Walpole Street and had a good talk. Oh that all these good talks must fade into nothing. Larry came round after the show. Went back with him, and hardly noticed him.

Tuesday March 23 1954

I don't know why I should be depressed tonight. But I am. And when I am depressed down it goes in the diary. I wonder what my diary should really be like, whether I should control what I put into it, or just allow my mind and heart to run down through my pen onto the page. And I have really nothing to be depressed about except that I do not know what will become of me when this job is over.

Wednesday March 24 1954

Donald is 30 today. Gosh! I had a free morning this morning, and did nothing with it except write part of a letter to Michael Bishop. I am jangled and irritable tonight - tiredness of course and poor food.

Peter Wood came round after the matinee, and we went out for tea. Always enjoy talking to him, though he is such a self deceiver. Everyone seems to get away with so much describing the sway of advantage one way and then another, the cold expressionless surface that gradually both of the contestants began to display, the flush of fury on his brother's face as his opponent squared up to a vital pull, their exhaustion afterwards. What has happened to Timothy? There is a flame in that boy. How splendid that he has this job at Lime Grove!

After lunch back to Michael's, to pick him up to go for tea with Harold Thesen. H.T., a large bald man, with a pink face with deep January bags under each eye, a lavishly vague manner, and a disconcerting habit of nuzzling and feeling and clasping one while going on talking quietly about wallpaper, has a prettyish Early Victorian house in Markham Square. The papers are pretty and so is some of the furniture, mostly Regency, but the ornaments and bric-a-brac are mostly hideous in themselves or wrongly chosen and the whole house has a far too bleak feel about it. He is a dear, a little bit slow, but very bright really, and less boring as you get to know him, which is more than you can say of most people!

To the theatre straight way to find crisis. Jeremy S. ill and off. Endless re-arranging of parts of table-laying routines. Michael Redington surprisingly good, except for a mad smile. Came away from the theatre feeling faintly low, because of the tension backstage, hoping for a visitor. But nobody. Going into Lyons' Corner House Brasserie, I came face to face with - Tony White. Only on Tuesday John Homstrom, who turned out to be behind him, had said that we ought to meet again - and there we were, face to face. Fate! He is much more assured and relaxed and improved socially. Much more come-atable and able to talk naturally. We got on well, I thought, and I...

PAGE MISSING

Friday April 2 1954

I think I shall leave the family's visit in the limbo to which it is almost relegated already.

A very nice lunch today with Bobby Chapman. So bright and sensitive and intelligent. A real person. Delicious sense of exaggeration.

Saturday April 3 1954

Very awkward day. I had arranged to take James I. out to lunch. Found when the morning came, that I had not enough money. I slipped a note into his house in Lennox Gardens, creeping deceitfully through the red ramparts of Cadogan Square, saying I was sorry I couldn't come because i was ill. Felt very guilty, but thought it better than making him uncomfortable by confession or borrowing; on my way to see the Magoo and Thurber cartoons (which were ravishing and ravishingly cheap - only a shilling) I looked down onto the pavement from my No. 19 bus, and saw James and Anne running for it. Providentially for me they missed, and got on the one behind. Ours drew away quickly, allowing me to get out and down the 'tube' station at Knightsbridge, without, I hope, being seen. Oh! the hot guilt and I'm being shadowed feel of it!

Martin Kenyon came round.

Sunday April 4 1954

Again alone all day resting and sleeping and reading Trollope's 'The Claverings', and writing. In the afternoon I went out for a walk along by the side of the Royal Hospital, and round the Pimlico Road through Bloomfield terrace. Such quiet pretty houses and No.8, that Richard Buckle writes so well about, very staid for all the excitements it has held. When I got to Victoria, of course I could not resist the crowds, and after a beastly lunch in a fascinatingly awful 'self-service', all greasy chromium and greenish neon-lighting, I went to see another rowdy garish American musical, rather better in a way, all the sets stylised and fragmentary, but most of the performers so amateurish. Afterwards I wandered around Victoria Station, enjoying as I always do, the little playlets of coming and going, of cheerful goodbye and tearful hullo.

Tuesday April 6 1954

6.0 Wed. morning.

Just in after a splendid talk with Timothy, John H. and Tony White at his house in Farmer Street.

Will write fully tomorrow, but must record the mood of quiet deep happiness I am in. We talked ourselves out of isolation into company. We all decided that it will be us who will lead a return to the classic rule. 'Consolidation' is everything, in spite of Mr. Lehmann. The age of analysis is over. Noel Coward said that the secret of success was to choose the right cliques at the beginning.

I know my clique, and I want to be in it and of it and with it. You know, I really believe we're going to do it.

Wednesday April 7 1954

What can I say about last night? The three of us, (for John H. though contributing valuable thoughts, is not of the theatre) are now professionals and though never at all close at Cambridge, are now drawn together by this common purpose - the new classicism. Tony with his urgent clumsy powerful intensity, Tim with his flame of bright purpose, and me fooling about as usual but exciting them by getting excited, there we sat and talked.

It had begun with a visit to 'I Am a Camera' with Peter Wood and Tony. Much enjoyed, although Peter is so tortuous and analytical in a crude way now, that one can say nothing now without one's psyche being dredged or one's vocal technique probed to their utmost limits. Outside the theatre we met John H. and went to the Vegetarian Restaurant for tea. Here the conversation was for a little, stilted, but relaxed as time went on. I was accosted by Michael David, with hair cut very close for 'Marching Song', very intense and serious about my wasting time in the 'S.P.' Peter left us at 6.0 to go to Streatham Hill. We went off to the Salisbury to wait for Tim. There amid the copper goddesses and cutglass I met Robert Cartland, square-faced serious, and had a little talk.

Arranged to meet the boys after the show.

PAGE MISSING

...ever the Victorians were in their day. That we must build, and never mind if the materials and style do not strike an immediately novel note. The edifice of civilisation shattered in 1914, has been used up, neat, piece by piece, and none of the pieces has been put together to form a new building. We are going to be sneered at for the opposite reasons from Strachey and the others.

All this we reaffirmed and restated and amplified when we got to Tony's house in Farmer St. Very pretty house not unlike Larry's, though much prettier decorations. Lots of family portraits everywhere, and Tony showed us a letter from Chas. Kemble to his great great grand-father thanking him for supporting Covent Garden with a loan. And Tony so loves looking anarchistic, in black and red. He 'house-wifed' very well.

PAGE MISSING

Sunday April 11 1954

Slept all day until three o'clock, when I bathed shaved and dressed with the utmost care before going to tea at Lionel Harris' flat. The house is a typical tall London house, in a typical tall London terrace. Inside his flat at the back of the ground floor, is very different. The living-room, a large oblong room, with a huge curved door, and an enormous bay French window, is decorated in grey and vermillion, with floor-felt dyed pale blue. Everything in the room is 'painted by Lionel and Paul themselves' as Ju told me. Thus the initial effect of the gold cornice for example, is exceedingly pretty, but will not stand up to a long or close look. The same is true of every object in the room, and, except that he is exceedingly ugly from a distance even for a short glimpse, of the host.

When I arrived only Ju was there, and in the large rather bare room, we talked constrainedly, oh dear that we should have to make conversation. And in a way I was quite pleased when Lionel Harris came in, about half an hour afterwards. On my way out, I had said to myself

that this might be one of the moments of my career. A TV. producer can do such wonders for you. My heart sank at first sight of him - a small fat jew, with large soft brown eyes and frizzly thinning black hair. His manner was, and remained, cool polite, even affable, but distant and quite quite disinterested. Never at any moment did he betray the slightest interest in me or my talent or my past or my future or my present or even of my relations with Ju. And although he joined his voice to Ju and James C. (dear James, how kind he is) when I said I must leave them to their work, in protests to me to stay, I knew that he really thought of me as quite an odd man out.

What really depressed me, as after a faultless exit, I trotted down the steps and away, was that it was true. I was 'odd man out'. Ju has become much more closely connected with other people professionally than he ever was with me. And that is a bitter pill for someone like me to swallow. I went straight to the cinema, but the drug didn't work, and here I am still wriggling. Why is it that I suffer from this idiotic fear of loneliness? I have plenty to do, yet am terrified of being alone too long, at least when there are friends nearby. At home I can sit all day and every day and hate interruptions. I think it's because I won't face up to the Church. I am sure I ought to. I can't go on believing in God in this wishy-washy way.

Wednesday April 14 1954

A very full day. Up early and out to pick up Michael W's 'Boy Friend' records. Played them over in the little playing booth, found them quite fascinating, though either they are poor recordings (technically, I mean) or meant to imitate the crackle and hiss of 'twenties needle and gramophone, for even on the smoothest radiogram their surface is poor.

Rushed off with them to understudy call.

Good Friday April 16 1954

The nearest that I have been to the Crucifixion today has been a cheap and silly film shown free by the Militant Seventh Day Anabaptists. Michael Bishop and I dropped in on the way to Marylebone.

Having seen him off I came back here and rang up John M. and Michael W. who asked me round to tea.

After a gay and delightful tea, we went out for a blow in Ranelgh...

PAGES MISSING

...met anyone like me or Michael, or imagined us. Mr. of the small family was very colonial and boorish (and would laugh at this description, I dare say) and one could simply hear his wife wincing at his announcing loudly to me that he was a sergeant-major in the War. I soon transferred myself to her group, which included Michael and her blonde simple-looking daughter. Both saucered at us while we sparkled, obviously adoring it, but at last Michael and I started to get giggles for no reason really, because we weren't teasing them or anything like that. It was, I think, because they were so terribly easy to surprise, and so receptive of such old ideas, that I at least who hate to shock, lost control. Just as I was talking about the

Queen Mother's wonderful technique, and saying that the Queen was the only child star who'd ever made good, I saw Michael shaking at the thought of presenting such a revolutionary idea as the Queen Mother having a technique at all to these simple souls. I gave up. Waited in the mounting tension until we got upstairs and out into Markham Square, where we rolled all over the road screaming with laughter and holding onto one another.

Sunday April 18 1954

In bed until three twenty shaved, bathed, dressed and off to John H. for the first time in old clothes.

When I arrived, I was pleased to find Tony White there, in dirty old jeans and those soft Greek sandals, no socks 'because I've run out of clean ones'. We talked of 'Marching Song' again, and of his experiences at Worthing. After about an hour he was called for by a slim blond young...

PAGE MISSING

Wednesday April 21 d1954

Yesterday saw me at St. James' for the dress rehearsal of Sir L's new presentation, 'Waiting for Gillian'. They were there, and Evelyn Laye whose husband is in it, too. A very poor play, but afternoon saved for I was able to watch Miss L. sitting in the stalls, her lovely haggard face lifted up to the stage, with an odd expression on it, like a woman who has had a great shock.

Finished today reading Philip Tonybee's 'Friends Apart', a cleverly written book, but most irritatingly humourless, and oh didn't they take themselves seriously. All those young men yarping about the workers and Spain and Fascism, and living conscientiously eccentric lives, with large family houses and unlimited food always in the background. Really, they remind me of Robin.

That reminds me that on my way home tonight, as I passed by Robin's house, I heard the 'Boy Friend' records being loudly played and Anthea thing came out, towing a rather silly drunk brother, and wearing a nasty cheap dress. Poor Robin, he really does find the most awful people. Even soft-hearted Michael refuses.

Why do I forget to say things about books I've adored? Read 'Future Indefinite' Noel Coward's thing. Poor. Should have cut war stuff by two-thirds. Have just read tonight an American novel, 'The Folded Leaf' by William Maxwell. Not bad, shows in style at any rate, a great deal more delicacy and awareness of un-American values than many I've read. Did I put down that I very much liked Nancy Mitford's gay vital 'Madame Pompadour' and loathed 'Lucky Jim' by Kingsley Amis. Excellent French theatre book by Harold Hobson.

Thursday April 22 1954

A hurried morning, visiting Michael W., and getting ready to have lunch with Michael David, at present in 'Marching Song'. He was almost half an hour late at the Salisbury but the time was not wasted. What sad lines are engraved on actor's faces! Nearly all those whom I saw around me had drawn mouths, wistful eyes, sudden eager smiles, equally sudden clouded wistful frowns. One I noticed in particular, a dark worried-looking young man. Turned out that Michael David knew him, and that it was Kenneth Haigh, who has been doing so well on television. Looks very unfinished.

Michael David is slightly shorter than me, very solidly broadly built, with a thick heavy square head, a face that is all jaw and nose and bright sparkling eyes. At the moment his hair is cut almost to the bone, for his part as a young Army Officer. His manner is a mixture of assertiveness and timidity. His mind is not nearly so certain as his spirits. His intensity leads him into slight absurdity at times, though I am sure he will gradually lose that. It is indeed a pleasure to meet a young actor who has not been to the University, who can yet recognise that the theatre is not sustained or controlled by rep. gossip.

Friday April 23 1954

An extraordinary frustrating day. Spent most of the morning and afternoon in here, for some reason just frittering away the time. I can't understand why I should be so lazy; my brain kept on wool-gathering, and my hands fidgeting. Perhaps I need 'smarties and blood-sugar'. Sat in here all day except for lunch-time and just after, when I went round to Michael and John. As I rounded the corner, there they were, just coming back from lunch, and behind them two people who were also with them, a fact that I didn't realize until they followed us down the stairs.

One of them turned out to be Trevor something, a meaty boy, and the other, a small pop-eyed tittering creature, called Arthur Barlow. Lectures at King's, and wanted us to go along to his doss-house for tea.

In the evening the Appleyards came round, to take me off to supper at the R.A.C. Enormous neo-classic affair with a huge oval entrance-hall, vast restaurant (dining-room I suppose) bars and swimming-baths, a Turkish bath, and probably a tube station, if one knew where. Appleyards benevolent but stupid. Oh dear the silences that fell.

Saturday April 24 1954

I cannot think why Martita Hunt has not entered more into the pages of this diary. She dominates all the time I spend at the theatre. This week I have had tea in her dressing-room on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and now today. She is talking on Tuesday at the Arts Council on 'Being an Actress'. She asked me to write something, so today I gave her a scruffy essay on it that I had scribbled this afternoon. That shows how our relationship has changed. She said she would let me read her speech, but she's too frightened. That means of course that she does not think it wise. She has been sweet to me, most kind and helpful, talking to me as an equal, and as Daphne and Paul are always there, too, giving them I hope, a better opinion of me. She was, or so she says, impressed by the article. How she could be....

When I walked down the stairs tonight, I saw at the bottom a man standing with his back, clutching Miss Leigh in his arms. His shoulders were hunched, and an old pork-pie hat jammed down on bright gold hair. As I passed them, he said '...must say goodbye, and Mummy's little boy is going to be so lonely'. This in a sort of English-German accent. 'Lovely, lovely to have seen you', she said, 'Goodbye, Danny darling'.

Sunday April 25 1954

To lunch with Michael and John this morning. John Holmstrom was also coming, and perhaps Tony W. I was looking forward to a wonderful full Sunday with them all. But no, Tony never came, Michael and John had to go off, and I didn't like to stay, so I made some excuse and left.

Went straight off to the Curzon, and saw the new French film 'Les Orgeuilleux'. Not very good, though perfectly acted. The beginning and the atmosphere and the detail are wonderful. Perhaps, as Dilys Powell says in the paper this morning, too right, their perfection only hiding the absence of anything real to say. The physical details, men vomiting actual matter, bed-bugs jumping, a spinal needle being pushed into a woman's back, seemed to me wholly inartistic - for me at any rate. For I could think of nothing but their real horror, as if I were seeing them in real life. So naturally I shut my eyes.

When I came out I felt very lonely and restless and lost. Had something to eat, came back here, fidgeted about a bit wrote the beginnings of two bad plays, just to see if I could, and went back to Michael and John's, where I found only John in. The reason why I don't really like him is of course that he is so understanding of, and so like himself, the side of me I don't all that much care about, and would be very disgusted with if there weren't more to. Oh fuck me!

How can I go on about myself so long?

Trevor is coming to live with Michael when John goes back to next week. My goodness what high jinks there'll be!

Monday April 26 1954

A quiet but pleasant day. Went in the morning to David Davies, where I am quietly talking about God, in a sort of take my soul unawares kind of way. I daresay that it will do some good, though I am rather flat about it all.

In the afternoon wrote and wrote and wrote. And read part of Patrick Leigh Fermor's 'The Traveller's Tree'. A very good book indeed, immensely rich and utterly fascinating. Only that it has rather spoiled 'The Violins of Saint-Jaques' for me because I can see where he got it all from.

Richard had much to tell us of an insipid sort about his weekend at Notley. Arrived at 12.45 on Sunday morning (p.m. of course, do I mean that, middle of the night anyway) four-course supper, stayed up until 3.45. Then breakfast in bed at 11.30. How do they pay the servants enough to do it! Martita Hunt asked for my telephone number tonight. Used three of my

points. What a thrill! She wrote her talk yesterday drinking two bottles of champagne in the process.

Supper with Michael and John. They had been to 'The Prisoner' where Michael had 'clicked' he thought with no less grandee than Terrence Rattigan. They confirmed that as I thought the ethics of the things are all wrong. Oh dear! And it was pretty empty.

Wednesday April 28 1954

Too late last night to write.

The dance was at the Mayfair, what's called a private subscription dance, given by the Countess of Bandou and Lady Mary Campbell; rather like a bottle-party, only a deb. dance instead. And debby it was, with lots of callow young men in tails that didn't really fit, and girls just out of gym tunics with tight page boy rolls of hair and badly worn white dresses. Most of the older set, (us, I suppose!) were much smarter, particularly the girls, and really I enjoyed this dance as much as any I have been to, although the band was not really very good. We were a small party, Mercedes Shaw, in a greeny blue dress of beautiful French silk, Tricia in grey net, and David Lane, a nice big ugly young man. We all enjoyed ourselves and even more playing records at Tricia's flat, where we stayed.

PAGE MISSING

Monday May 3 1954

Yesterday and Saturday very pleasant days. On Saturday went for lunch with Tony W. He opened the door to me, and I fainted away in the doorstep. John H. was also there, which turned out to be much nicer than I at first thought it might. They are tense, awkward, embarrassed, and that is always catching. But they are clever lively and keen on everything that I care about. We had a curious lunch, very rich soup, full of leeks and carrots, with grated cheese on top, followed by Frankfurter sausages with sea-kale, followed by raspberries and cream. Tony is very unexpectedly very quiet and neat-fingered. This is a quality which he could allow to be seen very much more in his acting. We walked to John H's where books were stacked all round the walls. I said, looking at the tall bookcase, I suppose these are the ones you're going to keep'. 'No', he said, 'those are the ones I'm going to give away. Would you like any of them?' So I picked myself a suitcase-ful! Imagine! Among them 'The Young Visitors', 'Such Darling Dodos' by Angus Wilson, Francois Mauriac's 'Each to his own self' or some title like that, 'Doting' by Henry Green, 'Becket' by Tennyson, two Denton Welch's, four William Sansoms, and two Cinema-Lovers Annuals for 1930 and 1932.

Yesterday was gay, too. Lunch with poor Michael W., exhausted by his young brother. Very well cooked - his first effort. After lunch to see 'Prince Valiant' one of the most richly idiotic films I have ever seen, after which in a heavy rain-storm, I met Michael for a drink, whence we posted off to the Players' for the Minstrel Show. Here underneath the arches, with the trains rattling the glasses in the bar at the back of the theatre, we had a great time enjoying the show and spotting celebrities. As it was an entirely professional audience, it was a good one, and afterwards there was the fascination of being in a crowd whose every member imagined he or she was the only real centre of interest.

Today has indeed been a full one. A letter from Flo demanded a telephone call. She wished to meet me for lunch, which by a fortunate chance (though I had not seen it before in quite that light) I was having with Robin. However, she relentless, suggested a meeting at Swan and Edgar's corner at three o'clock. When I met her, she suggested a visit to the Academy, so off we went. We had scarcely been there a minute, when the battery of her hearing-aid failed, and she had to confess that in her hurry she had come out without one. So around the crowded murmuring rooms we walked, with her screaming out unsuitable comments, 'Look how that girl in the pink dress with a poodle leaps out at you', 'Oh those autumn leaves are pretty', or, in the pathetic 'modern' room, 'Oh what hideous daubs, but I expect I'm old-fashioned I daresay you young men like them.' You know there can never have been a period when there was such a divergence between the generations. The dreariness of the Academy, the dullness of the Queen's portrait, the utter railway-poster poverty of the pictures, has to be seen to be believed.

She was too much of a strain for me to stand long, and I went to the theatre at about 5.30. During a long talk with Martita, she said that the young man who played in the 'Madwoman' with her in New York was coming over, and she wanted me to take him round a bit 'on her', if I would. If I would! I don't suppose it'll come to anything, but I don't care. She asked me. I think she is a wonderful woman, so vital and highly-coloured and talented and humble. O told her tonight she was attacking too much. She took it like a lamb, and thanked me for it.

Tuesday May 4 1954

This morning Tony W. rang me up at about ten o'clock to tell me that he had been engaged by Michael Benthall for the Old Vic. What a thrill! And how splendid that he will be staying on in London! He has found his right place. Afterwards a full day. Lunch with twisted Steele and witty Woolley. 'Marching Song' and even more impressed by it.

Saturday May 8 1954

Thursday and Friday were such extraordinary days that I could not find time to write on either of them. As together they form such an odd packed twenty-four hours, it is probably a good thing to write about them as one.

During the whole of Thursday, I was in a state of itchy nerves. 'The Boy Friend' so very much 'my thing' as everyone had been telling me for so long, was taking in my mind an absurd importance to itself. Certainly it is a curious phenomenon in itself - to me an assertion of despair as much as anything. Its real interest to me would be, (and indeed turned out to be) purely technical, a stimulant of a very professional kind. I am surprised that the audiences have so loved it. But I go too fast.

I packed up my dinner-jacket, running over the list of the various items nervously. 'Braces', cuff-links, tie, shirt, socks, suspenders, trousers, jacket, like a litany. In the afternoon I deliberately let myself snooze off for an hour or two, so that I might be really fresh for the evening, had a light tea, and went to the theatre. All my forebodings about the illustriousness of our seats had died down into a determination to give the Oliviers exactly the right kind of nod. Michael called for me with a taxi at a quarter past ten, and I was able to dash out of the

theatre saying carelessly 'Sorry I've kept you waiting', scramble into a taxi, and be whisked off to an evening of pleasure quite as if this was the normal way that an actor's evening was always spent. Or so I hoped the crowds of fans might think.

We dined (oh me, we dined!) at a place called L'Epicure on the corner of Frith Street and Old Compton Street. It is new and well-thought of, and was much recommended by Angus Wilson, with whom Michael had lunched that morning. Its decor was ordinary and usual enough, pale walls and flowers and plushy wall seats (what's the word for them?) but the food served by what Angus W. had called 'their pyromaniac waiters' because they cook on great flaming lamps at your table, was extra-delicious. Michael had pate, I had melon. He had a mushroom, I had a Fines Herbes omelette, with this a bottle of hock, '47, very good, medium, very rich and full, and strawberries - strawberries rich red luscious strawberries in April, with an udderful of cream. All this for both of us cost £2.14. No bad, really, with the wine '9/-. Off into yet another taxi, drawing up between a little avenue of sightseers outside Wyndham's. In the foyer a great deal of purposeful loitering was going on, everyone intent on seeing the celebrated, the celebrated themselves jockeying politely for a good entrance. Every variety of clothing was in evidence, under the bright chandeliers, corduroy, rubbed silk, tweed, lace, cotton and serge, velvet, nylon, satin and net, all circled and chattered together. We stood, seeing without being too much seen to be seeing (after M's advice to me) and touching each other's elbows now and then as some not-to-be-missed collector's piece of fame sailed by. Vida Hope, the producer of 'The Boy Friend', large and coarse, with a long thick nose, small piggy eyes, and a loose burned-lip looking mouth. Gladys Cooper, her still lovely face crumpled and shadowed like tissue paper. Christopher Hewett, the dull producer of the first show I was ever in, enormous in a green dinner jacket with a roll collar and cutting me dead, thank goodness. Martin Kenyon, small and trim. Billy Wallace, tall, gangling, nicer than his photographs. After a while we went in, passing Olive Gilbert, selling programmes. I bought mine from Jane Baxter, sweet pretty girlish forty-five year old Jane Baxter, who is really a clean sweet English girl at heart, and almost so in looks. We sat down and watched some more. In came Peter Glanville, slim, smart, good-looking in a rather ratty way, with him the star of 'Pal Joey', Harold Lang, short, thickset, with flesh-coloured spectacles, very greasy black hair, and a wide thick-lipped mouth, wet, turning up to one side.

All of a sudden I saw the Oliviers appear at the entrance. 'Here we go' I thought. The came in, to murmurs from the people around us, she looking very pretty, I thought, in a champagne-coloured silk coat, with myriads of pleats, (I had heard her say to Richard W. she would wear mink if it was wet) he in a velvet-collared overcoat over a dinner-jacket. They walked across the front of the stalls, round the side - and stopped at the end of the row, our row. In one awful moment, I realised that not only were they in the same row but that the only seats empty in it were the four next to me. With them were Irene Worth and some man or other. We stood up to let them pass in front of us: my face was crimson and I wasn't thinking of anything. I said 'Good evening' weakly as they passed me, and they sat down next to me.

I sat clutching my programme, and staring straight in front of me, until I suddenly jumped at the sound of Sir L's voice. 'You're a clever chap, Angus' he said, 'Who are those two chaps up there?' pointing to two portraits among the group of the statuary at the top of the proscenium arch. 'Goldsmith and Sheridan' I stammered, 'Or perhaps Garrick', I said 'And I suppose that's Mary Moore in the middle', said Sir L. pointing at a large allegorical female, at which I conjured up from somewhere a teeny laugh, and felt a little better.

After a time the constraint wore off, and I was able to look around naturally again. I was rewarded by the sight of Noel Coward coming into the next box to Dame Sybil, whose beautiful profile was outlined in stately nobility against the lights behind her. N.C. was with two exceedingly dull-looking people, whom I took to be either members of the Actors' Orphanage Committee or grand, possibly titled, heads.

Very soon after this the show began, and wonderfully funny it was. Coward kept glancing continually at the Oliviers. They enjoyed it very much, I think, she laughing a great deal in her low dark-brown register, he gruffing and glooming but chuckling now and then. At many moments in this extraordinary entertainment, the irritation of a 30-year-old now dead convention, I felt the strangeness one would feel if old photographs suddenly came back to life, and more particularly, the odd feeling that Coward must have had listening to 'Poor Little Pierrette' and 'A Room in Bloomsbury' both so obviously based on 'Poor Little Rich Girl' and 'A Room With a View'.

At the end of the show, Dame Sybil, looking lovelier than ever, appeared on the stage with the company, and made a tactfully tactless speech. Among other things, she referred to 'Noel Coward and his minions, who have sharp eyes and sharp noses and lots of other sharp things about them' and 'Noel Coward, like the good mother he is' at which Sally N.C. hid his face in his handkerchief and gales of laughter. Dame Sybil then went on, 'But to all of us in the theatre here tonight, and most of us are, what has it been like? In our dressing-rooms halfway through the show we suddenly said to ourselves, 'Oh dear, midnight matinee! Then we took off our make-up and put on another and came here and oh! hasn't it been worth it, hasn't it? We've got lots of money for the Orphanage, and seen this lovely lovely show, hasn't it been fun?'

And it had.

We staggered home, and lay exhaustedly trying to collect our impressions. They were too many to be relived, and we parted quite dazed.

The very next day the enchantment was carried on into disenchantment by Nigel's wedding. I...

PAGE MISSING

Monday May 10 1954

Daddy's birthday. Too late to write last night, as ever at Gerard's. Only family this Sunday, with two odd cousins of Gerard's mother besides Anne and James. Amusing though not very rewarding. Gerard dear as always, so loving and true and maddening with his two hair-shedding cats. I was woken up this morning by a sort of litany of 'Chaiya's smiling because she's pleased' repeated with interesting crescendi, apparently outside my bedroom door.

This morning I had meant to hurry off to David Davies'. Just when I was going to begin to wash and shave, two men arrived to mend the ball-cock, one of them discovering that the female cat is going to have kittens. Rest of the day after lunch, spent playing records with Charmian Kauffmann, our call-girl.

Lunch was quite fascinating. Timothy is now working at the new Television Centre at Frithville Gardens. You walk down a long dull little street, turn in two large grey iron gates, with BBC embossed on them, and find yourself facing a large and exceedingly new modern building, of pleasing soft brick, interestingly arranged windows and touches of acid yellow and Southsea blue about. I bearded a new and nice chatty receptionist, who was ultimately able to produce Timothy. He took me round the outside of the building, and behind it I was amazed to find what must be quite nine or ten acres of ground being cleared of the rusty rubbish of the 1931 Exhibition, to form a site for the new Television Studios. There are already magnificent premises for the designers with huge scene-docks and an enormous painting frame, with I think he said, 160 sq. ft. of canvas to paint at a time.

We had a very interesting lunch, though I felt I was by no means at my best for him. He was as ever, thrilling in his enthusiasm particularly in describing the first night of the Russian dancers at the Stoll, whose costumes 'Stiff with sheen of silk and satin' as he said, revealed to him a whole new world of dress.

Michael's flat in a fine old mess, with fat all over the draining-board and pee, (I suppose) all over the bed.

Tuesday May 11 1954

Lunched at the A.B.C., after a long talk with David Davies, and a playing of all the Yves Moutant records, including a charming new one he brought back from Paris called 'Car Je T'Aime'. At the ABC I got into conversation with an American woman, over here for a week only. She is staying at the Royal Court, and her room is 'next to the church and I feel so good and so holy.' I found myself delivering an enormous lecture on what she should see, on the English stage, on the English character, and on the position and importance of the Crown in the English Constitution. She took it all down in her notebook as if she were an undergraduate. I got so enthusiastic I worked up to my peroration of sightseeing, with the words, 'Westminster Abbey is the shrine of the British people', looked at the clock, found I'd been talking for half an hour, and left, leaving all my books behind.

Wednesday May 12 1954

Coronation Day all those years ago. The weather has turned much warmer, and all the strange freedoms of heat are coming back. Today in the theatre has been rather trying and exhausting.

Sunday May 16 1954

To lunch with Colin and Mary, who really seem to get duller and stodgier every time I go. What can I do about it? Oh dear, they are nice and they are kind and they are stupid. Their opinions and their feelings are all so second-hand and muddled that it is useless even to think of telling them so. Oh the superiority of me.

Afterwards to John Holmstrom's for tea, and to watch 'The Comedy of Errors', with Ju's music. The most thrilling things about the evening had, I fear, nothing to do with Ju's music. Indeed I did not even watch the whole play.

Few things have given me so much pleasure as the feeling that John H. has accepted me as a friend. When we were at Cambridge, he represented to me a world of irreproachable but unattainable intellectual integrity, an austere rational approach to life that I admired even envied, but could not share and an attitude towards me of at best, amused toleration and at worst contempt. I have fortunately lost enough of my self-pity and found enough self-confidence to realise how stupid this was. And the pleasure of his company, of his warm heart and the purity of his mind, (though what fun he would poke at purity) are more precious to me each time I see him.

In the middle of the rather mawkish and styleless performance upon which Ju had lavished one or two good tunes and a great deal of watered-down Beggar's Opera, John Gielgud was giving a talk on Hamlet on the Third Programme. I went and listened to that, leaving the 'Errors' rattling on. Gielgud's talk was very good, impromptu, I think, very clear, charming and intelligent.

I also read John H's play 'The Blank Slate', now finished. It has two or three really well-written scenes, notably that between Rogers and Tabuteau in the first Act, Barton and Tabuteau in the second, and Barton and Ashcroft in the third. The construction is so clumsy at times, and the melodramatic conclusion, when the boy watches the housemaster die, seems to me, though in one sense logical, in another an impossibly wrenched conclusion.

Monday May 17 1954

A quiet and frustrating day.

Went to the Old Vic to meet Mary Steele to run through her songs; she was almost an hour late, and hadn't brought a pianist. Still, I somehow enjoyed my hour, standing gazing out at the Waterloo Road, and managed to put quite a good face on to greet her with. She hasn't got much of a clue about putting songs over, is too keen on singing in the purely musical sense for that, and not enough interest in the character of the song. Too quick to find words 'silly'. An unquiet girl, restless and self-conscious to a degree.

After the play tonight, settled down to read John Whiting's 'Saint's Day'. Did not find it in the least obscure in the way that I had thought I might. The patter of the action and progression of the dialogue are extremely clear, quite as clear as 'Marching Song', though S.D. was, I believe, written before 'A Penny for a Song'. I found it much more moving and stirring than 'M.S.', though of course its full meaning is much more difficult to catch. I feel that in 'M.S.' he may be on his way to a new clarity, and has had to sacrifice some of the richness of his ideas while still experimenting. I must say I think a lot of the critics' complaints have not been serious ones. They have been loosely asking for clarity when what they wanted was poverty. I am sure that by their (or most of their) meanings of 'obscurity', 'Lear' must be obscure, since I am by no means certain that I could reduce it to a proverb.

'Saints Day' started echoes and struck chords in my mind which nothing else has been able to do. A spirited very well-written moving and theatrical piece.

More of his favourite 'War'. Hatred or ridicule of the Church, Violence poison.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 26

Angus Mackay

Being the twenty-second

From July 13 1954

To August 28 1954

Tuesday July 13 1954

XX XX and I went to meet Daddy at Westminster. We had a pleasant enough walk through the Parks, during which the talk kept up a steady and smooth flow; I left him at Victoria feeling that I had not done too badly by him, very unaccustomed for me.

I rushed off then to Wilfred Street, where I was due to meet Charlie Monteith. When I first knocked, there was no answer and then after two or three minutes the door was opened rather nervously I thought, by Howard whatever his name is, who lives there, too. He is a yellow-faced, pock-marked quivering-nerved American, with slim nervous hands and a harsh over-detached manner. We had a very pleasant talk for all that in the pub opposite. Charles hadn't arrived and hadn't left any drink. We talked about Jeremy. He was suitably envious, and I was really quite sorry to hear that he was leaving England so soon, particularly as America is bound to bring back all his neuroses. Then in bustled Charles, great snorting Charles, full of apologies. Off we went to his small sitting-room, and I got tight and excitable on gins, while Howard drank cider. I showed Charles my photograph, and he kissed it. After about half an hour, I had to go and (again I must be mad) jumped into a taxi to go to dinner with Jean Storey. Nonsense. I mean, Colin and Mary who had Jean Storey along, too. She is as pretty as ever, and always good fun, and I enjoyed myself very much. At the beginning I was slightly bothered by the strange feeling of being tight in company and surroundings when I've never been tight before.. Fortunately I don't think I ever show it, except to be more flushed and more myself. Jean S. is one of the very few girls who do attract me a little.

Wednesday July 14 1954

At twelve o'clock to Swan and Edgar's corner to meet Mary Steele, after another visit to the Labour Exchange. Mary was looking very fresh, for her, and full of all her Elsinore visit. She has unfortunately the trick of undramatising such a story rather than not, and cannot find the words that will make it more than faintly interesting. We had a pleasant talk, though, and an even pleasanter lie-about in St. James's Park. She is a nice enough girl, but somehow she is never real to me.

That morning I had rung up Peter Lewis to ask him to have lunch sometime, only to find he had gone off to Charing X Hospital with appendicitis. I joined the Visitors' Queue at 3 o'clock, and walked through the Out-Patients' Department, all little white cubicles and scrubbed benches, up some enormously high staircases, ultimately finding myself all alone in an empty passage, without an idea where to go to, and everywhere open! I found him at last, sitting up in bed as bright as a cricket in a large Victorian ward, all brown and green tiles and

aspidistras; his bed had a plaque over it, saying 'This bed is entirely supported by Colonel the Hon. J. J. Astor, M.P.' One felt one ought to look underneath.....

In the evening, again kept free for Ju, he was kept at a night rehearsal. On these evenings, when the only way to pass them is to spend money, and there is no money to spend; when I come back here and fidget and worry and walk up and down the streets and there's no one I know and I can't settle to anything. Even now I shall have to use my birthday money for my rent.

Thursday July 15 1954

My 28th birthday. Out to meet Daddy at St. Columba's, Pont Street, which is in the throes of rebuilding. I wandered round the outside, not caring much for the white stone or amorphous carvings, or the long etiolated windows. He came out bursting with enthusiasm, accompanied by a small thickset crumpled man, with a quiet voice and a pleasant manner, Dr. Scott, the minister of the Church. He asked me to lunch in September.

I saw Daddy off from Paddington, and went back to the Criterion stage-door to wait for Ju. I was on the jump this time, because I knew he would come today, for he had arranged for Michael Meacham to come, too. Before I go on, I must note down that a day or two ago, at the flower-stall in Sloane Square, I had seen John Moffatt with a tall fair boy, and it just crossed my mind whether that might be M.M., and so it turned out to be Ju came out alone, saying that Michael would join us, and we went to the Tea Kettle, that quiet little tea shop on a first-floor in Wardour Street. Here, between dark green walls, and black settles hung with horse-brasses we waited for him. Ju had already told me a little about him, but only a little. (We must find time for a really long talk.) We talked, eyeing the door, and with that curious unspoken but complete confidence, we talked idly, yet never pretending we weren't both thinking the same, 'How are Angus and Michael going to get on?' Up the stairs clattered footsteps, Ju's face lit up, and he said 'here he is'. I turned, and saw a tall fair boy, slim to the point of being almost gangling, with a small head, delicate features, large eyes with heavy smudges beneath them, and thick olive blond hair, falling tousled but very attractively round his head. He was wearing a dark olive-green corduroy suit, very worn at the knees, an oatmeal coloured shirt very loose at the neck, a red tie, and very well-polished shoes. Ju said, 'This is Angus', and we shook hands. The rest of the conversation fell mainly or was taken up by me, and is really of little interest. Both of us were going through the hoops. I was in good form, and he laughed in all the proper places, so we both did well. I watched him carefully all the time, and thought him very charming indeed. He doesn't attract me in the least, well, only very slightly, for rather unphysical reasons. He has beautiful hands, bony and nervous, bad teeth and poor skin, this last because he doesn't take care of it obviously. What struck me most was his curiously touching air of innocence; a way of holding his head with his lips slightly parted, which throws into relief the moulding of his face, the strong cheek-bones and marked hollows, and the large eyes, gives him an air of refinement and spirituality which fits ill with his character as Ju takes it to be. Certainly, all that I have heard of him from Paul and so on, gives one to think that he must have been quite a bum boy at some point in his career if not still. I cannot wait to hear all from Ju. Took myself to an early William Holden.

Friday July 16 1954

Met Gerard, dear Gerard in Harrods' Book Dept. A silly little talk with silly little Martin Kenyon. Gerard was all that he has ever been, and I much enjoyed our lunch and talk; when he had to leave about tea-time, I felt very deserted again, and came back here to be miz again. I have just been out and watched the dreary TV in a shop around the corner. Now here, all alone, nothing to read, and couldn't anyway.

Saturday July 17 1954

To that film full of small boys that I had seen before, 'The Heart Knows No Frontier', for John H's benefit. Just had time to come back and change, for tea with Ju. At least we were able to have a long quiet talk, with enough relaxation about it to bring out extra-confidential confidences after a long pause.

I heard then the whole story, of how Ju had seen him first in the middle of a rehearsal of the 'Shoemaker's Holiday', and had immediately made a dead set at him, far more, he says, than he ever has with anyone. How they got on very well at the beginning, and indeed would have done all the way through but for circumstances, circumstances being poor darling Dorothy, of course. He told me of a Sunday they spent together in Cheddar Gorge, so sweet and funny it sounded, all laughing and sunshine and funny disasters. And then Doro started to be difficult. Not in one sense deliberately, of course, but being in love with Ju herself, and being also genuinely concerned about 'queers', she naturally used every bit of persuasion to stop Ju falling in love with Michael - as it has turned out, quite in vain. Until she realised that Ju loved Michael, and wanted him physically, as he does, she had liked Michael very much - and still does, except that she cannot stop herself from being rude to him suddenly, without warning. Her real suffering has of course meant double torture for Ju, not yet secure in his need of Michael, and being so fond of Dorothy. He tells me that Michael, though seemingly sweet and charming, may very well suddenly one day say something, or tell of something that Ju may not be able to take, and he may never be able to look at him again. That is to say, he is prepared to find out that Michael's past or indeed present life, may have been, or be, a continual procession from bed to bed, of people Ju loathes. I don't know well enough to say anything about him, except that I would guess whatever faults he may have are faults of weakness, not taste. His friends do sound awful, I must say. Ju says that he is now dreading D's return to rehearsals on Monday. She apparently didn't want to be in it at all, and nearly refused. Denis C., after asking straight out 'Is she in love with you?' persuaded her.

After all this, it was about half-past six. The impression I had gathered was of great insecurity on Ju's side, coupled with a determination, as always with him, not to be the first to say 'I love you', and his usual marked reluctance towards the physical, anyway. It strikes me it must be very different from anything M.M. has known before.

Ju was meeting Liz West, the dance director of the show, who I had often met in Bristol, and had seen the other day at the stage door, but with her would be Jane Wenham, with whom Julian had been so embroiled just before Michael. When Ju realised that I had never met her, he said that I must come along, too, only I must make an excuse to leave after about half-an-hour, if he didn't ask me to stay, in case they wanted to see him alone. Fortunately they didn't, and I stayed on. We drank in the pub' next door, a nice dull one called 'The Bunch of Grapes' with no atmosphere to bother one. Jane Wenham is small, slim but very well-stocked

with curves, with a broad forehead, a great deal of pretty brown hair, enormous eyes and a wide generous appealing mouth. She has a soft voice and a rather shrinking manner, though by no means insipid or timid. She also has an enchanting habit of laughing behind her hand in a daredevil way at any outrageous joke. Fortunately we clicked at once, and the four of us had a delightful evening. They made me laugh a lot, and I made them laugh a bit; I made them laugh most, when I was singing a song with Ju at the piano, 'Dearest love, now that I've found you, the stars fade in the sky', I sang, then said, in the tiny pause before the next line, 'Mary Ellis' singing teacher said 'Put a cap over your high notes, so she did', and everyone screamed. Oh! how I long for a good part again!

Sunday July 18 1954

Another rather frustrated day. Tea with Ju, to which Robin also came, which was nice, but stopped my hearing any more. After tea, Dorothy rang up, and Ju said he would go round and see her. They have another number to write, anyway. Robin left, and we talked for a bit; a strange thing happened. A change came over our friendship - a final change. He was talking about my joining the company and saying how wonderful it would be, and I all of a sudden realised that I no longer felt either jealous or possessive or anything except absolutely free and yet bound, loving and loved, giving and taking. I don't know why I suddenly felt that. It must have been the genuine ring in his voice which showed me that he needed, and always would need me, and I him. Whatever it was, I walked home alone, without the slightest feeling of loneliness.

Tuesday July 20 1954

Very drunk. Spent the evening with Charles and Gerard. Talked all the time of Health and Strength faddists and Charles' holiday at Famagusta and great snorting Charles kissed me in the hall. Ugh! Must watch that.

Lent me Jean Genet's Oeuvres - my, what oeuvres!

Wednesday July 21 1954

Today I got a job in 'Salad Days'. What could be more pleasant, more prudent or more right? And how rarely the three qualities go together. Ju rang up in the morning and said Denis wanted to see me at five o'clock and that I was to watch the run-through. I sat in that little pink-peach hat-box of a theatre, and watched a slow run-through, without costumes or make-up, and only one piano with no drums, under three harsh works-lights. I loved every minute of it. My favourite moments so far are 'We Wouldn't Look Back' (for obvious reasons, my favourite) Ella Drew's two numbers, 'The Time of my Life' and 'I Sit in the Sun', the Beauty parlour scene, and 'Out of Breath'. The dancing numbers are a thought uncomfortable, the dancing being neither good enough nor bad enough, just indifferent. However that will doubtless improve. As for the company, I am full of admiration. John Warner is anyway one of my favourite actors, on the strength of one show alone, 'The Two Gents'. His performance is so subtle and in perfect balance, never a wrong laugh and all the right ones in their place. Ella, of course, is a natural, and her bright charm is quite irresistible. Dorothy is of course perfect in all she does, with her unerring timing. Yvonne Coulete, Denis C.'s wife, dark and

svelte-looking in a rather obvious way, is goodish. Michael M. is, I must admit, excellent as Nigel - the second lead, a light jolly charming youthful performance, all the words which generally mean so little, but in his case mean a good deal. There are performances of great strength from Newton Blick and Michael Aldridge, and a performance from a girl called Christine Finn, as a silly debby Cynthia Plushington person, that I didn't much like. Too artificial and not silly enough. It's going to be very good, I think, and a great advance on what Ju has done before. Partly it is that Dorothy curbs his sillinesses and broadens his mind, partly that he has forced himself to ratiocinate about his work far more than he will himself admit yet.

After the run-through I waited in the wings in agony. Denis C. shook hands with me, very casually. He is a short sturdy man, with thick grey hair, untidy clothes and eyes of a most penetrating and piercing stare. They can seem, I am sure, like a solid flame, or equally soft sunshine - very very remarkable and frightening eyes. I sang one or two things, 'I Could Be Happy' from the 'Boy Friend' and 'It Looks as if it might be Love', from 'Lady May'. We read a scene together from the play - he and I, and then he conferred with Ju - horrible, that was. I came back, and he shook hands with me, and said 'That'll be all right. We'll be pleased if you will join us'. Ju told me afterwards that D.C. thought I had great style, and could be relied upon to put a number right over.

I could hardly believe it. Ju took me back to the flat, where we were to wait for John Warner, who was going to rehearse his new number. (That struck me as strange, that a leading man shouldn't mind having an understudy watch him rehearse. He didn't at all - in fact, I sang him the song first. But this company is obviously very different from anything that has come before.) The song 'Don't Make a Fuss, Uncle Gus', is not very good, and Ju knows it really. We spent a good deal of time, the three of us, there in Mrs. Slade's be-porcelained and be-brocaded drawing, thinking up Parliamentary puns. John W. is of medium height, with thick smooth blond hair and rather a red face, of a very compact well-knit figure, a pair of wistful puzzled eyes, a long questing nose and a comic deep upper lip, with a long chin. A comedian's face, with great charm. Ju tells me that he hasn't much beneath the charm. Dorothy apparently succeeded in having an affair with him, and now, though he does resist being queer, he doesn't do anything else. Ju was saying that he feels that all the love and desire has turned inwards, making him narcissistic.

We had quite a gay evening, and made no less gay by Mrs Slade and Chris coming in and making supper for we puzzling Bohemians.

Thursday July 22 1954

Rather depressed tonight, though only drink, I think. To my first rehearsal this morning. Denis C. is a quiet but very definite producer. I was immediately struck by the complete absence of muddle or fuzziness about his basic approach. Such an atmosphere does he create that it is only details that have to be put right. The word for him is integrity - integrity. To lunch this morning with James C., Newton B. and John W. James as nice and funny as ever, with a quick and outrageous wit, Newton Blick a smiling Roman-nosed heavily-built man, with a slow warm voice and a strong personality of the no-nonsense kind.

After the afternoon rehearsal, we all went to the canteen next door for tea, when Ju, Dorothy, Michael M. and I arranged to meet for a drink at the pub at the junction, or near it, of the

Brompton Road and Knightsbridge. Ju was late, and Dorothy, M.M., and I sat in the pub rather disconsolately drinking, for about an hour and a half before he came. The pub turned out to be called 'The Daisy' and the part where we were drinking, the 'burette'. The conversation was rather a strain. Doro was in her didactic mood, and had already given me a talk on the unsteady poise of my personality because I carried an umbrella everywhere to support it. I answered, rather embarrassed, as always, when people tell me off for the wrong reason, embarrassment which they always take for guilt, that I carried it because this had been the wettest summer for years, and I hadn't got a 'mac'. Then she turned to the subject on which she has harped for weeks, apparently, the boredom of queers. On she went about how terrible it was to see young girls in a company not enjoying summer and sunshine, because the men would insist on falling in love with each other. I kept my side of the conversation as well as I could, but when she went off to the loo, Michael, who had relapsed into gloom, said 'Oh dear! I wish - I don't know, I do try to be what she wants me to be, but it's so difficult, I wish she wouldn't go on about it.' When Ju did arrive, the conversation wasn't much better, and when Dorothy started to attack me again, I lost my countenance completely and indeed complained to Ju. But it was silly and childish of me, and I hope, partly due to drink.

After closing-time we bought a bottle of whisky, and went back to the flat. Dorothy laid her long length on Mrs Slade's sofa, and we settled down to a depressed evening. Michael never said a word, and left to have supper with John Moffatt at about half past eleven. Chris came in at about twelve, and was much surprised at the Bohemian scene in his mother's tea-party drawing-room. He went and made himself some supper, and accepted some whisky from Dorothy like a prospective M.P. having a cup of tea in a workman club. Dorothy and I walked to the King's road, where she got a taxi. On the way she talked a lot about Ju, saying that she supposed she could say anything she liked to me. She said that she has quite given up trying to make Ju love her, or make love to her, that if he had been at all normal he would have had her or Jane, and that he must be, as she called it, 'chemically' as well as emotionally queer. She asked me if I thought he would even go to bed with Michael, and we came to the conclusion that neither he nor Michael were very strongly sexed, and Ju's pride probably wouldn't let him anyway. We met Robin on the corner outside here, and I introduced him. Poor R! He doesn't know Ju at all now. How cruel life is!

Friday July 23 1954

In the morning arranged with Tony to go to 'Six Characters in Search of an Author', while the rehearsals were running on. More little cuts in today. The show is good, I think, though it has some lines and dances I could well do without. The opening, with its chorus of dons so reminiscent of Gilbert and Sullivan, is tricky, but probably valuable in setting the atmosphere of literate lyrics. Certainly the first few minutes will leave the London audiences puzzled.

Julian and I had lunch today, when we had more talk of Michael. He says that last night was typical of many agonising evenings they have spent together, tho' rendered much more bearable by my being there, and making it a *partie carree*. He said, 'Oh! what a relief it is that you are going to be in the company. It'll be such a help'. Only Ju can say something like that in a way that makes you feel it. He went on to say that he didn't want me to leave Michael and him together at all. It would be far too difficult, and anyway they saw plenty of each other anyway, or would in Brighton. I was glad he said this because, although I don't feel anything about Michael, I am frightened of appearing as though I did, and of course I don't

want to make him suffer anything from jealousy, always provided he is capable of it, which I suppose I don't know yet.

After the rehearsal a drink. Julian and Sheila More called, and after a drink with me, they just caught Ju at the Tea Kettle. I went off to the St. James', where Tony soon appeared in full black rig, and in the Upper Circle he attracted many admiring glances from the many 'men' around. He was at his best, we enjoyed the play and Mary Morris enormously, and a drink at a coy Wardour Street club afterwards, where he heard the Jeremy saga. I just stopped myself from telling him I desired him! Quite drunk. I am.

Sunday July 25 1954

In Brighton. Pouring in torrents. I am waiting in the top floor front of a pretty little Gothick cottage in Wyckeham Terrace, just past the Clock Tower.

I could not write last night because I was drunker than I have ever been in my life, and I still feel rather odd. After rehearsing all day (and I am pleased to find that I am quite well received by the company) we again arranged to meet for a drink, this time at the Colville. I went round to Ju's first, where we had another long talk about Michael. He sounds rather touching, I must say, very anxious to please, shutting up like a clam at any mention of his 'other life', in case he should hurt Ju by admitting to anything. Ju believes that love and sex are quite separate in his life, and that one day they must be brought together or Michael will founder completely. All I hope is that Ju has enough sex to do it. He seems able to resist extraordinary temptations. Michael was apparently round on Friday night at the flat, and there was one terrible moment when, in the kitchen, M. standing very close to Ju, suddenly leaned across him, and, running his finger across a plaque above the fireplace, said idly, 'I've never noticed that before'. Ju stood for one long moment feeling Michael's breath on his neck, and then said, (Oh! I can just hear him saying it) 'Let's go into the other room, shall we?' Michael wandered away down the passage, humming and flicking the furniture with his fingers as he went along. That sort of thing is apparently happening continually. _How can Ju resist putting his hand out I don't know. I told him I thought he ought to, and as usual he shrank back and found endless reasons against it. The point is if the relationship is ever to be full and rich, I don't see what other line there is to take. Ju someday must live.

We had a couple of whiskies, and went off to the Colville. We had been there about ten minutes, when I went outside to look for the others, and found Michael looking very limp and appealing, staring into the window of a bookshop at the side of the pub. He came in, and soon after Newton Blick came in, followed by Dorothy. I had a couple of half bitters, seven gin and tonics, and, when we moved to another pub, two double whiskies. Only Newton and I were anything like enjoying ourselves. M.M. retreated into sickly-looking depression as soon as Dorothy arrived, and about nine thirty, fortunately when Newty was telling a very long and loud and fairly interesting story about a musical comedy he played in for five years, Dorothy suddenly gripped his hand and said, 'You must be kind to me next week. I don't think I could bear it if you weren't'. That accounted for Ju and Dorothy. We moved to another pub; after closing time, Newty bought a bottle of whisky and we taxi'ed off to Ju's flat, leaving Michael to go home, to supper with John Moffatt. At the flat, Ju got us some supper; I sat in the sofa making love to Dorothy, Ju sat in abandoned and exhausted despair, Newty went on telling stories. We left at about one thirty. I sat up half the night with the room whirling round me as it has never whirled before. Terrible. Still I caught the eleven

Brighton from Victoria this morning. Ju and M.M. were to be on it, and also Ivo Roderick, one of the other understudies. He, I quite forgot to mention, I met backstage on Friday, waiting for an audition, and had a long talk with him. He is medium height, very broad-shouldered, very slim waist, thick springing very alive bronze hair, wide thick lipped mouth, coarse hands, laughs a lot, dresses in a wind-cheater, flannels, open-necked shirt and a red-spotted kerchief.

He knew Michael, whom he calls Meech, in rep. He was on the train, and Ju, but no Michael. He had no 'digs' either, so we agreed to look together. Hardly had we been a moment in the theatre but Bob Harris offered us a double room that he didn't want; we took it. We went for lunch in Lyons', getting soaked to the skin on the way to the digs, kept by a violent but basically benevolent old bag of an Irishwoman. We sat over lunch about two and a half hours while he told me the story of his life. He is a New Zealander, and the main event in his life took place when he heard Sir Laurence speak about the theatre during his Australian tour. He went straight back to the school where he was teaching, gave up his job, and came to England to the Old Vic school, where he paid his fees by doing all sorts of odd jobs. And I'm writing this while he is exposing his deliciously brawny limbs behind me. I'm glad to say he doesn't wear pyjamas.

Monday July 26 1954

The weather still terrible, but as we are in the theatre most of the day, it makes little odds. I go up and down to the digs with Ivo, and sit with Ivo, and talk to Ivo, but I fear it is to be a short-live friendship. I wish I could somehow convey the sudden rush of company that I find myself in, the word here, the laugh there, that is insensibly bringing me into intimacy with the company. Sweet Patsy Heywood, so demurely earthy, Liz Charnley the S.M. rather harsh but nice in a dull way. Oh! life is so full there's so much of it, I can't touch it, let alone write about it.

I shan't see Ju this week at all, if I can help it, naturally that is. With Dorothy out of the way and none of Michael's friends about, this week with them sharing that flat, has a chance of being a time that will set aside in Ju's, perhaps in both their memories as a precious time. I do so want Michael not to feel insecure about Ju, at any rate on my account.

Michael Aldridge is in our digs, too. He seems very nervous, of course, he hasn't played before. Even after these two days, it seems to me there's been some tightening up which has been all to the good. The house tonight was very full, the audience cheered at the end, and altogether, taking into account, that it's Brighton and a starless company, it must be accounted a real hit here, though I daresay the word won't get round quick enough for it to draw. In the back-stage bar afterwards, there were various personalities, Hugh Williams and his wife (she went quite mad about Michael M., saying to him, 'Can't I take you home with me?') lots of managers, and agents, all milling around, cashing in like anything. Even the staff of the theatre were impressed. I was very touched by the warm quick way Michael suddenly pressed Ju's hand. I mean, when they're in the state they are, it's an event to touch one another.

Ju has the dressing room apposite mine, and I walked in to wish him good luck, and he said, 'We'll go out and have a drink, when I've done these notes', so we did. He was very nervous, so I talked about Michael calmly.

Wednesday July 28 1954

Yesterday all theatre and Ivo, for whom, I can say, I am much too much! Poor sweet, he's so nice, but oh! dear, so intense. So today I walked along the front and on to the pier by myself, and a very well-blown time I had. Between the shows or rather the rehearsal and the show, we all had tea in Beste's, which is the same as ever, and we all signed the book.

Thursday July 19 1954

The notices for 'The Duenna' which opened last night (Ju's other show) were wonderful. 'West End Triumph', 'New Novello' were the headlines. All the notices are more complimentary about the music than about anything else, the Express being quite the best and most ecstatic of the lot surprisingly enough.

I brought them all into the theatre, and found everyone standing on the ramp leading to the stage. They had a few of the papers, and grabbed mine. Soon after Ju came in, and I found that all my false pumping up of occasional emotions had gone for good, and I was able to congratulate him less as if we were both about to carry out a suicide pact. The rehearsal was made quite chaotic by excitement, and the telephones both front and backstage ringing. Then reporters and photographers appeared, and there was more confusion while they took pictures of him in all sorts of places, sitting at the piano chiefly where he sat wearing his dinner jacket over a pair of grey corduroy trousers looking exceedingly odd.

Between the shows we went out to tea, he and I. He started to tell me how a letter he'd had from Michael Codron, one of Jack Hylton's young men, who was at Oxford when we were at Cambridge, and whom I vaguely remember at Nigel's fateful party, had had a message in it, saying that Meacham's beastly to-Codron attitude was tiresome, but he supposed must be endured. Ju taxed Michael with this, and Michael admitted (this had all happened more or less a moment before Ju told me) that he was very much attracted to Michael C. 'But it's not important, you know'. There was a long silence, and then M.M. said, 'Perhaps I should have told you that a long time ago'. 'Yes' said Ju tartly, 'You should, and probably a lot more besides'. As he told me this, Ju suddenly buried his face in his hands, saying, 'It's not that it's a _shock, I've known there were things like this, it's just that I won't accept his two lives, like he does, I won't.' Then, 'Oh! if only I weren't so tired!' We moved to the pub, where a quiet drink and a further talk soothed him, but he still feels very uncertain about Michael, in case he may suddenly reveal something that will freeze Ju's love for good.

Friday July 30 1954

After the rehearsal today, Ju said, 'Come out to tea', so I did, along with Michael M. and John Warner. This was very pleasant, because it gave me an opportunity to be in Michael's company, yet without the slight undertone of strain still present when the three of us are together, or when just he and I talk. We went to the patisserie, and sat right in the centre of the place, laughing and talking, I suppose, much too loudly. We talked of the show mostly as actors will, and I am always amazed at the disorganised way their minds work. There are two 'me's, the one gossiping on the surface, the other rather scornfully dissecting underneath. The show has to me, some very embarrassing passages, notably the Bishop's Dance, the Rowena-Boot scenes and a good deal more of the dialogue, with all those terrible puns. If one

protested against them, one would be told of course that they are fun simply because they are bad. That is true up to a point, but the sort of laughter they make is an irritable sort, and I should have thought must be very sparingly used, or people begin to wonder if you mean it to be thought funny on its own merits. After tea John W. left us, and we walked down to the front, where MM suggested we go onto the pier, which we did. And now again I am at a loss how to convey the quality of that little walk, of the gradual quickening of one to the other, of the little shifts of emphasis from fun to the touching, very delicately, on deeper notes of fondness and - but that's all wrong too. We made, I thought a good threesome. MM set like a rock at one point when I mentioned the priest at Little St. Mary's at Cambridge, with whom he'd spent so much time. Another bit of his 'other life', I suppose.

Saturday July 31 1954

In the morning I met Jerry Jarratt, whom I forgot to mention I saw last night after the show, for coffee at Beste's. He is a sad indecisive figure, with a lively wit, a pleasant personality, many talents of a rather slight kind, I suppose, (but who am I?) but lacking that all or nothing devotion to anything that is so precious in giving one's life a driving-force.

Between the shows Ju and I went out to the pub again. He told me how the night before, he had said deliberately to Michael, though quite casually, 'Oh, how lovely it's been sharing with you this week. I have enjoyed it.' Michael said nothing, then, very tight-lipped, he said 'I've enjoyed it, too.' When they were in bed, and it was dark, Ju determined to make himself say to Michael that he was fond of him, and he told him that he didn't want him to think that his manner was really an indication of his true feelings, that he had never let himself show how fond he was of Michael, but that he was very, and that he didn't make friends easily but when he did, he stuck to them. This was all with reference to the Michael Codron conversation. This was accepted by Michael with incoherent thanks and obvious delight, and they talked themselves to sleep. Today apparently MM has been transformed by happiness.

When I had been having tea in Beste's earlier on, who should come in but Michael Codron, just down from London? And, though I had sort of forgotten about him, there he was at the stage-door when we got in. I went on and left Ju with him, to find MM on the stage running through a dance that had worried him. I thought he had better not meet Michael C with Ju suddenly, because his reaction might upset Ju, so I said idly that I had just met again someone I hadn't seen for years. Michael said, 'Who?' I said, 'Someone called Michael Codron who was etc. etc,' going off into casual details. M.M. threw back his head at the name and stopped dead. A violent reaction indeed. Then he said, 'Oh God! - Where is he? I said 'I don't know. At the stage door, I think. Why? Do you know him?' 'Yes', he said, 'Yes, I do'. A moment later I realised that Ju and M.C. were in the wings. M.M. just went to have a word. M.C. said 'Hello Michael', and went straight on talking. MM came back on stage, and as if determined not to look again went on rather irritably with his dance.

The last show went splendidly, almost as well as the first night. There was a good deal of cheering, and some encores. In the bar afterwards we had quite a gay time, tho' I felt very sorry for Dorothy, whom I now feel somehow very close to.

Sunday August 1 1954

Back to London, thank goodness. And a fine day. Rested most of the afternoon, until about five-thirty when Ju rang up. He was about to have a bath, having just lit the boiler, and we arranged to meet at seven. He arrived at about half past, and we went to the pub across the road for a short drink, as he was having supper with Michael at eight at 'The Ox on the Roof'. We sat down, and I noticed at once how much more rested he looked, and how the signs of strain had more or less vanished. When they went back to the flat last night, 'Michael lay on the bed, just looking at me', Ju put it. This went on as it has done before, but Ju suddenly sat down beside to see what he would do. (Why Ju didn't do something I don't know, still we've talked all that out before.) Michael immediately clutched hold of Ju's hand. They went on talking about the show, Ju said, 'I'm tired. I think I'll go to bed' or something like that. MM threw his arms round Ju and said 'Dear Julian', and buried his face in Ju's neck, there was a pause and then Ju got up, and got ready for bed. Later after they'd been talking a bit more, Ju said 'I suddenly felt I wanted to hug him, just to hug him, so I got out of bed and went across to him; he put his arms round me, and we hugged each other. I went back to bed, and went to sleep.

After a pause, I said, 'What a sweet story! How the cynics would laugh!' Ju said, 'Yes, but it's so strange to me that I didn't feel excited or frustrated or anything. I just wanted to be close to him. Now I have been, I feel so relaxed. There's no more of that terror of touching him because it's too exciting. In the train today we leant against each other and bumped and swayed against each other, and it didn't worry me at all. And so that's why I'm so happy today'.

He went off to his supper in good spirits, and I came back here very pleased that things are going so well. I rang up Tony W. and found John H. there, too. Was able to arrange lunch with him tomorrow, and Raef, who is coming, too. Tony very sweet, saying he wasn't in the least interested in the show, except what good it was going to do me.

Monday August 2 1954
(Written on Tuesday Aug 3)

By order of the stage-manager, I spent all today in the theatre, helping (sic) with the get-in. In fact I only went out to buy tea for everyone. I spent the day talking in the wardrobe to dear little Daphne Lucas, the ASM, and going out every half-hour or so, scrambling over the huge hampers, rolled-up cloths, great iron-bars for goodness knows what, and all the scenery, to show myself to the stage staff rather like a King showing himself to his people. Unlike a King, I was greeted with absolute disinterest, at which I was really pleased to go back to the wardrobe. Just before lunch, in came Ju and Michael, looking very happy, I thought. Michael and I had a talk. I asked if they had a nice time last night. 'Yes' he said flatly, then recollecting himself, he said 'Yes, we had a gorgeous meal and a lovely time with Moff and his records'. 'Moff' is John Moffatt, whose flat he shares. We went for a drink to the pub nearest the stage door. I was rather worried in case Raef and John H. appeared in case they should not want to see Ju, who has no idea I discovered later, how very unpopular he is in that quarter. Oh, I forgot, it was terribly embarrassing in MM's dressing-room before this. We were talking about what we wanted to do on the first night. (By the way Michael said 'Moffatt must be there. Yes, I definitely think Moffatt must be there.' I could see in Ju's eye a determination that Moffatt wouldn't be there.) The conversation turned to our visit to 'The

Duenna' tonight, and how Ju might be photographed 'enjoying himself' in the stalls. MM. suddenly said, 'We must have a spotlight turned on us, and then you and I' meaning him and Ju, and for no reason at all I sprang down his throat about it. The moment I'd said it I realized what it sounded like, pure jealousy, which up to a point it was. But it was much more annoyance at his thoughtlessness. For all he knows, I might be terribly jealous. Whatever it was, though, I wish it unsaid. I had to give another explanation of it to Ju; otherwise he would have been worried. I don't think I could have conveyed the exact degree of jealousy, so that any mention of jealousy was out of the question.

'The Duenna' was exceedingly well received, too well received in our corner. So much so that we were told off in the second interval for making too much noise. I was sitting next to Yvonne, and she was visibly shrinking from me every time I laughed. Julian was feted and photographed in every interval, and at the end was, I suppose, carried off by MM to some other pub for a drink; they appeared at the party later, that the 'Duenna' company gave for us. The party was held in a long low cellary place, which was very hot. I met Joyce Carey, who is so nice, but depressed me by being so when I had nothing exciting to tell about my part in 'Salad Days'. If she had looked down her nose, I would have felt better. Yvonne gave me a very nice telling-off about making such a noise. Ju was busy talking to everyone. MM. was flirting madly with two of three black-beetley types. Soon I could bear it no longer, and left very early, crying tears of angry self-pity and shame at my self-pity all the way home, where I cried myself to sleep. I tried to pretend to myself in the middle of it all that it was jealousy of Ju that had done it. But of course it wasn't, (I mean jealousy of him and MM.) it was horrid jealousy of his success and my obscurity. I long to be important. I long to be able to make people want to talk to me without having to prove to them laboriously that I'm amusing.

Tuesday August 3 1954
1.30 a.m.

When I went along for the run-through at about four o'clock, I met Ju as I got off the bus and we went for a cup of tea. He had many things, business things to tell; Robert Morley rang him up this morning to ask if he would like to consider doing a musical version of 'The First Gentleman'. 'We might put it on at Drury Lane' he added casually. This is a strange coincidence. I only suggested to Ju the other day that I thought Brighton would be a marvellous place to set a musical comedy in, and we had talked about 'The First Gentleman' then. All the agents and managers and so on, who are around him, are terribly keen on his doing lots more at once. Ju is terribly keen on doing absolutely nothing, and taking a holiday if 'S.D.' runs. Quite right, too. Hardly had I got inside the theatre, but Dorothy came in and I went out for a cup of tea with her.

She seemed in a tranquil mood and wanted to know about 'The Duenna'. I told her that it was charming and pretty, but by absolute standards not really very distinguished. She quite saw the point, and we had the nicest quietest most understanding talk we've ever had. We agreed about everything, that's why it was so nice.

After the show when we went for a drink - no, before - Ju asked me back for supper. Later I heard Michael ask him back, and Ju said, 'Can Angus come too?' I wondered at this, for Ju knows me well enough to know I wouldn't mind him going off with M., and thought perhaps there was a slight rift. There was. M. did ask me - for a cup of Nescafe, and off we went as merry as grigs. We arrived at John Moffatt's basement, enormous racks of wine in the

passage, because the house belongs to the owner of the 'Matelot' restaurant. I met John M. at the door of his room, a short plump very black-haired man, with an oval face, a long chin, opaque eyes behind thick glasses, and an air of charm with undertones. His room, the housekeeper's room of the old house, I suppose, is 'done out' in shades of red, with a great many theatrical prints on the walls, and down one side of the room a huge series of white built-in cupboards. Down another there are large shelves bearing a collection of I suppose four or five hundred, perhaps more, gramophone records. There is a modern record-player, and fascinating, an old gramophone designed to play the old cylinder-type record. We sat for a little while drinking coffee. I sparkled a bit, and was quite a success, I think. Then there was a rather embarrassing attempt to make us stay to supper when there obviously wasn't enough for four. Ju was obviously determined to go, and of course so was I. John Moffatt worried me by being so nice, yet obviously 'thinking' things. We walked to Ju's flat, and on the way, Ju told me that last night, so far from my having left them to be happy together, M. had gone on flirting, and when he came to ask Ju if he was coming home, actually had with him Frank something, Gerald Case's boyfriend. They walked home to Michael's, where Ju said 'Good night', Michael made no effort to stop him, and went on home with Frank thing. Now it may be quite innocent. Frank ? may have been tagging along, but what thoughtlessness on M's part to leave Ju with the slightest wrong impression if that was the case. I was angry, I must admit. Ju went on that he went home and wept, ultimately ringing Michael up to say how terribly depressed and lonely he felt. To his credit Michael did say he'd come round at once. But no reassurance, and poor Ju also cried himself to sleep. I told him that I had had such a strong urge to ring him up when I got in, and it just shows how I should trust my instinct. Finally he said, 'I think you'd better stay to the end of every party from now on.'

Later on in the kitchen, I took him by the hand, and said, 'I want you to feel that I am always near, so that I can be here if Michael fails you, or can't stay with you; I also want you to feel absolutely free to go off with him whenever it's possible. Never feel that you need be alone'. He said, 'Dear Angus' and kissed me, and when I left, said the same. And I walked away feeling very light-hearted and warm.

Wednesday August 4 1954

Spent all day pottering except for a quick visit to the cinema to see the operative parts of 'Beneath the 12-Mile Reef'.

Michael and Ju had been to see 'Them!' at the London Pavilion. When Michael asked on the telephone if I was coming and Ju said, 'No', Michael said, 'Oh well, perhaps 'Them' isn't really him'. After the show (very successful except for lights) James and I went back to Ju's.

Thursday August 5 1954

The first night of 'Salad Days' felt really quite nervy during the morning, but was saved in the afternoon by Rosemary Irvine asking me to meet her in the Roof Garden on the top of Derry and Tom's, of all mad places. We had a pleasant soothing talk, during which I heard about the wedding which of course I missed. I left her and got to the theatre at about six o'clock, where they were already rehearsing. I found Ju opening tons of telegrams and letters, and

crying over all of them. I had sent notes to everyone, working very hard at them to make them right, MM's particularly.

I found that I had to be call-boy for the night, so I climbed into my dinner-jacket. I just caught Ju to ask him what he was doing after the show, and as I must admit, rather surprised to find that he had arranged to go back to Michael's, where he had incidentally spent the afternoon lying listening to John Moffatt's records. I was surprised because I would have thought that was chancy. However it's what he wanted, and of course he'll know where Michael is if Michael leaves before him, as he probably will. I started running round with all the flowers and presents and telegrams. Staggering under huge bouquets and juggling with tiny cactus pots. I dashed in and out, adding my mite to the general confusion and excitement.

As for the show, I felt very little. Only when Ella sang 'The Time of My Life' probably more beautifully than she ever has was I lost. The audience worried me a bit. It was obvious to me that the really loud clapping was all from the large Bristol contingent. Though the cheers were loud and continuous at the final curtain, though the curtain had to be raised sixteen times, twice after the house-lights had gone up, though Ju finally had to make a speech, and tho' a voice called out at the end of it, 'Sing the songs again', there was to me an undertone of interested parties having carried it to success - a dangerous thought. And I shall wait for the papers with interest.

The party afterwards was very dull, so Judy Harte, Ella's understudy, Ivo and I went down to John W.'s and M.M.'s dressing-room, and drank our presnet - a half-bottle of gin. I hope Ju is having a lovely time.

Friday August 6 1954

Drizzling slightly, and as my only other pair of shoes is still at the cobblers', I had to choose my time to go out carefully. In the end I got the newspapers, and read them avidly. All are selling notices, with the possible exception that the Standard, madly rude, will be taken notice of seriously by some people, I suppose. Most intelligent far and away, is the 'Times' which has the sense to see that the youthful high spirits that the other papers talk about, are the result of careful hard work rather than casual vitality. It also admits that the show has something new, and that the audience's taste was right behind the show. The Express is the most unequivocal, with a headline, 'Clap Hands for a British Musical! Cut out Rodgers - the name is Slade'.

I rang Ju up as I had said I would. The family was at home so that he had to be guarded, but I could tell that he was upset. He seemed pleased about the notices, then I said, 'Did you have a nice time last night?' 'Yes, very', he said calmly. 'When did you go back to Michael's?' I said, 'I didn't', he said, 'When I got there, there was a note on the door'. Of course, that upset me very much. To think that he had had to be alone on such a wonderful first night! And when I would have given my ears to be with him, and had left deliberately so that Michael wouldn't feel in any way awkward. Anyway I'll never do it again. He couldn't say much more on the telephone, and we arranged to meet for a drink at 6.45.

We arrived at the put at the same moment. He told me that M. left the party quite early. I told him how I had met Michael Codron in the passage, asking where Michael M. was. I'd

said I didn't know, but I had a sort of feeling that he mightn't be coming to the party. Michael C. reacted strongly and questioned me closely about it. At that moment MM looking rather distraught appeared with that odd girl, Rachel Roberts, and, as I couldn't help seeing before I turned the corner, greeted Michael C. with a very close warm handshake and a hug. Upstairs, so Ju tells me, he went on talking gaily to everyone, particularly Michael C. He said tonight, almost vindictively that he thinks M.C. is playing MM. up, that he really wants him but wants to make him ravenous first. He uses Ju as a sort of double pawn in the game. Ju said, 'I hope MM suffered last night anyway'. Ju apparently went down to Dorothy's room, and drank there with Jane and Newton. (Jane rang me up at the end of the show to ask about it all.) When he left, about two, he said he had a sort of fatalist feeling that something would go wrong. There was a note stuck to the knocker, 'I can't see you tonight. I feel too awful and upset. Please forgive me'. Added to all this, Michael hadn't said one word ever since a moment in the taxi on the way to the theatre, of good luck; he never thanked Ju for the wonderful letter Ju wrote him, never sent him a note or a telegram or anything. I was furious at this, and was just beginning to say so, when Ju, without altering his expression, said, 'Here is Michael'. Michael came up all breezily, hair prettily tousled, and said, 'I'm not interrupting a private talk, am I?' 'No' we said, untruthfully. He sat down, and Ju said, 'Would you like a drink?' in a hard voice. 'No', said Michael, 'I'm still feeling too ill'. Ju asked me if I'd like one, and Michael then accepted a second offer. He made a great show of moving his chair to let Ju pass. When Ju had gone to the counter, Michael said 'Julian's annoyed with me, I'm afraid'. 'Oh dear, why?' I said. 'I made an arrangement to meet him last night, and then I couldn't, because I was feeling too ill, sick with too much drink and other things'. 'Do you mean to say he was alone after the party? That was a pity'. 'Yes, and he's angry with me. Still, not to worry!'

When Ju came back, the conversation was extremely cold, Ju being at his most frigid, which is saying a good deal. After a very little while, he left, still breezily. (I forgot to say that we also had a coquettish passage while Ju was at the bar. I said, 'Tell me, how do you get your hair so carefully disarranged?' 'Oh', he said, brush and brush and brush it in the morning, and don't touch it for the rest of the day. I thought I was looking rather pretty today'. And it was then he said Ju was annoyed with him.) When he had gone, Ju became really upset, partly by impotent anger that anyone could matter so much to him, partly by real anguish. A cloudburst began, and for the next ten or fifteen minutes, the little pub 'lounge' resounded to the roar of as heavy torrents of rain as I ever heard, with violent flashes of lightning and great rumbles of thunder. Ju began to cry. It was the thought of Michael's worthlessness that upset him, the selfishness that led him to give up being loving to Julian the moment it entailed the slightest sacrifice or effort. I could see that unless I did something, Ju would very soon repudiate Michael altogether. When we got up to leave, we found we really could not go out in such rain, even the few yards to the stage-door. We came back, and had a short, rum for Ju, gin for me. The landlord found out who Ju was, and we had another on the house. When we got to the theatre, we found that the stage cloth had been badly marked by flooding. It must have been an odd storm.

After the show, which went quite well, but nevertheless had an ecstatic reception again, the Goodmans came round, and took us out for a drink. In the pub James C. and Michael were talking quite earnestly, and soon after we came in, went out together. Ju and I walked back together, stopping at Lyons' on the way. I said, 'Let's go to the Brasserie. Will you be recognised, do you think?' 'Oh', said Ju, 'that won't matter in the Brasserie. It's the Help Yourself where I'd have to be careful.'

We talked and talked and talked about it all. He is beginning to feel very bitter about Michael, and up to a point I am not surprised. All the same Ju asks a great deal from his friends, particularly in deep ways. Not more than he gives, far from it, but I am sure that there is a lot of sheer incomprehension about many of his mistakes. Like Nigel, he is simply not good at fine shades. Unlike Nigel, he is aware of them, and that's why Ju must stick to him. If there is a chance to save him from the worse of his 'two lives' as he calls them, Ju is the one to do it. Ju has asked me to ring him up tomorrow morning, as if it was my own idea. Of course it was, as I told J. I'm fascinated to know how he'll answer. I hope I'm up to it.

Wednesday August 11 1954

I don't know how to begin. Saturday I must begin with, I suppose, but I can hardly remember it now. In the morning I rang up MM. as I had promised. He was very concerned, and apparently rang Ju at once, and they went out to lunch together - so that was all right. At the theatre all was jubilation - even the first house was nearly full and very enthusiastic, and for the second the House Full boards were out again, but why am I writing all this? Michael upset Ju by going off with some of his awful friends again. Doro and I went home with him, seeing that he was suicidal. We had something to eat, and eventually D. and I left. She walked back to the King's Road, but said that she would come in for a talk. We were both rather drunk; I had been longing ever since the Saturday before we went to Brighton to be alone with her, but had been too nervous of her as an actress to speak to her very much at Brighton. (I still don't think she or Ju realises in what a hard school I've been raised!) The moment we had got into the room and settled down, I started to make love to her again. She took it like a lamb, saying, 'Yes let's kiss a little, would that be nice? Shall we?' The smell of her was in my nose, and suddenly her breasts were under my fingers, small soft breasts with big nipples. She sighed and breathed harder; I hardly knew myself. When I drew her to the bed, I kicked off my shoes, and we lay and made love stroking and feeling and learning each other. We could go no further because she had the curse. It was only by keeping every button done up that I stopped myself.

But no, that doesn't tell of the sweetness and wonder of it, how much sweeter and more wonderful than all the silly men I've had, which all my other friends try to persuade me is what I want. And out of order though it is, I must write about last night, when after a solemn pact not to talk about Julian (she doesn't seem to like me talking about him or being concerned about him) we had a dotty supper at Lyon's with a bottle of Santernes, and came back here again. This time we began very quietly, but went on much further. She made me undress completely, though she kept everything on. I nearly went mad with her caresses, and jumped on her time after time tearing at her dress with my cock, pulling her pretty breasts out of her bra, kissing and sucking them, feeling her wet juicy cunt, thrilling to find her slim tenseness quivering underneath me, groaning together at the loveliness of it, - and the loveliest thing is we haven't come yet. It's to look forward to. This is the sweetest time.

She asked me if she could read this entry; I said 'Yes' at the time, then 'No'. It's no good writing this thinking of somebody reading it. And anyway she shouldn't be so inquisitive. It's not as if she really cared for me. She wants a good fuck, from a young man with a big cock (and poor mine has a great sort of water blister on it - strain, I suppose) and is clever and intelligent enough to want to talk about it.

Sunday was a good day. Michael W. and John Merriman came up for the day, and there was a grand 'telling'. I had been round at Ju's in the morning, where I had put his letters in some sort of order, and we had read the Sunday papers in mounting screams of excitement. Harold Hobson was especially, almost absurdly good, calling it 'this rapturous entertainment.'

Monday was full of understudy rehearsals. I strained both my thigh muscles doing the bit of Spanish dancing in the Don's chorus, and could hardly walk yesterday or today. The rehearsals went wellish, Michael M. being a great help. I had lunch with Ju, who seemed to be in good spirits, though these turned out to be short-lived. After the show, another House Full, we went to the Bedford, where we sat in a group, quite large, but not including Michael M. who was with Michael Codron and other unsuitable friends again. Ju and I went on the 'bus to Sloane Square. He said he would go to the Fantastic for a cup of chocolate, so we did. Here he sat in the furthest corner, looking quite awful with an occasional tear trickling down his stubbly cheek. He realised that a decision one way or the other must be made, and that it must be made soon. I pleaded hard for Micheal, thinking as I do that Ju could do so much for him. Ju eventually admitted that Michael could not be expected to save Ju pain until he knew he was giving it, and I suggested they go away quietly together one weekend. After a great deal of talk round and round and round, we eventually walked home. He seemed calmer, which was something.

Most interesting Michael W. told me on Sunday that Ju slept with him a number of times. Doro wouldn't believe me when I told her. But it must be true. Yesterday more understudy rehearsals. After the afternoon one, MM and I bused home to Moffatt's, where Julian had been listening to the critics on 'The Duenna', for some tea. On the way we were talking about acting. Michael said that he nearly gave up acting at one point at Bristol, because he thought he was so bad in 'The School for Wives'. I said that he was very good in this, 'Oh yes', he said offhandedly. 'And you'll be better in Ju's next one', I said, 'I don't want to be in musicals all my life', he said.

Thursday August 12 1954

Rehearsal in the morning very pleasant, mostly singing, so much less exhausting than dancing. Managed 'It's Easy to Sing' and 'The Saucer Song' quite well. At lunch-time went round to Peter Lewis, and had lunch with him for a long time.

The matinee went very well; I had a little talk and a few caresses from D. at one point. She told Ju about us during the interval, but I haven't seen him to talk yet. I would not have believed it myself, but I find myself thinking about her quite a lot, and when I do, I get all excited. I'm sitting at the moment with a great erection crushed up in my Y-fronts. Talking of crushing up, pushing her dress up with my prick and other of my violent actions must have pulled a ligament in it or something. There's a great ridge all round it. Still, it doesn't hurt, so I daresay it's all right.

I went out front to watch the show tonight. The Duchess of Kent and Princess Alexandra were in front. Really Princess A. is an attractive girl, very vivacious and natural. They seem to have enjoyed anyway. I was very struck, standing out in the London audience for the first time, how strongly the piece appeals. It is obvious to me now that it has struck a chord which was waiting to be struck. It is the first of a series, surely, for I can see the passages in the

books of theatrical chat, telling how English musical comedy was saved by a young man named Julian Slade, when the name has long been a house-hold word.

Friday August 13 1954

Not an unlucky day at all. Spent all day at understudy rehearsals. Denis C came. All that I got a chance of doing was the hush-hush scene, and the number which I had never done before. In any case this is my least favourite bit, and the one I feel I am least good at. But Denis was very very complimentary, saying things like, your breath control and your voice are so good, and your projection so strong that you can afford to forget all about singing and characterise it more.' Afterwards Daphne Lucas, the ASM, and Harold, the other pianist, said they'd rather I played the scene than James, a nice thought for me. I was fairly satisfied that I had not lost the trick of acting at any rate.

Mary Steele arrived for lunch, which we had at a little cafe round the corner with Liz West and Liz Charnley. A very gay one, too; I hope I'm not just imagining I get on well with them all. Mary S came back to the theatre, and we sat in a dark corner of the stalls, playing delicately together. She's not very happy now, poor girl, though looking prettier than ever, with a new short haircut. I must say now, that she does attract me very much; but more of that later. We spent the rest of the afternoon doing bits. I went home on the bus with Michael M., who happened to be at the theatre for some reason. I left the bus at Victoria, and he went on to his Moffatt, I suppose.

I came down early to drink with Ju. He told me that he was taking Michael out to dinner tonight, in pursuance of his policy of being openly nice. He seems to me slightly calmer, though this will of course be only temporary. After the show, Mary S. brought round John Wood, who is with the Vic, and was at Oxford, a tall thin beaky-nosed young man, of a slightly feline manner. Can she be in love with him? He seems rather slimy and vapid to me. John Warner came in, and joined our group, proposing in the end that we go to the Buckstone. This (to me legendary place) we got to in the end, by asking Newty Blick too, to page in those of us who weren't members. N.B. has acquired a glow for me, for he so obviously is so approving. Doro told him about us. The Buckstone is a smallish basement room, with a tiny bar, the eating room decorated in unrestful red, the whole place packed with faces embittered, weak, comic, pretty, but nearly all vapid in some way or another. It is the refuge, as a rule, of those people who cannot bear to be alone, but who are prepared to put up with any company rather than none. I shall never become a member, because I am frightened I might become one of those. Saw Paul H. Rather an uncomfy talk,...

PAGES MISSING

...through the Sunday I looked at life through a golden glow. Although I had only had about three hours sleep, as I was walking down Firs Drive, I was suddenly struck by a shaft of happiness. I looked around me, the trees were greener the sky more blue, the sun brighter than I ever seem to have seen it. I found I had stopped by a church with a text-board saying, 'Hearken, stand still and hear the voice of the Lord'. I felt so relaxed, so calm, so soothed, so peaceful. Gerard is off to Rome, so more packing to be done to cries of astonishment at its neatness.

After the show on Monday, Rose and Pam Fildes came round. How nice to see P.F. again. She adored the show, 'just what we've all been waiting for', she said. This time I _must go and see her. When I went on to the pub, Ju was looking terrible. We were due at Robin's at eleven and Ju left so late, that we were forced to take a taxi. He broke down in the taxi', because M.M. had been so distant and cold today, after being so warm and sweet yesterday. More hand-holding, though it had still gone no further. At Robin's were dear Ben Duncan and Bobby's brother, Dicky. Ju became unnaturally bright and animated, sparkling, over-sparkling quite like me at my most obnoxious. After supper he subsided into a coma, and there were more tears on the way home; I left him in tears at the door, saying, 'Oh, why must I be so selfish?' He wouldn't let me come in with him, and I walked away, feeling worried for him from the heart of my peace.

Tuesday was full of understudy calls again, a good thing as it turned out. Tony W. came to lunch, and got on quite well with Ju and me together. As we said to each other afterwards, 'It is strange that 'they' have the impertinence to think that we've changed, because their manners have acquired some ease.' Tony is off to Edinburgh on Monday with the Vic. Gerard and Christina came to the show tonight and both adored it. In the pub Doro introduced me to a black-haired golden-skinned red-lipped woman, with a face a bit like Isabel Jeans, rather nervous, restless, awkward, tart and governessy, who turned out to be the famed Mary Llewelin; at first blush I thought her in pain, and I don't see much point in meeting her again till it's over. Soon after in came a tall bluff curly-haired man, with glasses and a bursting-with-talk air, the producer, R.D. Smith. With him, his wife, a small peaked face, big curving nose, tiny pinched mouth, no chin, a shrinking lively inquiring resigned face, Olivia Manning, the novelist. by the time I had arrived, they were talking animatedly on the repulsive qualities and lack of talent of Graham Greene, only pausing when a couple got up from a far corner, and passed us on their way to the door - a fat, squat thick-lipped woman, with sparse dry hair, and thick-lensed glasses, and a very tall man, with very long heron legs, thinning greyish hair, a puffy red face, a cold proud frightened eye, and an indescribable look of haughty slyness. It was Graham Greene and his affair.

After the show on Wednesday Ju asked me out to supper. He started off depressed and no wonder. On Monday he rang up Michael, and the conversation was very tart and unfortunate. However as the evening went on, I managed to turn the conversation to lighter things, and left him in a much happier frame of mind I think.

On Thursday, after having sung all the morning, I found when I got to the theatre that Michael Aldridge had mumps. Only two days before I had been told I was to understudy the dress-designer scene. I had never rehearsed it, never spoken it, never touched the props or worn the costume. I wasn't as terrified as I expected, and I was delighted to find that after all this time I hadn't lost my touch. I did quite well, and got all the laughs clean. It needs a lot doing to it, but the bones are there. Ju was very pleased, I think, though it'll be worse before it's better. Michael will be off for a fortnight, at least.

By a curious chance, Mike Hall was in front, with Anne Rogers, his girlfriend from 'The Boy Friend'. She turned out, at tea after, to be quite different from what I had been told. Dressed in a very pretty white po-hat, with white gloves and bag, a grey coat and skirt with a grey and white tartan design on it, a deep lace collar on her blouse, and gun-metal shoes, she is pretty with black hair, a slightly turned up nose, a generous mouth, very bright eyes, very vivacious, very sweet, very gay. I loved her. She was saying that she didn't like Sandy Wilson, because he didn't invite the company to the party he gave before he went to America. What's more he

was idiotic enough to give his reason, which was that he hadn't got enough money, 'when he's getting £260 a week', she said scornfully. When I told Ju this, he said, 'Oh dear! I am sorry. I thought they were such a happy company. How awful that he should be mean like that. I am sorry.' Then, 'How much did you say he was getting'.

On Friday I stayed in bed all day, and the show was (my bit of it) all right. Saturday I spent almost entirely with Ju, doing his letters in the morning (he gets on the average about ten a day at the moment) lunch, a film 'Dial M for Murder', and tea with Dorothy. He told me that his cheque for 'S.D.' was £75, and for 'Duenna' £40, besides his £20 salary, all for one week.

Tuesday August 24 1954

Rehearsals in the morning; Ju very helpful with Dress Shop as well as the others. It is obvious to me now that he and Doro hate Ivo's acting, and I must say I can't blame them. It's hard and inflexible and forced and untrue, so that for example, any display of high spirits is terribly embarrassing. Ju is really excellent as a producer, for me, anyway.

Michael and John called for us, and we all went out for lunch. Quite a success, but again Bernard, tho' sweet, was in the way. I felt constrained, knowing that Ju doesn't like John M.

Back to rehearsal we went, and got on well enough. Broken the back of the majority of it. John and Michael came round after the show quite speechless, and almost remained so in the pub. When Michael congratulated Ju, I suddenly found I was crying. We had a gay time in the pub, and sad goodbyes at home because they had to get up early.

Against all this must be set my meetings with D. I go to her dressing-room far too often, I think, tho' she is very nice about it. I want to touch her all the time, and yet when she lets me and we get excited, I feel guilty as an actor. As a man of course not at all, but I feel I ought not to bother her in the theatre.

Wednesday August 28 1954

More rehearsals. Julian asked if I'd like to go to supper at the flat, because Chris had said he was to ask someone back, - strange, as he said, but apparently part of the plan to make Ju stay at the flat. No chance of that.

Ju was supposed to be lunching with John Barton, and meeting him at Gower Street Station. I thought I'd go along too, completely forgetting that I was to lunch with Tricia D. I went hot and cold when I thought of it later, and decided in my usual pusillanimous way to leave it for a day or two, and then write a letter, saying how I'd rung up and couldn't get through. I don't know why I didn't confess at once that I'd forgotten.

As it was, we missed John Barton, too. We walked the entire length of Gower Street, and found no station. Eventually we had lunch at the Quality Inn in Upper Regent Street. Ju had salad, I think, and I had steak and kidney pie. Goodness, how much nicer meals are, now there's plenty of meat. We skipped off after this to see the matinee of 'After the Ball', meeting creepy-crawly Hugh Kingston-Hardy in the foyer. We were very much disgusted with the show, almost depressed by its badness, its ineptness, its lack of shape.

At tea Ju was talking about Michael M. He is being 'strong' this week, not going in to see him in the dressing-room at all, with the consequence that they haven't seen each other at all either. I think that's a bit silly, though I suppose it's a rest for Ju. The more I hear of Michael from other sources, the less I like it. Of course I should like to think he wasn't as nice as me, I suppose that's only human, but I wouldn't let it alter anything I might do for him and Ju - I hope.

Thursday August 26 1954

Down to the theatre at 12 o'clock to help Ju with his letters. Most of them under control now. It is now a week since I took over Ambrose, and I think I have it all right more or less, and fixed now, except the curtsey, which I have never got quite right since the first time I did it spontaneously. It's only a question of placing each move and line clearly, and I know exactly how to do it, but get thrown. Tonight I got it, I think. So that's all right. I certainly got some good laughs, and I think Doro and Ju are pleased. They certainly talk freely enough in front of me about how bad Ivo is. Tonight in her room they were going on about the policemen's scene, in real anguish that he made it sound so childish. Oh dear, he is an irritating actor and rehearsaler, and no less so because he's perceptive enough to know that he is. What can one do for someone like that?

Between the shows I went to Dorothy's room where she was lying on the divan. I made a little mild love to her, and so wished that I could find something to say to her. But nothing. What I like is that she leaves me more alone now to get to know her without trying to do it directly as she has before. Every now and again she is maddening when she suddenly says, after I've caressed her, 'Tonight I went into D's room, and while I was caressing her she' - involving me in my poor little puzzled mind in an endless Chinese puzzle-box.

After the show who should appear at the stage-door but Martin Kenyon, that astonishing little china doll, with the thickest skin in the world, one hopes. He would not be shaken off, and he and a nice dim friend of his came out to supper with us.

Friday August 27 1954
Four-thirty a.m.

Dorothy has just left after staying here cock-teasing for three hours or so.

I am thoroughly dispirited and irritable. We went back to Ju's flat for supper, just the three of us. It would have been all delightful, and was in a way, except that they got on to me about talking so gaily to any and everyone. They went on for ages about what torture and agony and shame it was for them to have to speak to someone who bored them that a boring interview burst like a thunder-cloud on them the moment they woke up, that of course it was much easier for me to be nice to people I didn't care for, or who bored me. This led the talk onto motives, and Ju said tartly it was no good my thinking it was Christian motives that made me talk to unattractive people, it was no use my pretending, it was because I enjoyed it. They went on telling me the truth about myself for what seemed like hours. I hadn't the courage to do the same back, nor the unkindness. Their torture and agony seem to me neurotic self-indulgence. They claim they know me well enough to know that it's easier for me. I don't know them well enough to do anything but take their word for it.

Of course they laughed at me, too when I got hurt. Do they think because I look funny or sound funny it's any less real a hurt? How can you go on hurting someone you're really fond of? Deliberately! I can't.-

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 27

Angus Mackay

Being the twenty-third

From August 29 1954
To October 20 1954

PAGE MISSING?

12.0 p.m. (midnight, is that p.m.)

Just back from John H. He has just come back from Denmark, where a holiday that was to be all sturdy brown limbs and dogged twelve-year old faces was rather ruined by rain. In any case, after a very hasty supper, which he was kind enough to prepare, we watched an act of the 'Matchmaker' from Edinburgh, and then talked about Julian. His ideas about Julian are like mine up to a point except that his ideas are completely external and mine are based on intimate knowledge. When he's vitriolic about Ju, which he often is, I don't know whether to laugh or get angry or what. To disagree is impossible, because John is not rational about Ju. So I find myself saying v. weakly, 'Yes, I see what you mean', when he goes off again. He's coming to see 'Salad Days'. God knows what he'll think - or say.

Monday August 30 1954

To lunch with Julian. Arrived at the flat in Gloucester Square to find it all sadly dismantled, the drawing-room where I had many a happy time, quite empty, with picture and cupboard marks on the wall. We went to that place in Baker St., and had steak, walking back to Regent St.'s Cunard office, and through the Parks back to Gloucester Square. Tricia is off to America; I shall miss her. She's a nice inexperienced eager-after-self-improvement-girl. I must try and write to her.

Tonight the 'Duenna' company, who had gone up early on account of their broadcast, came to the last half of 'Salad Days'. It was obvious that they liked it, and I was pleased with the compliments they paid me, too. Jane W. and Liz W. and I were taken out by the composer, with Adrian S. who happened to be there, to Ketthers' for supper. We were none of us except Jane, particularly well-dressed, and Liz and I in particular, were in 'tat'. We had a very expensive supper, with a lot of wine, and a lot of giggles, too, because the waiters were confident that Ju wouldn't be able to pay. The bill was well over seven pounds.

After we had seen the girls off in a taxi, Ju, Adrian and I walked home. Ju and I talked all the way about Ivo and how bad he was, and what could be done about him. Poor Adrian! He goes in the Army on Thursday.

Tuesday August 31 1954

All morning taken up by an understudy rehearsal, and a good one.

Today has otherwise been one of the few 'nothing' restful days there have been lately. I came straight back here after the pub too.

Wednesday September 1 1954

After the understudy rehearsal this morning, Julian and Liz and I went to the Bonbonniere around the corner, and had lunch. Liz said something about Jane joining us, and, rather late, she did, wearing the same dress, a very pretty yellow one with a draped neckline, which takes off to make it a sun-dress. Liz went off to the ballet, and we went back to the theatre for Jane to go to the loo. While she was there, I asked Ju if he'd like me to go away, as I easily could. He said no, he liked things like that to arrange themselves naturally. I knew then that he didn't particularly want to be alone with Jane. I wish I knew her side. We went into the park to the bit of St. James' next to Wellington Barracks. After we'd been sitting for a bit, Ju said he wanted some fruit. I thought that it would be a good opportunity to leave them alone, so went as far as Victoria to get it. The only afternoon, idled away in the boiling sunshine, was really most pleasant. Jane is a real person, true, straight all through; as Michael M. said to me when I mentioned her, 'She never says a word too many'. Or, I might add, too few. I wouldn't say that she had any striking traits about her personality itself which is striking. After tea at a genteel tea-shop opposite the theatre, went into her dressing-room for a drink. After a little while, Joan Plowright, a dear bright button-eyed girl, came in, and as they both wanted to change, we left. In the courtyard outside, we found Gerald Cross, who plays Isaac Mendoza in the show, writing congratulatory postcards to the 'Salad Days' friends. He was very kind to me about my bit, and seemed altogether most intelligent and cultivated, (A suspicious coupling of sentences.) Tall thin, one leg wound round another, loose mouth.

Thursday September 2 1954

Completely forgot to mention that the company were staggered last night to find that _Denis had been in front. He came round after the show to give notes, and I noticed that Ju had been absolutely right when he said that D. would probably nod to me and say, 'Jolly good' and then build Ivo up like a mad thing. This is exactly what happened, but I am glad to say that it didn't depress me at all. I also noticed that James takes notes very badly, so does Ella really, and John W. is very funny and earnest about them, saying very seriously, 'Now do you want me to play that line for comedy or pathos, Denis?'

This morning I rested, lolling about doing cuttings and reading Iris Murdoch's 'Under the Net', which I thought very amusing in a remote sort of way. In the middle of the matinee this afternoon, I suddenly wanted D. so much I could hardly say so. She said firmly, 'Wait till the interval, darling, and see if you still do', which I thought was a bit prosaic. However, I did wait, and I did still want, and back she came. She had sent me out to get two bottles of Spanish burgundy, which we drank. Every now and then I dramatically took her drink and her cig. from her hands, so that I could make love to her, but after a bit it got too serious to be funny. Oh how difficult it is to write of the great melting pleasure of sex, when under your fingers she moves and moans and trembles! When down you plunge into her smooth oily

self. No, it's no good, I can't. I - it would need far longer than I've got, and far more energy than I have left at four in the morning.

But I must just record that once when we made love tonight it was so good that the whole world seemed to turn inside-out.

Friday September 3 1954

At the understudy call this morning, Denis produced me in 'Cleopatra'. He was, I think, quite impressed by my voice, and obviously couldn't get over how clear it was. I didn't really do the song very well, though.

Saturday September 4 1954

Sunday September 5 1954

(written on Sunday)

Last night Ju asked us back to the flat for a drink of his presentation whisky. We went, meaning to come on here afterwards. Ju went to sleep almost at once, and D. began to talk to me about marriage. I said that I wanted children. She said did I really, and hadn't I better examine that want more deeply to see if it were more than just a sentimental idea. I said I thought it was a bit more, and I certainly wanted to get married, not being capable of facing an old age where there would be nobody who was first with me or me first with them. D. said very truly, that I was too involved with all this, meaning the theatre and Julian and my friends to have any place left for anything as enormous as marriage. I agreed, and she said that during the next two years I ought to let the want and the idea of marriage fill my mind until the day would come when I would feel the lack as well as knowing it, and then sure enough I should meet the girl. All this I thoroughly agreed with, and felt very sensibly D. was just rejoicing over my lack of touchiness about it, when I mentioned Mary Steele's letter. D. said, 'And I suppose you'll answer it with one of those letters in one of those handwritings.' This immediately threw a greyness...

PAGE MISSING

Monday September 6 1954

After the weekend trials how calm has Monday been. Today to lunch with Bobby Chapman. He seemed slightly distraught and down. That may be my imagination, but for all that we had a pleasant talk. He has had to leave his lovely Clarges Mews since his young brother came to live there, because the landlords didn't like three people living there or something.

I went to the theatre in the afternoon where we did some more letters. I see he has had one from a man called Ian Read in Dilke Street, who has an unpublished Victorian operetta by Dylan Thomas, which he wonders if Ju would be interested in.

Ju asked Michael to supper tonight, so after letter-writing we went back to the flat and started buying things like mad, pounds of mushrooms, loganberries, coffee, fruit, cream, the lot. I carolled 'Good night' to them as I left. Hope it was.

Tuesday September 7 1954

Understudy call. Exhausted. Rested. Played. Bed.

Wednesday September 8 1954

Rang Ju up, and he got in first with what was I doing for lunch? We did together, with Robin and his girl friend, and very nice and dull it was, then off to 'The Boy Friend' again which he'd suddenly decided he wanted to see again. A lovely performance this afternoon. We had a word with Anne Rogers afterwards, in her blonde wig, as bright as a button. Ju told me over tea that Monday...

PAGE MISSING

... very well-cut, very straight the other rather pointless, a slightly muddy crimson jersey, very full in an unpressed sort of way. Still I tried to say something nice about each one, as honestly as I could. We went over the road to the pub. It was the first time we had really had a meal together, and we were both in a very clear light mood, excited in a quick happy unstrained way. Over lunch I asked her to come back to my room; she considered a bit, as she always does, a new step, to be taken in daylight, and not drunk - a big step indeed. She still hadn't decided when we went to Swan and Edgar's for a belt, but when we came out into the sunshine she had made up her mind. When I said 'Peter Jones', she said, 'Yes'. I was again surprised to find that walking with her in broad daylight made me a bit self-conscious. In peter Jones' she bought a broad suede belt with a gold buckle. Pretty. I found that really I...

PAGE MISSING

... she thought it was good for me. We talked very well over tea, very soundly and agreeably. Some of the time it was about Julian, during which we talked about John H's amazing letter, and she made the remark that she's never thought Julian's tunes particularly good. She is a very honest, very thorough person, but like all people who allow themselves to be continually critical and analytic, her conversation tends to be destructive. To others this afternoon and not to me, which of course gives me the pleasant and disgusting feeling of sitting in judgement.

Certainly by this afternoon's course, a new stage has been marked in our relationship. I am gradually advancing in ordinary life into the confidence I feel in bed.

PAGE MISSING

...and everything in time. Just before I went out, Mrs. Lumley caught me, and asked me whether it was my friend who banged the door at three in the morning, and that it was disgusting. 'No visitors after 10.30' she said, 'that's the rule'.

I went off to the Irvines rather annoyed, I must say, with everyone. James and Anne seemed really pleased to see me, and I must admit, it was nice to talk unreservedly to someone who would not continually find fault. Their house is charming, and already feels like a home;

conventional it may be, as Gerard called it, but it has warmth and friendliness. The dining-room is specially pleasant, with a good table, and pretty silver. The lunch was plain and good, and after it, James, having persuaded me to stay to tea, took me for a walk in the park while Anne made her first Victoria sandwich.

Back here Dorothy arrived at about six and we had a quick...

PAGE MISSING

Monday September 13 1954

Met Michael Bishop at Paddington at 11.15, and found him looking much crisper and neater than of late. We went to Austin Reed's first, where I had my plaits cut off, and then rather absurdly to Nathan's, where I was measured for a toupee. This took almost until lunch-time, and Michael was, I must say, very good about it. In the afternoon, we went to the Victoria & Albert, where the costumes interested him. We were able to find time for quite a lot of talk, and I found him much more relaxed, much less self-conscious in the wrong immature way. I really believe he only needs a few good friends to rub the corners off to become quite ordinary - like me.

After the show J and D and I had supper at Lyons'. She got a little drunk and assertive. My goodness, she does like the sound of her own voice.

Tuesday September 14 1954

Up at seven o'clock to go with Michael Meacham to the Dental Hospital. He was to have a wisdom tooth out, and for an extraction you apparently have to have an adult with you. John Moffat couldn't go, Ju couldn't and, though I can hardly believe it, he had no one else to ask. I got to his flat at about a quarter past eight, suddenly realising at the door that I should be alone with him, virtually for the first time. He greeted me brightly, not seeming in the least apprehensive about the tooth or anything else. His room looks very nice now, all white with a red fitted carpet, and soon-to-be curtains of green, he thought. Very pleasant. Only five books, the poor thing, and the OBEV one of them. We went out into a bright cool clear sunny morning, much earlier than either of us are accustomed to be up. At the hospital the atmosphere was one of clinically smug horror. Nurses strutted crackling past, taking their hideous power repulsively for granted. Rows of wretched extractees sat alternately with their accompanying adults. People went up some dreary stairs with long faces and came down them with swollen ones. Michael came to me after the inspection, and sent me into hysterics by saying he wasn't having the teeth out at all. It turned out when he came back the second time that they had taken the top one out unexpectedly. He was as bright as a button from start to finish, and all my delicious fantasies about him fainting or bleeding or even dying were sadly dispersed. We were free at five to ten, and went to have a cup of coffee. The rest of the day, which I had imagined would be spent by a bed of pain, stretched ahead uninvitingly empty.

After the show we were whisked off to Launceston Place by Martin Kenyon to a young people's party. The drink which was only limp white and red wine ran out very early on. There was a lot of singing partly of the 'Salad Days' songs, which I saw on top of the piano,

lying about among all the others just as if they were songs I didn't know at all. Ju was, I noticed, far less choosy about how the songs were sung than he used to be, letting everyone sing them quite casually. John Warner played and sang, too, and really plays very well. Newty sang one or two songs, among them a ravishing one, 'You're only a girl whom men forget, just a toy - to enjoy - for a while'. I talked to a nice dull young man just down from King's, who made me feel for the first time, as if I'd changed since Cambridge.

The party finished at about half-past two, and Ju and I walked home.

In the taxi on the way to the party, someone quoted his 'Express' remark, 'I like the old things'. 'Oh', said Julian, 'how wrong they are! I like the young young things!'

Wednesday September 15 1954

Off to Golders Green to see Susan. Another thing I forgot to mention. Past the Hippodrome, where I spent the gloomiest of weeks with the Priestley play, past the Crematorium, hideous in Byzantine red-brick, through neat prosperous streets to Turner Close, a large village green with houses set neatly round it; no. 12, prosperous enough from the outside, is empty and bare as if the family were moving out or in, except for one room, small, lime green-papered, with a great many books, two old presses and some rather dreary pictures, into which I was shown. From behind a desk rose a heavy severe old man with a round intelligent face and the slightly over-pitched voice of the deaf. It turned out to be Susan's father, and as Susan was upstairs feeding her twins, I was able to have a quiet talk with him, helped by a surprisingly good cup of coffee brought in by the German 'girl'. Mr. S. is incisive, logical, determined, rational and has something ruthless about him. Susan is much more like him than like her mother. After about quarter of an hour, Susan came in, with bundles of white wool with wizened heads sticking out under each arm, looking better, more relaxed and happier than I have ever seen her. Wearing a broad blue and white striped blouse and a tight dark blue skirt, she also looked smarter. She came in for a moment leaving the babies with us. I sensibly chose Charlotte, the younger of the two, who seemed less restless. She lay very quietly in my arms, looking just like an ordinary baby. Victoria, the elder of the two, has a wizened monkeyish premature look, and indeed both their bodies are rather more skinny and mottled than a month-old baby would generally be.

Susan is, I am glad to say, just the same in all the pleasant ways, and has lost a great deal of the tension that was so much a part of her before. It was fascinating to hear all about the babies; an experience of that sort, with so many physical changes having their automatic effect on the brain, is particularly interesting when it's somebody who is intelligent and whom you know very well. She didn't have a difficult time at all, as I thought she might, and I must say she made a very good story of it. My goodness, she is grown up now.

After the show tonight, Julian More came round with Bobby Chapman and Nicky Johnston. They came over to the pub, and we had a gay drink. Dorothy was sitting with Newty, Michael A. and Robert Eddison. I just kissed her goodnight and went off with the three of them to Julian M's flat for a drink. Ju had left for supper with James C. Back in the Mores' flat we talked a little desultorily, for J.M. is a slightly restless host. Toby is staying there, as P.G., though, as J.M. says, 'not so much P-ing as G-ing'. I stayed quite late after the others, and although Toby did not stay in the room very long, I was surprised to see how tired and haggard he was. I daresay John B. is giving him hell at 'Richard II'. I think Julian is taking

Ju's success very well. My God! I know how I would be. He walked home with me about two, and as we turned into Draycott Place from Sloane Avenue, and were approaching my house, down the middle of the road came a woman dressed in a nightdress and dressing-gown, her feet bare, running and looking over her shoulder giving little 'oh's' and 'ah's' of fear. Julian called out, 'Can we do anything'. She called back, her voice dying away on the wind, 'No, there's nothing you can do.' We followed her to the police-station, where I went up the steps, peered through the glass doors, and saw her sitting at the reception desk, with her head buried in her hands. When she caught sight of me, she jumped up in fear, until she saw who it was. She came to the door, opened it and said 'I'm quite all right. Thank you so much for caring about me'.

I have left this to the end because it's exciting. Before the show when we went for our usual drink, I noticed that Ju was abstracted. After a bit of coaxing he told me the reason, Coward was coming to the show. Sure enough when I peeped through the mask, there he was in prompt box, sitting between a hard blonde woman and a nondescript man, red carnation in his button hole, shoulders raised, cigarette-holder poised in one hand. He obviously enjoyed the whole show, particularly the sweet bits which he couldn't possibly have written himself. Hardly had Julian come back to the dressing-room than Vic, the stage-door keeper was sticking his head round the door to say that Mr. Noel Coward was coming straight round to Miss Reynolds' dressing-room. Ju told me all about it in the pub, but I heard and saw the first bits myself. Vic came back, and knocked on Dorothy's door, and down the stairs appeared the hard blonde, who turned out to be Kay Thompson, the American singer. She stood in the dressing-room doorway, waved a laconic hand, and said, 'Hello'. She stood to one side, then there was a tiny pause, then in a rush and a flurry with both arms outstretched, 'How do you do?' I felt I had to come round to tell you how enchanting I thought your show was. I'm deeply grateful. It is so intelligent, so wise. Undergraduate. That's what the critics call anything they don't understand. I make a point of never reading notices until the show has been running to full houses for six months'. (What a shock he's going to get in November!) Oh your songs, such shape, so gay, and those tunes. Oh those tunes, tunes, tunes!"

Thursday September 16 1954

Friday September 17 1954

Between the shows today Peter Barkworth came round to have tea with us. John Warner happened to come, too, and we all four went to the Curb. He is a nice but uncomfy-making person, the high seriousness of him is touching but trying. Ju of course is attracted by him, and gets on well with him because he's exactly like Peter Firth.

During the evening show I suggested to D. that I come back to her flat, as I thought Mrs. Lumley ought to be given a week or so to get over the door banging. She was doubtful, timid and puzzled about it, and would give me no direct answer. 'Prim', Dorothy Primrose, was in the pub with us after the show, and suddenly Dorothy asked us all back to her flat for a drink. So into a taxi we piled, my thoughts rather mixed. I supposed that I was to stay on, and that the others had been asked partly because she really wanted them and partly so that...

PAGE MISSING

Saturday September 18 1954

Felt subdued all day and stayed in. At the theatre Dorothy and Prim in her dressing-room all through the second house, which was good in one way, because I like Prim, but bad in another because I like Dorothy more. Heard them arranging to meet at the pub near Dorothy, she and Newty and Ju. Foolishly could not resist asking if I could come, too. She said 'Yes, but come halfway through pub time.' This was damping - quite unreasonably.

Sunday September 19 1954

Decided in the morning not to go to drinks, and after a nice enough lunch with Robin and his girl friend and his girl friend's flatmate, a most beautiful auburn-haired girl called Joan Neville, unfortunately Australian, rang D. up to tell her so. Said that I wanted a day to myself. She asked me why, but I said I couldn't hear.

Why? It suddenly seemed to me dreary to go all that way to hear her lecture me, while Julian sat silent, try to make love to him, and ultimately go to bed with me. Heaven knows I've got good at second fiddle playing, but there are times when it becomes too much. They are both so rarefied that they sometimes irritate me. They never seem to feel any of the ordinary feelings at all, jealousy of success or vanity or covetousness or anything. All they do is go about understanding often all wrong. I wonder what would happen to them if I started to behave as they do. My goodness, Julian would get a surprise. When they laugh at my seriousness, I wonder if they remember their own, particularly about sex. How they talk talk about themselves, until one really feels like throwing open every window in the theatre to let some fresh air into this stale fuggy room.

I have been in all today, until this evening when I went out to see 'The Iron...

PAGE MISSING

Monday September 20 1954

Tuesday September 21 1954

Spent all Monday here at home, reading and writing. Finished Lawrence's 'The Lost Girl' which Dorothy had lent me. So typical that had I been asked to tell the typical Lawrence story, this is the one I would have told even if I hadn't read it.

When I got to the theatre, it was quite late. I'd missed the rehearsal, apologised to Liz C., and went down to Julian's dressing-room, and apologized to him. Then I knocked on Dorothy's door, walked in and felt, oh! I don't know what, an immense flood of relief that she was there and pleased to see me, a warmth, a tenderness to her that made me able to do nothing but stand and smile idiotically, broadly completely with all my face at her. I took her in my arms, and after we had kissed a little, she asked me what I was doing for supper. I said nothing, and she said, 'Well, I can give you some cold beef'. I thought 'Well, I've never heard it called that before', but of course that isn't what I thought at all at the time. I've just thought of it now. So I went.

This time we were alone. We had supper, and sat and made love for a bit. Then she said 'Well, now, Angus, I'm very tired, so I think I'll go to bed now. You sit for a bit, and then

you can go home', all this with her wonderful common-sense face on. It was exciting sitting reading and waiting for her rustling and moving about to stop. I forced myself to read about twenty pages of 'A Member at the Wedding' and a Lawrence short story 'In Love', and then went in. There was no light but the gas fire. She said shakily, 'You meant to make me wait, you meant to make me wait a long time. I had been about twenty minutes. My instincts must be better than my judgement because sexually I nearly always seem to do the right thing without meaning to. I undressed in front of...

PAGE MISSING

...could not bear to hurt her or fail her. She is a woman who can turn my heart over by a look. When she spoke of our affair being over one day, I couldn't answer her properly, only in fun.

Felt a bit queasy in the show tonight. In the pub, Ju was monosyllabic again. Said goodnight to D., shared a taxi home. He never said a word. He is down just now. Such a boring time he's having, I suppose. Should I have said something? Suppose not.

Wednesday September 22 1954

Felt queasy and tired when I woke today. Reaction, I suppose. Just got to the rehearsal in time; I hadn't felt so uninclined for work for ages. As it turned out, it went quite well. Ivo was hell today, terribly embarrassing but of course not his fault in a sense. He must learn to relax. Ju went off to lunch with Bill Linnit and Dorothy to talk about their next show. I had lunch with Liz West who'd been at the rehearsal, too. She talked more cock about Jane, at least not cock but quite mistaken things, I'm sure, culminating in asking me to take Jane out, saying she needed someone to tell her how attractive she was. What a betrayal of one's best friend. Unintentional of course, but oh dear! the lack of instinct and judgement. However, I kept a good face on it, and we talked rudely about Ju and Dorothy for some time, such a relief. While we were sitting in the little cafe where we used to go during the rehearsals, I suddenly saw Martita on the other side of the road, floating along in her usual remote way. She suddenly stopped to talk to somebody (Wolfe Morris, Liz said) opposite the cafe window where we were sitting, and I instinctively hid my face. Why? I think because I couldn't bear the shock of remeeting someone I wasn't sure I really knew well but hoped I did. She was wearing a brown-blue mixture tweed coat and skirt, and gamboge hat and shoes.

Liz left me at four and I went to see 'Gog' at the Pavillion, an absurd science-fiction which relaxed me better than bed. Back at the theatre I met D. coming away from the pub, no, I didn't, I met her in the dressing-room, wearing a white sweater with a 'boat' neckline, which I hadn't seen before, with her new red skirt. It shows her figure much more than most things she wears. I liked it. We went the pub, where Newty was sitting with his cold in a corner. I got some sandwiches, and we sat and I heard all about the Linnit conversation from her and Ju who came in soon afterwards.

After the little rehearsal I came back to the pub to find MM and Ju together. They seem to be getting on better. Good. I spent most of the evening in and out of D's dressing-room, trying to keep my hands off her, and my cock in my trousers. I just don't know why she excites me so much. She said last night, 'Thank you for all the sweetness'...

PAGE MISSING

... I sat and talked to Jane most of the time and my God! she is a darling, so warm and curved and wantable. We had a very gay party with boiled eggs and a Fuller's Iced Lemon cake. Joan P's husband, Roger Gage, a slim dark hook-nosed young man, came in, too, and David Peel dropped in for a minute. Jane told me about Coward's visit to them. Apparently he hates the period, but loved the music, even though Mozartian music generally sounds to him 'like a Pekingese peeing on a mink rug'.

The show tonight was enlivened by Newty saying to Dorothy that their next show should be about a dancer who makes everybody play the piano. James capped it by saying, 'Then we could have choruses called 'We're dancing for a looker', and 'Oh Play to Me, I'm Looking'. Newty also cheered D. up by knocking on her door, coming in and saying, 'It's me, I expect'. She asked him if his cold was better, He said, 'Yes, thank wood'. She said, 'We must go. We've been ever so called...

PAGE MISSING

...The show went well tonight, except for a party in the O.P. box. A young woman clutching a toy dog and a young man with a champagne bottle on the edge of the box were joined by another couple and made a terrific noise. I joined Ju and Michael in the pub tonight. It is nice that M. comes more (this was before the show) I thought it mightn't be, but it is. Ju's gone to see Jane tonight.

I wish Dorothy were here tonight.

Saturday September 25 1954

Arrived at Notting Hill Station at twenty to twelve, and rang up the Zoo to see if the Monkey House had reopened. It had, so I went to see James.

He lives in a peacefully decaying road, with handsome houses in Pimlico Italianate, generously sprinkled with urns, and provided each with a glass awning with a lot of elaborate wrought iron tracery about it. Oh but such a calm street, with drifts of leaves lying tidily in the middle of each pavement. James' flat, made up of the ground floor and basement of one of these large houses is calm and peaceful and tidy, too, but like the street, I suppose, hides a good many odd secrets under its calm, James' queerness and his father's mad second wife and so on. The room he and David share is delightful. About all it is full of at the moment, because they only have the two beds, a chair or two, a bookcase and a large gramophone with an enormous horn, on which we had a good deal of pleasant dance music. Dr. Cairncross is very frail and thin, wheezy and obviously ill, yet very active in his mind and tongue, and rather boring, too. I had a good time, though I am never quite sure of James.

The shows this evening were a little unhappy for me. It comes over me every now and then how little I am doing and how slow my career is in coming on. I know other people have waited much longer, but I am afraid that doesn't help as much as it ought to. I can't take the grand views of Doro and Julian, who talk about work in such high-flown terms entirely in terms of standards. Its availability is of much greater interest to me now.

The awful thing is that I have to fight against a continual jealousy of Ju, on almost every ground. I have nothing left me with which to feel that I have anything special to offer anyone. Sex I suppose, but what's that. In the pub tonight, they decided to go back to Julian's flat for a drink. I deliberately refused just to see if I could, and I could, but not of course without stirring up a lot of black thoughts. Why is it so terribly difficult to listen to, and be sympathetic with, someone complaining about things you would love to have? It is wrong to want to be famous? Just to be known and not nobody? Dorothy would laugh, I expect. But then all sweets are bitter to her by now!

PAGES MISSING

Monday September 27 1954

A quiet uncomplicated day, spent writing letters and reading. Begun 'Rachel Ray' again.

The evening at the theatre was boring. D. was 'withdrawn', the word she used herself in the end, though I had used it to myself almost the moment I walked into her room. She made an effort at the end of the evening, but it was obviously an effort. Julian by chance more or less, I never saw. I must really try to remember to be 'withdrawn' one day. It wouldn't be any use, because I would be bound to forget. Why am I so subservient? I never dare to be withdrawn or snappy. I'm too scared of losing people's friendship, especially people so easily made irritable or bored, as D. and J. It is all inexplicable to me. I tried to explain to her about yesterday, but she just said we were all babies, and seemed to think that I had been offended or hurt in some way by yesterday which I hadn't been really. She so seldom seems to understand what is really worrying me, and seems to think it's always something different from what I say it is. I was annoyed with Julian for spoiling a pleasant evening out, for what seemed to me a quite inadequate reason.

Gerard has asked me for the weekend, and oh! how I long to see him as a thirsty man longs for water. How lovely it will be to know that one will be welcomed unreservedly!

Wednesday September 29 1954

Up and out to lunch with Jane Wenham before going to the matinee of the Rattigan plays. Oh what a girl, so sweet and natural and attractive. She talked easily, as I was afraid she mightn't. We got on well, and I very much enjoyed the afternoon. I hope she did. She has great reserves and depths, I am sure.

The show was a little less dreary for me tonight, though Ju was as collapsed and down as ever. I really feel I must ask him what the matter is. Dorothy was a little better tonight, and was sweet to me. Both of them seem very tired, yet I feel that they should be recovering their spirits by this time.

Thursday September 30 1954

A nasty wet crawly day. Arrived at the theatre at one fifteen after a lazy morning, and was just in time to go out to lunch with Julian. He probably had little breakfast, he had some salad

and a roll he didn't finish for lunch, a cup of tea and a piece of swiss roll for tea, and probably no supper. Well, of course, he feels washed-out, because he's getting no energy out of his food. Starch is what he wants. But he wouldn't listen when I tried to say so. Tonight he felt worse, chilly, so I expect he's sickening for 'flu.

Dorothy was very dear tonight, wanting me to lean on, and talk to, a bit. She thinks that she is sickening for the curse, which indeed I hope she is. I was just wondering to myself what I would feel if she said she was going to have a baby. Pain for her and the show would be my first feelings, I think, not because I'm unselfish but because I know she wouldn't bother me with it if she could possibly help it. But it would seriously upset our friendship, for I would always feel guilty at having forced such pain and bother upon her. Oh, I like being with her so much.

I feel more and more uncomfortable, not buying rounds in the pub.

Friday October 1 1954

Understudy call not a success, for me that is. Weak, flat and fluffing all over the place. Ju told me off, and quite right, too. Didn't depress me except in the right way.

Liz and I went to the pictures after lunch, 'The Belles of St. Trinian's' and very bad, too. No, I can't pretend to write up the day any more. Dorothy was sweet and loving tonight, very funny about feeling excited about my body but not about her own. I wanted her very much, but didn't dare kiss her because of her make-up and daren't ask her here because she's been so tired. I know she'd say yes if I really wanted her to. She said we must have a talk, so I said to her, 'Come back to my room for it'. She said, 'No', but of course, I could have made her say yes. All that doesn't really worry me.

The sort of thing that worries me is John Neville being in the pub, being such a nice person, getting on so well, so much loved by them all, and so nice to me yet knowing nothing of my talents at all. Why am I tormented in this terrible humiliating way all the time by the longing for people to know who I am and admire me? A longing so strong that I bore everyone about it.

Even my poor old diary. I am jealous, jealous and envious of everyone in this wretched show. I wish I'd never joined it, except for the money.

As we parted at the tube, D. was silly enough to say I hadn't wanted her all this week. Of course I do see how lack of self-confidence is irritating. Her lack of sex-confidence is very to me. All her absurd 'Am I doing the right thing?' If you aren't, it's no good asking. Instinct for it, that's all. My God, I'm fond of her though, for all this silliness.

Saturday October 2 1954

Sunday October 3 1954

Monday October 4 1954

Monday 11.45

On Saturday afternoon got to the theatre at about two to help Ju with his letters. He had not had lunch, so we went out to Forte's across the road for him to have some. When we came back, we sat and talked for quite a time about last night (that's to say, Friday night of course) when he went to -the Caprice with his music publisher.- Lionel's flat. This led him to talk about (writing so late has muddled my memory) his music and then about his career. He said that he thought the important thing was to know where one's strength lay, and develop it to face the years when one's initial talent dropped away. He also said that he thought the success of 'Salad Days' was due to the book and the cast far more than to the music, which was what everyone else thought. He told me all about his Lionel evening. He was sent out to have a drink first with Ian Dallas, a young playwright whom Lionel thinks, might work with Julian and thus preserve the fast-loosening bond between Julian and himself. I.D., a tall thin cadaverous ugly young man, far from endeared himself by criticising 'Salad Days' savagely before they had even reached wherever it was they were having a drink. Julian set into his more Arctic of moods, and the poor young man remained frozen for the rest of the evening. What annoyed Julian most was that it was obvious that Lionel had put him up to all this rudeness in the hope of making Ju feel that he was tied to inferior work-mates. After a bit we got down to letters, and he did quite a few. Dorothy came in at about four, and kissed him long and lovingly. I have to think about something else when she does that because I feel sure that J. is thinking, 'Ah well! she may sleep with Angus, but I, with my deathless charm,...

PAGES MISSING

...than I was rather late at the church. Such a performance going on, very silly, but very good for those who like it, I suppose. Cradock Ratcliff, a tall broad smooth-faced purring voice man of about 60, was preaching. A very lucid simple sermon on angels. At the Parish luncheon, guests included me, him, Princess Mathilde Windesgratz or however you spell it, Sam Gurney, and a very silly woman called Miss Petre, who said to me, 'I got into awful trouble in the war for saying I didn't hate the Germans. I don't hate anyone'. Rosemary and Gerard are sweet to me, sweet. I'm going back for Rose's birthday on the seventeenth.

Today has been in bed. Till tonight. In the show Dorothy was very moving, needing me very much, loving me almost, never out of my arms or my thoughts. She said we might go to Cambridge. Julian talked about Michael.

Tuesday October 5 1954

Alone all day, and when I wasn't actually doing something, found myself thinking of Dorothy all day. I hardly know what to think about myself, for she has not entered my thoughts at all, or not like this, until this last week or so, when I have suddenly come to realise that I think about her far more than I used.

Went to see 'The Caine Mutiny' this afternoon. A rubbishy film on the whole, but the trial scene is good, and Humphrey Bogart is brilliant.

Waited outside the theatre for D., but she never came until very late, and then with her mother. I never met her mother. I suppose she didn't want me to. I couldn't keep away from her in the pub, or the theatre. She said again we must go to Cambridge. That would be good; it would finally kill the ghost for me.

Ju and I walked round the big calm Georgian blocks of publishers' and magazine buildings in the still warm evening, talking about Michael. How unhappy Michael must be with his huge blistered conscience! I wish I could say something.

Dorothy has the curse. I want her very much. In the pub Denis C. came in, and Eric Porter, a tall pitted wild-eyed man, with an unstable manner and thin white hands. Oh! Dorothy, I want you.

Wednesday October 6 1954

I am calmer now. I have read a little more and I am calmer. When I first came in, I was upset, or rather disturbed.

It has been a happy undisturbing day. I went to the understudy call full of enthusiasm, and it went off well enough; though I wish that Liz would see the show again and find out what the dancers are actually doing. As we broke, Julian came back from an interview with Leslie Mitchell, and said that he had got tickets for the D'Oyly Carte matinee of 'Trial by Jury' and 'The Pirates', so off we went. At lunch he told me about the American offer that's been made by Maurice Evans, and gave me his ideas about the zipping up of the show there would have to be for Broadway. The operas were terrible; tasteless imitations of imitations.

We met Dorothy coming out of the theatre after her rest, and we all had tea together. I wanted to talk to her about missing her, but she went to the pub, and anyway I thought better of it. Later I did tell her. She quietly teased me, thinking, because I had said it badly, that I was pumping up an emotion that I didn't feel. Later still I told her again, but she made no comment. I think I might be getting fond of her. I mentioned Cambridge again to her, and suggested the 11.10 on Saturday night. She wondered if there might not be too much of Sunday if we took that train. I said only something teasing about knowing how we bored each other. She answered that of course I was never bored - with anyone. If that is to be her opinion, I would feel better not going at all. After all, one day is not much to ask.

At other points in the evening, we talked again about my voice. I daresay that I have skilfully transferred my depression about this, which seemed non-existent at the time, into depression about my feelings for Dorothy. At any rate, when Julia, Dorothy's dresser, came in and found me slumped in the easy chair in D.'s room, and said, 'I expect you get very tired of doing nothing every night', it released a repulsive wave of self-pity. Or rather a number of waves. First, that I'm only another of D.'s young men, whose pricks make up for their brains. Second that I'm just a sort of gigolo, because my only important role in the show is to fuck Dorothy. Third that both these attitudes are childish and untrue. Fourth, my uselessness is real. I'm not doing anything. Fifth it's turning everything else sour. Sixth all these thoughts turn things sour, thoughts such as complaining of Julian's complaints when I have so much more to depress and bore me.

You see what a morass it could become. I'm not really like that. I'm more independent than that, not much more but a bit. What Dorothy said about Sunday in Cambridge, I should never say to anyone. What is the point of wondering aloud whether the person you're talking to bores you too much to spend a whole day with them? I long and long to walk away from her just when she's wanting me most, but I can't. What am I going to do? I wish I'd never begun this thing. No. I don't. I daresay I can manage her all right. Physically she's weak enough.

Thursday October 7 1954

I decided twice not to write tonight, but I must. D. read the last few entries in this diary tonight. I didn't mean her to on the surface, but I'm beginning to think that underneath I wanted her to, so that she should be hurt.

It was contemptible to let her read it, or write most of it. I must put it right. I don't want her to go away from me.

Friday October 8 1954

Oh the sweetness of this evening! I felt she must be annoyed and slightly disgusted, but she was tender and loving to me. I wanted her tonight, but she wasn't ready for me. She's asked me round on Sunday, and then oh then I'll let it all this week's love go in one night. Oh she's made me so happy. She talked about Newty, who was in love with her, and John Neville whom she nearly had, and John W...

PAGES MISSING

Wednesday October 13 1954

Understudy call this morning, for which I felt a little tired. Julian tells me that James is to play, though wants me to do 'Out of Breath' for him. Disappointed and relieved. Wish I was being made to do it all again.

In the afternoon went by myself to see 'Rear Window', the new Hitchcock film. Literate, gay, thrilling and well put together. And oh! Grace Kelly. How beautiful, how attractive, how intelligent.

In the evening had to tell Dorothy that the Garden House couldn't take us. Hope that doesn't mean that fates are against it. Will try Blue Boar. She was very sweet and soft all the evening, wanting me and responding to me. But I want her now to do more than just that.

After the show to supper with Jane and Liz, when I felt constrained. It would be so good to be alone with Jane.

Thursday October 14 1954

This morning mainly in bed reading 'Our Mutual Friend'.

To the matinee with a great deal of trouble. One 'bus every half an hour because of the strike. Felt very close to Dorothy all today, but particularly during the evening when I said to her that she was welcome to come to, and in, my room tonight, tomorrow afternoon, tomorrow night, or Saturday night. She leant over towards me, with a mixture on her face of tenderness and desire. When she stood up to put her hat on, she stood looking down at me with the same expression on her face, an expression meaning that I had touched her deeply.

She is to come this afternoon, as it's now (1.30) Friday.

Julian and I went out to supper. We left D. at the tube, where I noticed for the first time, she kissed us both with equal warmth. Usually her public...

PAGE MISSING

Friday October 25 1954

She came to me this afternoon, and it was lovely - lovely. We had a talk first about J. which wasn't so lovely. She accepts all those things about him, which I find unfair. So that's that. The quality that makes people fall in love with him is, the one thing about him I can't take. She says I love it, but really I am jealous of it.

Oh that's all muddled. Because we went round to Julian's after the show, and, as he fell asleep, D. and Newty and I talked very pleasantly. I found it difficult to bear to be the other side of the room from her, and that Newty should be on the sofa with her and not me. The talk was very pleasant but bored me. I wanted her to myself. She worried me terribly when I came out by saying suddenly that she would like to sleep with me all night. I persuaded her not, or rather intimated not. She said it was because she would disturb my rota for tomorrow morning. It wasn't that at all. It was partly fear of someone finding out she was here in the morning, partly fear of her spending such a poor night that I wouldn't be able to forgive myself for exhausting her before a matinee day. Oh dear, she does disturb me so. I feel still that at any moment she may suddenly feel she never wants to see me again.

Saturday October 16 1954

Sunday October 17 1954

Monday October 18 1954

Tuesday October 19 1954

Wednesday October 20 1954

I am not sure that I really want to write about Saturday yet. Dorothy came back here, with me in a strange restless state. For almost the first time in my life, I went to the pub alone and got drunk - not very on five gins - but I had an empty stomach. In the pub Dorothy and Julian and MM. and I had a gay conversation about sex. So frank, for him, I mean that Julian's eyes were popping out with fearful excitement and that air of casual amusement - no that's not it quite - casual you can't-take-me-by-surprise-isn't-it-all-amusing ishness which he wears when he feels the pull of sex in any way.

Dorothy hadn't got her 'Dutch cap' or whatever she calls it in, and went back to the theatre to get it. When we got back here I mentioned that I was restless and bored. She said that it was no wonder, and went on to talk about me and my career. Earlier in her dressing-room, I had been crying, exactly about what I have now forgotten, though the real reason was the gin. Now of course I started again, not over myself directly so much, but over the beastliness of feeling jealous of Julian. The tears poured out. She talked for a long time about the...

PAGE MISSING

By the afternoon of Monday I had settled down to some sort of acceptance. I have stopped actively thinking about the details of what she said. The burden of her talk lies in my mind as a great continual weight, picked up again every morning, and not very easily put down at night. But I'm not allowing myself to ask any direct questions about it, only allowing it to heave about and throw out roots.

Fortunately I had plenty to do on Monday and Tuesday, getting ready for the party on Tuesday, for the hundredth night of 'The Duenna'. I reckoned on about sixty people coming, and on the principle that half would drink wine and half beer, ordered four dozen wine, red and white, and six dozen beer, on sale and return. I thought that about half of each would be drunk leaving a safe margin anyway. In fact all but three bottles of red wine were drunk and only a dozen bottles of beer. I made quite sure that everyone had enough to drink by circulating continuously with a bottle of each. Mrs. Sweetland did the food superbly, under my direction - partly; I kept the gramophone going and altogether I think it was a great success. Everyone said so, anyway, and it didn't break up until five o'clock.

The result of all my hard work was that I got so involved with my party keep-going that when I wanted to make love to Dorothy I couldn't because, I suppose, and so she said, I didn't want to enough.

We have had two talks about it. She says it's no use hoping to feel more than you do. Well my goodness, yes.

Most important of all, as she was leaving on Saturday night, she leant over me in bed and said, 'Come closer to me'.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 28

Angus Mackay

Being the twenty-fourth

From October 21 1954
To March 14 1955

Thursday October 21 1954

Altogether a good day for me, though rather base of me to find it so.

During the afternoon it became obvious that Ella was in great pain from a carbuncle on her thigh. This strained Dorothy and Julian very much, for the thought of Ella being off is worst of all. However she went to Dorothy's doctor during the break between shows, and seemed better.

I spent that time in Dorothy's dressing-room. We talked about me, of course. I went on complaining about Julian, and about myself, upset that I could be trivial enough to forget her for a party. She said that that was what I was like at the moment, perhaps always, that I liked people and had a very wide affection for them, which rather precluded an intense affection. I said that I felt dull and shallow. She said, 'Never mind. You must settle for what you're like, just as the other night I was saying that we were lovers and Julian the loved, and people are divided in that and all sorts of ways'. She thinks I react strongly to Julian's moods. So I do, but so I do to hers and to anyone I care for, because I'm weak, because I always seem to care more what people think of me, than they do what I think of them. All this is what I must accept. It's all so unfair. I still cannot see what is the point of being like me, all gay and bright and cheerful, and only having a depression when I remember to have one because it's interesting. Now you see, I go warm at the sound of her name, because she's been kind.

I asked her here tomorrow afternoon. I wish she could believe how I think of her all morning, how I fidget, open the windows so it won't be stuffy, shut them so it won't be cold, not have a bath so that I'll smell, which she likes. Oh women.

Friday October 22 1954

Well, she came, and it was lovely. I met her at the 'bus-stop, and blushed at her. Then I noticed that Mary L. was sitting in the bus, apparently on her way to the Tristram Hillier show at Tooth's. She was wearing black, (Dorothy I mean) and seemed a little down. That soon passed, and after a little conversational lie-down, I started to make love to her. I excited myself so much that at the last I tore off my trousers and took her, coming almost at once. She was very restless when we were lying quiet, saying that her mind was full of what she called 'ineffable' thoughts. When I took her again, it was a rich thrilling one, and afterwards she sighed and said, 'Dear man'. After a little while she confessed that the first time she had not really been satisfied and had thought she was going off me. I said to her, 'Don't go off me yet'. She said 'No, I won't, not yet, my darling.'

Earlier she had read my diary, and said, when she had finished it, 'I think you're very sweet - and gentle.' And 'I've been glad of you this week.' She is so perceptive and has such an instinct for the right word that I never find a moment to say to her what I really feel about her - not quite.

I wasn't pleased by her saying she'd thought she was going off me. I don't quite know how I'm going to face that.

Saturday October 23 1954

Sunday October 24 1954

Dorothy asked me to come and stay the night with her, 'as Mary was away.' She was very tired and rather on edge, I think. Our love-making was to me a little perfunctory because I was afraid of keeping her awake, which I did anyway by snoring and rolling about. The perfunctoriness though had a sort of familiar quality, for we undressed on opposite sides of the room without having made love at all, just as if we were married. There was something exciting and bold about throwing away one of our chances for savouring the preliminaries.

The next morning was as sweet as ever, with a lot of book talk left over from the night before, and me hardly talking at all because she's said she adored the way I talked at breakfast. I went off at about half-past two, and went to bed, from which I was woken by Julian at about five. He sat in the dark here for about twenty-five minutes and finally left saying 'Come round at about nine.' After something to eat and a popping into News Theatre, I got to the flat to find him writing the 'Shrew' music. We went to the pub, where we heard a group of strangers humming the songs for the first time. Back in the flat, I told Julian most of what D. had told me a week last Saturday. He was interested but disagreed, saying that he would be prepared, as he had always been, to write parts for me, tho' he realised for all Denis thought well of me for instance, it was quite possible that Denis might say 'Not ready' when Julian suggested me.

I am glad that I waited for over a week before I talked to him. My mind is quite made up about what I must do. However good I or anyone else may think me now, I am sure that it is not really true and lasting.

Monday October 24 1954

Out miles up the Euston Road to the Cambridge U. Press to take Jean Storey out to lunch. She is a sweet gay sensible pretty girl. She looked lovely in red with a white knitted coat with brass buttons. We had a lively talk. She took me back to the press, and I was amused by a quiet publicity poster saying 'C.U.P. Publishers to Erasmus Donne, Gray, Milton, and King James I.'

After I left her, I went to see 'Sabrina Fair' on her recommendation but didn't enjoy it much. Not true and slightly flashy. She's lovely.

Tonight D.'s friend, Henry Reed, was in the pub. Tall, youngish, forty, with smooth clear pale-brown skin, a long pondering penetrating face. He was going across the road to the Italian Film Festival, and worrying about how to get in through the crowds waiting to see the

Queen. I wish I might see him again. Even his pub conversation was enchanting. D. quoted back at him what he had said after a performance of '6 Characters in Search of an Author.' When they entered through the audience, he had an irresistible impulse to tag along behind them. This, D. thought excitedly would be a good idea for their next musical. She seemed to think it a fresh and amusing one. I remember thinking it in 1946. She asked me to find a flat for her and Mary at once, and asked me to have tea with her tomorrow.

Tuesday October 26 1954

Did odd jobs all day, reading Elizabeth Bowen's book of short stories, 'The Demon Lover'. Some terrible; I like best 'Ivy Gripped the Steps', 'The Inherited Clock', 'Songs my Father Sang Me', and 'Pink May'. This last Dorothy asked me tonight if I liked. I said no, but realised later I had only skipped through it, and was in any case confusing it with another.

We didn't have tea together, or rather not together alone. Julian and Newty joined us, and we stayed together until the show. The fun and the jokes are very difficult to think of leaving - ever.

During the show, we had one longish talk - all about me, of course. All my foolishness about myself came out all over again. This time about tidiness being less admired than untidiness. More jealousy of Julian. More saying 'How endearing' when J. spills coffee down himself, or looks rumped, more gentle twitting because I'm in my best suit. It's so childish of me to mind, yet 'minding' is creeping onto my pen at this very moment. The strange thing is that I magnify my lack of adjustment about it when I talk to D. I only bother about it when I think about it. I don't feel much. Well then! D.

I remarked that it was a good thing there were people like me, or there wouldn't be any norm for people like her and Julian to feel comfy and cosy about breaking. I mentioned Chaplin to her, and it did occur to me later that I could put my feelings about it all in the terms that now there are no frock-coated gentlemen to throw them at, nobody throws custard pies. When everyone is so busy relaxing, life does become dull and colourless. Just think how dull clothes could be if we were all them. No collars or ties, no cuff-links, no starch anywhere, oh dear.

D. said her hair started to go grey when she was 30. It gave me a shock to recall that she was.

Thursday October 28 1954

11.30 a.m.

I deliberately did not write last night because I really did not like to think of another three or four pages of unpleasantness.

We worked hard at the understudy call yesterday morning, or rather the others did, for I did nothing at all. Julian and I lunched together, and he ran away so as not to give in to the temptation to go to the pictures instead of writing the 'Shrew' music.

Dorothy did not arrive in the evening until close on the call at seven. She had been in the Cranbourn with Mary L. and Philip Ingram, whoever he may be. Mary perhaps in love with

him? After the call I went to her dressing-room, thinking she seemed a bit down. She started to talk about the depressed hormone that she had read was in the ascendant a few days before a woman gets the curse. She's due on Sunday. She said she was feeling sick and depressed, and suddenly crept into my arms. She went on talking about it and then said, 'But really I'm upset, thinking of Philip Ingram and Michael and Julian, all being queer, and I can't do anything about it. It's either a feeling of shameful failure or one begins to hate them for it, and the feeling of failure's better really.' 'But harder for you', I thought to myself. She had already begun to cry; I felt very helpless. What could I say? What could I do except hold her tight? It was almost pleasurable to me that she cried, because it was so good to feel her turning to me for consoling, not that I could. She calmed down, and when I came back with her Guinness seemed better a little, though she remained depressed all night.

Princess Margaret was in the stalls. I watched her arrive, giving a rather studied performance of an ordinary person, slamming the door of the car, and shrugging herself into the theatre. She was with three other people, Lord and Lady Ogilvy and dear Simon Phipps, who is Chaplain at Trinity now. She looked pretty enough in dark green velvet, though her hair is in much too thick and much too bunchy a style. She asked to meet Julian afterwards, and I hid in the flies to watch the meeting on stage. Julian said she was just like an ordinary girl.

Sunday October 31 1954

I wish that I could find the answer to my restless dissatisfaction with myself. I moon about, pitying myself for all my shortcomings, envying everyone but myself. And now I'm not writing what I really feel at all.

The last few days have been strange. Friday was lovely, for D. was here, and - there you are. I wish I could write something strange and exciting about the afternoon, but apart from a strictly chronological report, I can't write anything. On Thursday I had tea with Tony W. which was good, too, because he's real, and very young, like me. I am most confused by how much I talk of my troubles to Dorothy, and how exaggerated they seem when I tell them. She so often laughs gently at the things that bother, or seem to bother me most. I long not to feel lonely not to be jealous, to have someone to need, and I suppose these very longings and my simple way of talking of them is the most immature thing about me. She said to me three times that I didn't value myself highly enough. Not in practical ways, but deep inside me. That's why I always give into Julian, I suppose.

Oh dear. All this about me. It's all so stupid and pointless. I oughtn't to be writing about it. I ought to be going and getting on with it. But I did feel lonely today all the same.

I rang up Dorothy to ask her to come to the pictures tomorrow and Mary, answering the telephone, called me 'Dear'.

Dorothy sounded far away and husky, and I'd woken her up again, but she said she'd come.

I went to see the last film of the Italian Film Festival tonight. A little band and one of the stars and everything. But I wanted Dorothy to be with me, too.

Monday November 1 1954

Wrote a letter finally to dear Michael W. whom I have disgracefully neglected all this time and set off to meet D. who arrived almost late in a taxi. She was looking a bit tired, but seemed in very good spirits, though she has behaved curiously all day - well, not curiously, it's been lovely.

Wanting something from me, but she couldn't say what. She lay in my arms in her room, twisting and turning her head in an effort to find what it was. I said that I offered affection, fondness, tenderness, that I would say more words if I could, but I could never think of any. What could it be?

I am so fond of her now that I can't quite picture us not going on like this - for good.

Tuesday November 2 1954

In the morning - at last - sang over the 'Comedy of Errors' songs to Stan Edwards, the 'Boy Friend' pianist in a studio at Steinway Hall. Very tiring, and an awful little meeting with Henry Hall, and a completely dispirited Mike Hall to boot.

Got to the theatre about half-past two. Wandered about, put my overcoat on, took it off, undressed, lay down, got up, dressed, went to a news theatre, came back, fidgeted some more, slept a bit, found it was four-thirty, went and had tea, and talked to Newty. Went to the pub, and stayed there till seven thirty. No Dorothy.

All this time I don't know what was the matter with me, I thought I was over all that sort of time-frittering, the sort of restlessness when nothing fits into a pattern. I wanted her to come all the time, to give a pattern to things. They somehow don't seem to have one when she's not there now.

In her room she was behaving at first as if she was very drunk, very funny. She had been drinking with Henry Reed. She suddenly turned and said, 'Do you love me?' I was surprised into turning the subject. But her question went on saying itself inside my head, and is still. I answered 'I don't know.' Is that true? Do I perhaps? As I said to her, 'Two months ago I'd have said 'Yes' two months ago.' Is that the cause of my restlessness? Oh.

Wednesday November 3 1954

Lunch with Julian More. Very pleasant and enjoyable. And I went off after to 'Neopolitan Fantasy' which I loved. The gusto and the noise.

At the theatre I waited and waited for her, and she never came until 6.45. And then Bill Bevir was there too. All the evening we had a long argument about my restlessness, (silly) and she seemed maddeningly to know the answer, but wouldn't tell me. Perhaps I do love her, but I have absolutely no cause for any kind of jealousy at the moment or uncertainty or any shade of feeling that I am not very necessary to her. I am - very, and yet until it is tested, my affection, I mean, how can I know?

I can't sit or stand or walk just now, and I don't like it. I can't even think what she would want. She's coming to me tomorrow night.

Thursday November 4 1954 (WRITTEN BY DOROTHY)

In D's dressing-room all afternoon - The Neville children were in front and D. a little obsessed with them (she says she's not good with children - that may be why). When they were just going, Stephen strayed we-wards; I seized him and got on well with him and was glad to know that they saw me getting on well with them.

D. talked again (how did it start?) of Bill and her abortion and of all of him. 'Don't say any more now', I said, finding it too moving - her distress at that time, and the strange big figure of him, looming over us and her life. But it doesn't move me really unless it comes between us. We are happy together, she and I; sometimes. I will trace the beginning of this happiness and the insecurity I feel. How thrilling and new! The strange progression from experiment to knowing! and from there to the uncertainty of knowing!... How strange the change of my attitude to J. and to her, who moves me less and moves me more, who challenges me! We're going to Cambridge! The Catholic church XX the arrival! the XX! how strange it will be! The old the new! How much more is there of this? How am I changing? Am I changing? Ah! how is it? My darling my darling Dorothy! The sweet familiarity, and the sweet discoveries yet excitingly in store!

Thursday November 11 1954

She's written stuff more penetrating in a day than I do in a year.

I went there for the weekend. Had toothache. Still exciting. Love and toothache - I looked at her, I went into her and propped myself up and fucked her while I was looking her. It was the strange division of it that disturbed and excited her. Instead of feeling one with me, just the two of us she watched me attacking her.

She asked me last Thursday why I hadn't mentioned Cambridge in this diary. I think it's because when I come to write it at night, I am thinking of her and what we have done, and forget or dare not look forward to what we are to do. She may hate it. She may wish she hadn't come. She also might be bored or anything. But if I have nerves about it, I shall spoil it.

She also said I was writing this diary for her. I told her I might, but I try hard to be truthful, or rather common-sensible about truth. I always think at the time I'm being truthful.

I so often feel in conversation with her so stupid and imperceptive, as if I have missed the very clue of what she is saying. When she said to me, 'Come closer to me. What matters is our relationship', I feel constantly these days that I am not trying, that days slip by with my making love to her more or less, not listening enough, talking too much in the wrong way, in short, not getting closer to her. She does heaps of fascinating things, to which I respond so weakly, never saying anything very penetrating, or likely to mean that our relationship will grow or change.

About Cambridge, for instance, I feel that I am like a bubble still attached to the pipe, able to be detached quickly by a firm hand and float off to a gay and independent life, or perhaps burst. My God what a silly simile. Perhaps bursting would be the thing.

But what will Cambridge mean to us, alone in separately new but independently familiar surroundings? Will our common memories divide us or bring us closer? Will the absurd masquerade of marriage make her feel nearer or more withdrawn? It will excite me, I know; it does even in prospect, the thought that she will be mine to look after, if only for a day.

Oh dear, she'll say that's sentimental, I expect.

Darling. I shouldn't have started to let you read this. It's become a letter. Darling.

Friday November 12 1954

Mary Steele could not come today; a relief in a way.

At the theatre, after most of the day in the library, D. abstracted so that all my foolish mistrusting side comes to the top and I feel I should be doing or saying something all the time to stop her thinking about me and getting bored. All so foolish, a silly part of me for part it is.

The weekend?

Monday November 15 1954

It feels so strange and arid to be alone, though in a different way from any way I have quite felt before. It was the being married that did it. That she should even consent to pretend to be married to me for a day - that is the fact, the fact, in front of people that is with me so strongly. This morning she went down to the dining-room first, so that she could say, 'I'll have fruit juice. My husband will be down in a moment, and we'll have porridge.' I managed to say 'My wife and I' three times, but didn't tell her. We didn't do much except walk round and make love, but that was the precious part, for once I had her to myself, and found it so exciting behaving as if we had our lives together before us. She found a new way of fucking and holding back. I called her 'my love' though she didn't notice it, I found later, till I mentioned it tonight. I can say literally that I enjoyed every moment of it, especially paying the bill and signing the register.

As for Cambridge, which was looking its best on a brilliant sunny frosty day, it made no impression, or at deepest a distant long-past impression, except as a place where Dorothy and I were staying. She seemed so much more real, and more desirable.

Tuesday November 16 1954

She takes me more for granted now in the right sort of way. But I want to get closer to her, to be with her more, to know more about her, to fuse with her more, oh dear, to become more joined to her. I never want her to go away, I want our minds and bodies to go on getting closer and closer and closer together. But I don't know her at all really.

John Holmstrom and I went to see the last of the Gorju films, and on the way back from Hampstead, John said 'Come and meet Peggy Ramsay, my agent', so off to St. Martin's Lane

we went. She met us in her pretty little office, a plumpish attractive fortyish woman, with sharp lively features, very excitable manner, wearing a pink chiffon blouse with a very deep cleavage with a large bunch of roses just not hiding two big breasts. She knows what's what. I liked what I saw of her, though I can imagine that she might turn out to be too destructive.

When I told D. this her face set a little. I asked why, and she told me that P.R. was the married woman with whom Bill R. had been having this everlasting affair. It had obviously slightly disturbed her to think I had met her. When she had left, Newty remarked on the impression B.R. had made on D. It's ten years since she even saw him. What chance has someone like me against dark mysterious moody people like that? Julian has something of one same quality she says, and it's the thing we've had all the arguments about, because I called it self-indulgent bad temper, she said I couldn't possibly know, or rather that I was just wrong.

I wish I didn't feel that personal difficulties of this sort were like money troubles to be put right and forgotten. Of course they can't be. I have a dream of everyone liking everyone all the time.

Thursday November 25 1954

The curse came on today instead of at the weekend.

She was very disturbed, nervy, wanting to lean, clinging round me, pulling me closer to her than desire ever does in the end. She said he had something to say to me sometime, something nice - about love.

I never really understood what the novelette phrase 'passion of tenderness' meant before.

Monday November 29 1954

She spent the afternoon with me; we came together the first time without a word. It was all very good.

This evening she said, 'Stay close to me', and revealed later that it was for a particular reason, because she would want to escape unhappiness this coming week. We had come out of the pub, and she asked Newty to take us to the Buckstone. I said to her, when she asked me, 'Well all right', a dubious way, not thinking she could really want to go after the afternoon we'd spent together. Then she said she needed to escape, and left me feeling awful. What is she going to feel unhappiness for this week? Julian going away? Mary, for almost any reason? Were it someone ordinary, I might think it was an anniversary of some kind but Dorothy wouldn't be so silly. What, then? I didn't want to go to the Buckstone for such a variety of reasons. I had my letter home to write, I wasn't dressed properly, I was a bit tired, it was pouring with rain, all that helped, also Michael M. who was down could go instead of me, that was a tiny bit of one, too, but mainly it was because I was not able to face being D.'s and Newty's guest yet again quite unnecessarily, and because I couldn't seem to like the idea of sharing D. so soon with so many people. I wanted some time tonight to sit and think and recall this afternoon.

Why is she going to be unhappy this week? Why doesn't she tell me so that I can know and help her? What is it?

Tuesday November 30 1954

And then you see, today I'm irritated by her. Her passion always for the best, very right and proper, but to the absolute exclusion of the second or third-best, which I'm not ready for. Not old enough, and I daresay never will be. I'm irritated by myself continually pretending to feelings I don't feel and yet want to. Not desire. I almost always feel that, at least just now, but the desire to be uncompromisingly honest. So often I want to leave myself the loophole of intelligent fantasy. But she won't stand for a single 'if'. Nothing is good but what is good. There's no place for the comparatively good. For instance, she saw 'Rear Window' this afternoon. Pretty Grace Kelly, cool and clear and intelligent, I think, and at the lowest giving one the negative pleasure of not squawking or vulgarising like most Hollywood blondes, at best looking really lovely, bringing a mind to bear on what she's doing, and doing it with genuine not taught poise and style; even the clothes she makes natural. D. would only have mentioned her after seeing the film if she had happened to give one of the dozen best performances that she had ever seen, and the greatest find for the last ten years. She would have mentioned her, of course, if she were older, and had got worse or better, for she mentioned James Stewart, who I expect made an impression on D. when she was young herself. I wonder if she sometimes forgets how she looked at her contemporaries when they were starting, when she didn't know any better than they did.

Of course it's silly to think that every new actress is going to be exciting, just as it's silly to think that every new person you meet is going to change your life, but it's only admitting that you haven't quite grown up to admit that you still do. Perhaps twenty-eight is a bit late to go on admitting it?

Wednesday December 1 1954

'The Shrew' was a flop. The notices said almost in as many words what I said at Cambridge in 1951. When I met Julian and Michael M. in the afternoon to go to see 'Wedding in Paris', he didn't seem to be minding too much, though later he said that he was more upset for Denis' sake than his own. We had a pleasant time; some advance must have taken place in their relationship, for me to have been there happily at all. MM is certainly more at ease, more secure which makes Julian more so. I in myself would be perfectly easy if they were. Every time D. is mentioned however, there is a slight reaction, which makes for a slight tension. They'll be better alone for a good few months yet. Julian was very bored by Jack Payne, tonight, very. How awful it must be for him!

I felt inadequate all this evening. I don't try to be real with D. I just drift about not thinking what I'm thinking, not retiring or advancing, not being or doing. All I seem able to do is to find occasions to be conventionally sentimental, hand-pressing and eye-catching. She's worth all I can find to give. And she could so easily get bored, not ordinarily bored, but bored for a while without knowing it at a relationship that had stopped. I asked her here on Friday because I want her so much, but also because I find I say the most and advance the most afterwards. A simple thought but my own. My God what truisms one does come out with.

Thursday December 2 1954

Very late.

Henry Reed came to the show tonight. The truth of him - and afterwards to his flat, where the conversation between him and D was fascinating except shamefully more for the light it cast on her than anything they said, tho' they talked intimately and almost importantly of Christopher Fry. She comes to me tomorrow.

Friday December 3 1954

Saturday December 4 1954

I wish I could remember more of the conversation last night, Thursday night, I mean. Some of it was interesting. There was a fine earnest inquiry into sitting, and why men liked sitting reading and women not. D. was a bit tight then, very energetic and eager, bouncing up and down in her chair, her face coming thro' her make-up. She could not be brought to understand it at all. She and Henry had a long talk about C. Fry in which Newty and I could scarcely join. Henry and she know him well, and their talk was far more of him and himself rather than of the plays. D. said that Fry's reaction to criticism was a little smile and a soft 'No', which she described as 'that Christian Science Quaker thing'. Sounds to me more like someone who has insufficiently found out about himself, but decided to settle for that amount of self-knowledge. H.R. thought there was little or no verse in, as far as I remember, any of the plays, but my memory may let me down here. D. was most interested in H.R.'s saying that C. Fry had asked him to go over 'The Dark is Light Enough', with him, C.F. D. kept saying 'Tell me, tell me, _why he wanted you to go through it, knowing that you could not really like his previous work.' But I am afraid she got no satisfaction here either. As we left at a quarter to five, she got none from me either. She asked if she could come round here earlier in the evening. When it came to our going she saw that it wouldn't be wise. We should never have got over it. She came this afternoon instead. And jolly good too!

Monday December 5 1954

Left my pen in the theatre on Sat. Tiresome. On Sat. night Julian was taking a taxi and as one rolled up just as we arrived outside Charing X station, I jumped in without saying goodbye properly or going down to the tube with D. Hope she realised that was because of the taxi being nicer than her, not Julian.

Sunday quiet. D. all right when I rang up, so no 'flu or pneu. To a dreary party given by poor Mary S. in a large cream-washed room hung with pictures of the Founder next to the Matron's room in St. Mark's Hospital, City Road. Wonder if there is anyone in the world (let alone London) to whom it would be worth pretending that it was a romantic venue. Then to 'Top Hat', light and fluffy and actually, genuinely, gay.

Tonight an odd angular evening. After a dull lunch with Robin tuck, and a fascinating expedition to a film called 'New Faces' with this woman, Eartha Kitt, (the most sexy really sexy cabaret star ever) came to the theatre rather restless and physically irritable. D. came smiling to me, and I thought we were in for a good evening. So we were, but rather differently from what I had expected. Early in the evening I lost my temper slightly with

Michael M. for interrupting me telling about the film to say that I was singing one of the tunes wrong. As I didn't know the tune, that wasn't surprising. However, I snapped back at him, and upset myself, and of course went whining to D. She wondered why I got so upset about being interrupted in that sort of way, which led on to talk of my social attitude again. During this she revealed that she thought I was too forgetful of what people wanted to talk about and inclined etc. etc. In other words, a bore. It is certainly not an encouraging picture - a 'screaming queer' voice, no actor, and now a bore as well!

After the show she did not seem to want to go to bed. - (There is no way of qualifying that to make it really clear except to say that she did not seem to want to go straight home to bed as usual (that is to say, as usual oh dear let's leave it)- So we went to Lyons' for some coffee, and had a meal and a 'carafe' of wine instead. During the meal she told me that she didn't really like me much for the first three weeks or so after we started our affair. Not until after that first Friday afternoon did she begin to have some feeling about me, and then mainly because I began to feel for her myself. This was fascinating, and we talked about it all the meal; though I now see that I talked mostly of myself, I did try to tell her a little of what she meant to me.

Since I got back here and read through some of my diary, I see even more clearly what I should have said. She likes me more because I really have changed. No wonder that I am disinclined for anybody's company but my own and hers, because no other seems worthwhile. She has made me revalue myself so drastically that I find myself waiting every day for the moment when I can meet her, when I can go on becoming the person she had made me want to be. I see now - that's what it is, that's why I can only do things like going to the cinema which are a distraction from her, and why letter-writing has become most difficult of all because everyone else seems irrelevant.

Tuesday December 14 1954

Shopping with D. this afternoon. How I love shopping! And she is surprisingly good at it. I would have thought when I first met her that she would be bored by it. Not at all. Full of zest for spending money on almost anything. She bought her mother a fur, her aunty a powder-bowl, enamel with a chromium rim ('11/3 plain, 12/11 chased') Bob Harris a descant recorder (with instr.), Newty a pair of gloves, ('Yes, they're very nice. He'll lose those'), Joe Greig a plastic dressing-table-cloth, and herself some kirbigrips. The saleswoman said sweetly how much she'd enjoyed 'Salad Days', and D wished she'd bought more than Kirbigrips in return.

It was lovely fun, and back in the dressing-room, lust set in, with that exciting spontaneity, all quick and hard, that's so particularly thrilling.

Wednesday December 15 1954

I felt on the 'bus tonight, absurdly, as if I had solved all the world's problems. There seemed to be a few moments, or one long breath, when everyone must be at peace. This serenity was the result, or a result, of an afternoon fuck. I can't write of them any more because any phrases in which I attempt to crush my feelings become or seem to become, either

extravagant or extravagantly prosaic. So I won't try for a bit. We enjoyed it very much, and D. came three times all in one go.

In the morning I went to Newty's film. Not very good really, though Newty was 'sweetness itself' in it. M. Leighton good, Mark Dignam very good, direction undistinguished, story more so, and Noelle Middleton very irritating. I was talking to Mary L. about her, who said, 'Yes, it's the acting she's not very good at.' Mary came to the pub, looking very pretty, without a hat, and in trousers. The men must be blind and mad. And I'm not writing this for the evil eye of my only (for the moment) love either, though I easily might be, I suppose, if I searched a little more.

Talked with Yvonne about the film, and I now see she's intelligent. Michael M. and Julian in the pub again. They're turning into a pair at last.

I really know that she is fond of me now. My greatest hold over her (ha!), wrong, not hold, my strongest link with her is still my cock. I wonder whether I want it to be the whole of me rather than just that bit. I suppose if I knew that, if I knew exactly how much of myself I wanted to give away, and how much I wanted to take from her, I should know how much I was in love. Rubbish.

Thursday December 9 1954

On the 'bus I had a fit of sulks, and decided not to write tonight. But that was only part of my inability to judge what moods it is wrong or right to encourage. That isn't quite right either, because moods as such are always to be discouraged. Oh dear, pompous again. Anyway the net result is I don't know myself very well, do I? (Where's this ink come from by the way? It's horrid.)

Why did I not want to write tonight? I suppose because I think I've been rather stupid today. There are days when I talk for the sake of talking more than usual. When I suddenly feel in the middle of kissing her, 'Does she really want me to do this? Would she not rather I was talking or listening or something? Do I really want to do it? Am I only doing it to stop her thinking about how boring I'm being?! She never told me at the time that she didn't really like me; perhaps now she's bored, but doesn't want to hurt my feelings. I don't know how to relax into not worrying about developing the relationship in some new exciting actual nay tangible way every day.

Patience, and letting things be, are, I daresay, the answers. So much of the patience like the money has to come from her. She has to stand firm and go about letting things be, while I blow hot and cold with my passions and fears; if I could only be a little less self-conscious and not stand about wondering why I'm not developing the relationship! Shall we leave it for now, and perhaps I'll be able to.

Have decided that Margaret Leighton was very good, principally because I have just re-read the 'Times' notice.

Went to look at some young budgerigars today, in Upper St. Martin's Lane. Rather moulty now, but might be worth going back after Christmas.

PAGE MISSING

Friday December 10 1954

Lunch with Tricia D., full of news about her American trip. She stayed with a millionairess called Mrs. De Forrest, on Long Island, and said she felt as if she were appearing in the background of a not very well written-up thriller.

Did some shopping this afternoon. Dorothy questioned me most of the evening about what I'm giving her. Last night she said while I was pouring her Guinness and refilling her lipstick, that she didn't want me to feel that she didn't notice and appreciate all the material things I did for her. I don't need her to say that. I know she is grateful, and anyway it's a tiny return for all she does for me - materially.

Tonight she offered to lend me the money to buy my Christmas presents, and I could pay her back in months or years, she said. She never forgets what hell it is not to have enough money; and I never forget she hasn't had enough herself very long. She was a little tired in the pub, and when we came out, waited for nobody else but scuttled off down the road with me. No Michael, no Julian, no Newty even, only me. She said something tonight about the illusion of protection while she was resting in my arms. And I said that I wished it wasn't only an illusion. She laughed, as she always does. I suppose she's right.

Saturday December 11 1954

Met Peter Lewis around this afternoon. Nice to see him - he is jolly and takes trouble to talk.

I wish I could help her when she's a little tired, as she was tonight after two shows. I had to leave her again, as Julian offered me a lift in his taxi. Well of course I suppose I needn't have accepted, but it is pleasant to be whisked home like that, and free. If I had really cared about her being tired - no, that's silly, because when she really is tired, she either wants to go straight home with no nonsense, or come to bed with me.

I've got her present, but I mustn't say what it is in here, because she may want to read it. This is one lie that I can legitimately tell! I hope that she won't be annoyed or anything.

Oh dear! the Basketts tomorrow. How dreary! Still I'm not staying the night - that's something.

Sunday December 12 1954

A long and rather dull day, spent with nice kind boring people and a rapidly developing cold. Must stay in tomorrow, and try to read, to finish rather, Henry R's play, 'The Unblessed'.

Monday December 13 1954

A streaming cold. Always worse indoors, so shopped. Bought D. some of the coloured freesias she's liked; wildly expen., but she liked them. She had been shopping, too, lots of undies and stockings for Mary and a pair of shoes that Henry bought, for herself. But she was very tired. She didn't sleep until four o'clock this morning, and she felt so washed-out

that she didn't even go to the pub. Though she didn't look it - tired, I mean. She was tired, I had a cold, but we were more tender to each other than usual. And she said 'Let's love a little', meaning be in love a little for a little.'

I wish that I had remembered to write down a conversation that I had with Julian on Saturday, or was it Friday? It seems, as he told me some days ago, that John Moffatt and Michael M. have had a bad quarrel, and Michael M. is leaving the Eaton Place flat. In our talk Julian decided to tell me the reason for the quarrel, which I had of course guessed, that John Moffatt had asked nay implored M.M. to sleep with him. Well, anyone might have known. The really unpleasant part to me was his expression of ashamed relief as he said 'Oh, I can't tell you how it's cleared up and advanced our relationship. It's, well it's so much easier now there's no comparison. I think, you know, that Dorothy was right about Michael - he's not very highly - very interested in sex, he finds it a bit disgusting, and, well', with a little laugh, 'it's so wonderful having my attitude marked out for me', seeing I was looking a little dazed at his running so true to form, 'I mean, it's so clear now, isn't it, that he knows he can turn to me for help'.

Tuesday December 14 1954

A good day spoiled by a silly evening. No, it's no good, I can't write about it now. It's a tiny small petty thing, but it raises such clouds of beastly mud in my mind that I must wait till tomorrow morning.

Thursday December 16 1954

The company party at the Criterion is on tonight. I came home, entirely without regret, and indeed I have just surprised myself by having just this moment remembered that I am missing something. Midnight is just striking.

I've made a worse fool of myself than ever. Sitting here for the last hour or so, I haven't really got myself clear, except to be amazed at my self-centredness. I wish that my amazement made me less so. I suppose I hadn't really got over Tuesday's upset, and a little teasing in the pub sent me walking off around the block, stamping my foot, and swearing that I'd leave them all as soon as I could. I told D. of it, of course, and merely added to my depression the extra disgust at myself for not concealing it from her. She simply says every time, 'Forget about it. You give it such importance. Forget it.' I wish I had some way of making her understand the torment that such discomfitures inflict on me. I suppose that she just doesn't believe me. Of course it is understandable, just as some of the causes of her suffering are to me incomprehensibly slight, that I simply don't know what to say but 'Sh' when she suffers from them. The real reason for her believing that I ought not to feel anything at all is her inability, up to a point, to believe in any upset which can be traced only to selfish and muddled motives. If to be teased about talking too much or what have you, upsets me, well, it upsets me, and 'people' go on doing it. If to be teased about lack of sex confidence or of attraction upsets her, well, it upsets her, so I never do it.

She went on to say something about our affair, that it was, or would be possible for me to create, as it was not possible for most men, a real sex relationship with a woman. Which is what she sought for our relationship, and what we sometimes seemed near to making it. In

my pitiable anger I said that I didn't want it enough. What I meant I am not sure, though I think I meant not that I didn't want it, but that having it wouldn't compensate or console me, or make me less susceptible to this kind of soginess.

She's so bloody high-minded and honest that she can't see the reality of the messes I get into. What, I say to myself in these fits of self pity, is the use of being good in bed, or at anything that nobody will ever hear about? 'Don't think about it'. But how can I help it when a compliment can exalt me and an unkindness depress me? Where is the way out between thinking more of myself and not thinking about myself so much? All the fuss came from them all asking me to make a funny face. I refused, saying I hadn't got that sort of face. They all leant towards me, twitting me gently, Julian laughing as he always does when I am being asked to do something foolish and find I can't, and won't. It rouses furiously resentment in me as I write. It's honestly not only for me, because I feel almost as awful if it's someone else. They're like awful children at a party playing 'Forfeits' and giggling at someone who is too embarrassed to join in.

Why is she so dissatisfied with me? She said tonight that nobody ever listened to her criticisms. Does she think I wasted pages of drivel like this before I met her? Every person I have ever known has been compared with her, glutted with pleasure at me as I am, leaving me at least with my individuality, while picking at my faults. She has disturbed my basic picture of myself, and I just don't know how to begin all over again. I don't feel I've got anything that is me at all, nothing to offer anyone that nobody else can offer, and that's what I can't accept. I feel as if I want to go right away.

Sunday December 19 1954

Oh, how I do get things wrong, don't I? Friday gave me a chance to recover my spirits. It was a neutral sort of day, finishing up in the afternoon with a long and properly exhausting shopping expedition with Julian. He got a good deal done, and I bought my trousers with the money Dorothy had given for my Christmas present. I was pleased with them, and they cost sixpence less than she gave me.

D. was as usual, though I imagined all kinds of reactions which were simply not there. We did not really talk about last night. As John Merriman had turned up in the morning, he made an extra in the pub, which helped me all over again to keep my feelings in proportion. Saturday was immensely full of rushing about, to the St. James' and the St. Martin's to get more tickets for John M, to the P.O. with my cards and laundry parcel, lunch with John M. and Harold, old Tiberius that he is, and to the theatre.

Here we were close all the evening. I was to stay the night, and so D. said that I had better come to the 100th night party of 'Separate Tables' which she and Ju had been asked to, before we went home. The party was boring and unhappy. Eric Portman greeted us with abundant but insincere charm, and Margaret Leighton never spoke to, or looked at, any of us. Julian was funny, coming in with a face arranged to suffer a lot of tiring attentions and going unnoticed. He was amused. Eric Portman is smooth, with flat white hair and a loose mouth. Margaret L. still has beautiful hair, but her face is discontentedly ugly in expression, and her body emaciated, so thin that her ankles and elbows look swollen. The gallery entertainers were playing in a corner which didn't help our enjoyment, and the sight of Laurence Harvey's stupid face and silly behaviour made it all too easy to leave all almost at once.

We waited three-quarters of an hour for a taxi. D. was getting a cold, and her spirits only just stood out against the cold and depression of it. She and Newty and I went back to the flat and drank some Guinness. Newty went off at about two; we went to bed and lay together in that sweet tiredness of after-love till the morning, when it was all blessedly to be done again.

Mary arrived at about four, just after our breakfast, looking very pretty. We had a lot of talk. I found her much more relaxed than before, and of course so was I, I must admit. She is a small neat snub-nosed person, very perceptive, very gentle, very fine.

To the Watergate in the evening for Julian More's pantomime. My darling was getting colder and colder, but kept up well, and seemed still to like John M. He took Ju and I back to supper, and Ju sparkled for him, as he always does for his proved admirers!

Tuesday December 21 1954

Yesterday an easy day. Never thought a thought, saw 'Pinocchio' and comforted D., who has a cold, and needed an arm. Poor darling, she cried in the interval from limpness and having fluffed in the breakfast scene.

Today has been all shopping. Oh how I enjoy it! I feel as if I could go on working now all night it has so invigorated me. I wish I could transfer some of its vigour into D., who flagged tonight, clinging to me quite quietly and burrowing her face into my shoulder. I wish we were going to be together over Christmas.

Tuesday January 4 1955
4.30 p.m.

Have felt flat and vague since yesterday morning. I think that it is the reaction from a strenuous week and weekend last week.

Last week was certainly pleasant, and Christmas went off well enough. The real moment of Christmas for me was Dorothy opening her present. Christmas at home ought to be beautiful, except that nobody but Lalla and me really try to forget themselves for a minute. Daddy is depressed by M's silliness and insipidity, Donald and Joan are impossible, of course, and the children well of course they enjoy it, without effort, so they don't really count. Even with them the day almost came to a halt three or four times. I hate to look ahead to Christmases which will be such shadows of what they have been, with nobody making any effort to make something new, but acquiescing grumpily to anti-climax. They all complain so.

Lalla had had my cage painted up. It looks well, and as I'd brought it back with me, I got a hen budgie, pretty pale blue, from the Army and Navy Stores. Later in the week Michael Meacham brought me his beautiful green cock, as he wanted a younger one. They do look nice together, and seem to be fairly settled. They do give me pleasure. They get their greatest pleasure from the taps being turned on. Ohterwise they find it a little quiet.

I spent last Tuesday and Wednesday nights with D at the flat. We had also spent the afternoon of Christmas Eve together, a long quiet afternoon, with the King's Carol Service on

the wireless, and her in my arms. The time spent this last week at the flat was ordinary - that is, it seemed normal. I didn't feel that I had interrupted her life so much, nor she mine. Any complaints I might make to myself, about her or about me, were this time simply not brought to the surface of my mind at all, because, I think, I had and have accepted the basic fact of our being together.

Sunday was a funny day, tea with Julian and a visit of a chorus-boy, and exquisite 'Meet Me in St. Louis'.

12 a.m.

She's coming to me tomorrow. So that's all right. I must remember to clean the birds out before she comes, or she'll think I have substituted them for her. Goodness. I'm lucky.

Wednesday January 5 1955

Understudy rehearsal all the morning. I rushed around to be sure of being ready and then missed her at the 'bus-stop 'cause she had taken a taxi. She was lying on my bed in her black sweater, smoking. We made love - very very well. She said, in the middle of it all, 'I love you.' That was lovely, but wonderful, too, was when she said, 'I think I'll make you my last lover', 'Why?' I said. 'Because I'll never find anyone as pretty as you', she said. Not good in bed or gentle, but 'pretty'. That was lovely. Because it might have been 'sexy' or something boring. 'Pretty' is my special word, and that's what she called me.

The greatest pleasure to me this afternoon was to be giving her such pleasure. The triumphant sense of moving her almost unbearably, of making her groan and pray to me, of feeling her body working with mine to submit more completely to me, - and of course the warmth and closeness of the resting afterwards, the silly light-headed talk, and the casual knots of legs and arms, that is pleasure pleasure pleasure, such as I have never known with anyone else.

Saturday January 15 1955

7.0 p.m.

First idleness and then a cold filled the last ten days. Oh and Michael Bishop. Highlights - Susan's visit on the 6th, with husband, quiet, strong, immense reserves, perfect for her. Quite a good talk with them, followed by a drink at the Royal Court, followed for me by an all-night sitting with Julian. He said he would just come in while I undressed. He stayed till what must have been about half past four, talking over all the usual things. Still has no clue of what MM's real feelings are, except that he is now fairly confident of a fondness. I couldn't think why he spent so long so suddenly talking to me about it all again. I mean I knew that he must have some special reason for feeling insecure, but I didn't know what it was. He didn't tell me until the very moment he was going out of the front door. Oh the hours he takes to tell one things! Apparently MM was out to supper with an egregious young man I once met called Donald Pickering. Ju said laughingly! 'Tell Michael that if he went to bed with D.P., I'll shoot him'.

I went round the next morning to pick up MM to go to the Cage Birds show, and was rather amazed to be kept out of Michael's room by the curious excuse of its being so untidy. I heard a smothered giggle and a voice, when I made a loud reference to D.P., and M.M's manner told me the rest.

The Exhibition was great fun, and most instructive. It made me finally decide to take my grey hen back and get another older and healthier one. In the afternoon D. and I went to the R.A.D.A. revue, which was awful, though a girl called Alison Crowley took my eye, and boy called Brian Bedford really had something.

Michael B. had arrived by this time, and turned up for a drink at the theatre. Same as ever, rather sad, but still potentially someone, I should have thought. I do my best but I'm hardly a person myself yet. Sat. was nice. I bought a new hen at Harrod's, lutino, but mainly white with a green sheen in the right light. Six months at least. The poor little grey one I returned to the Army and Navy Stores. I wonder what I'll get out of these two. She is so pretty and strange.

Off to the Film Theatre to see 'On the Avenue', 1937. Alice Faye and Dick Powell. Enjoyed it, though by no means first-rate. At the theatre asked my love to come back with me, tho' a bit bothered about the house. She was so persistent in saying that I didn't really want her to come, that in the end I stopped being able to say I wanted her to, at all naturally. Like sounding guilty though innocent. She came thank goodness, all the same, although we couldn't fuck because I was too tight, we slept beautifully together. Alas I woke up feeling awful with a bad head and a streaming cold. We were still in bed when Michael B. arrived. D. said 'I love you' at one point in bed, which held me up all through my cold, which lasted in _misery all Sunday and in discomfort during Monday, Tuesday and Wed. when D. came here again. She enjoyed it very much, I think, though I was worried that she might not because I was still full of cold. We're off to Julian's tonight.

3 a.m.?

Ju's party rather a frost, I think. D. did not enjoy it, I feel, and I didn't help by getting tetchy. I was rather disappointed in us. 'We' didn't rise to the occasion at all. I didn't do anything to help make it 'go', tho' I don't know what I really could have done. Julian was tired, I think, and that certainly didn't help. Paul was sweet.

D. is not enough my concern, as she said tonight. She gave me some money to buy some shoes because my brown ones are letting in snow. I bought the shoes today. I don't think I really should have taken it, but must try and be strong-minded about it or it'll spoil all her pleasure in the giving.

I wish I knew more what she was really thinking and feeling at times like tonight. She didn't enjoy it much, I'm afraid.

Thursday January 29 1955
2.30 a.m.

Late again tonight after D.'s birthday celebration last night. Our 200th performance. D. very tight, but oh the pain and suffering before. I could almost wish that I felt it all more, to feel with her. She suffers so, and I can do nothing.

Saturday February 12 1955

I've very lucky. To enjoy so much, and to have so much that I enjoy. This week has been a delightful one, starting off with the weekend with D. at the flat. Poor darling she was dry on Monday morning, and it worried her a bit, I think. She says it is because of the loss of pleasure for both of us. It is a little more than that, I think - there is a certain amount of...

PAGE MISSING?

Monday February 14 1955

Cannot seem to want to write, though I expect it is only laziness.

D. is very much not herself today, weak and limp, with a swollen eye, expecting the curse or my baby. I asked her the other day what she would do about the baby. She said that I would have to marry her, and laughed. 'You'd hate it', she said. I don't think I would hate it. I didn't like to protest either way. It seems something so little likely to advance into here and now. The marriage - not the baby. Superficially, I have felt during the last three months especially, that there will never be a time when I shall not wake up with the brightness of seeing her during the day, somewhere about me.

Tuesday February 15 1955

She is a little better, though her eye is still swollen. We went out to supper tonight, instead of going to the pub. She talked of her stories, of one in particular, with such enthusiasm. I hope she'll rewrite it as she said she would, though I suppose the new show will keep her busy. I was interested by Julian saying yesterday at lunch how he admired her dialogue, the laughs and reactions she could get on lines like 'adventurous, amusing, with a living wage and temporary', which, as he admitted, he could never have written. It is true that he is incapable of writing truthfully without a satirical edge. But he is really brilliant at gauging the exact degree of satire that will appeal to the maximum number of people.

Wednesday February 16 1955

Very sick this morning and weak all day.

Thursday February 17 1955

3 a.m.

My darling very down with B.C. feelings. Most beautiful radiant in new dress.

On to Henry R's in the evening. Mary, too. Poor D., so itchy with cursy feelings. In taxi on the way home, she asked me to be sure to be at the theatre for her dress fitting, 'because it gives me confidence.'

Oh she has needed me tonight, and all this week, but still is reluctant to show her need. She seems not to see that the more need she shows, the more tenderness I feel. She calls 'need' throwing herself at me!

Friday February 18 1955

Tonight she seemed to have forgotten it all. Or never to have thought it a special night. She said she expected she was drunk. It is no pleasure to find that she is less sincere drunk than sober. No, that's silly, because everyone is. Still it was a disappointment, to me, not to us, for the effect on me of what she said last night will be the same. The Queen Mother came to 'S.D.' Sat in the front row.

Saturday February 19 1955

Robin's wedding today. Great fun, and lots of old friends.

Newty, D. and I to the Buckstone tonight. They became passionate and troubled about war. She frets so uselessly in these conversations, when she is telling me of her convictions. But she is distract with B.C. feelings, too. She and Newt talked so gaily of their affair's beginning, and quarrels and rooms. I wish so much hadn't happened to her first.

Sunday February 20 1955

Out with Jean Storey tonight.

-Reading over what I wrote last night, those scrappy sentences standing for hours.-

I don't wish really that she were young and innocent. Perhaps I should wish that I were so. That might be some compensation for the dullness and sluggishness that my refusal to be aware except for brief moments, casts over our relationship. That I can just 'go on' without the constant knowing of what she and I are making together, that I can allow words to be just words, never reflecting one on another to make some new pattern, is really painful to me. That we are in some sort of way together, that I am pretty well always aware of. But of anything further or finer, it is always some word of hers that reminds me.

Monday February 21 1955

The curse has come. Phoo! Relief, that is. Though I was only just beginning to feel worried.

She is in pain tonight at bit, but ought to be better tomorrow, more herself for the first time for a week. David Davies came round tonight. Either he has become more oily and tasteless, or I have become more finicky. I can't take him at all.

Tuesday February 22 1955

This afternoon to Owen Holder's play 'A Kind of Folly' at the Duchess. Denis' production. It opened last week to almost abusive notices, most of them quite mistaken. The play is a high comedy, written in rich exquisite prose, full of wisdom and humour. The first two acts are very good, the third muddled and wrong. The whole makes all the same a most exciting afternoon. The delight of finding a young playwright who sees prose as a delicate and yet to be worked on instrument, and a light comedy as something more than a whirl of caricature on the top level only, is rare and splendid. I haven't enjoyed a play so much or looked forward to the next play from the same man so much ever, I think. Flora Robson perfectly cast, most flexible and winning. Jack Gwillim and W. Hyde-White very good, again subtle and more penetrating than one might have expected from either. The author a little forced, I thought, but D. and Newty didn't agree. I may be wrong about that. Jean Kent right in a way, and not actually harmful, but a much more superficial performance in every way. The little girl I thought a pity. Wonderful chance for somebody special to go through that third act like a bullet. Quite ordinary. How strange of Denis.

After tea, D and I went to her room to rest. She rests very well, better than any girl I've ever known. When we got up, we were both quite weak from our rest.

Later in the evening she said 'We're together, you and I'. Strange.

Having just re-read some of the notices, I want to add a bit about the play. They either thought it trivial or a pastiche, and either way basically unsatisfactory, whereas I (we) found it brilliant, but with a sagging end. One of the most exciting things about it was the deliberation of choice of style and form. As for its being pastiche, I am told tho' with what truth I can't yet be sure, that it was only Henry Sherek insisting on its being Edwardian for commercial reasons that made it so. Can the critics be blind even to its minor excellences? The mother's relationship with her son, with the colonial bore? And me too. Brilliant.

Wednesday February 23 1955

To 'Serious Charge' by Philip King this afternoon. Rather dull melodrama.

D. had been writing a lyric all day on an idea for a song for Ann Rogers, and had a headache as a result. She didn't give the lyric to Julian, just the idea. Will give him the lyric later, if he hasn't got on well with it.

Letter from Mummy saying Daddy is worried about my income tax. So am I, but mustn't let him worry me.

Thursday February 24 1955

Both houses are awful today, as they have been all this week so far. It does have a deadening effect on the company.

D. all right today, though nothing special. Down, as I found out, at the thought of going to Jane W.'s tonight with Ju. She had been alone between the shows, because I had gone off

suddenly to the pictures, and had been lying down and thinking about it. It is really no good doing anything about it but not thinking about it. She wept a little, but we had no time, and I have no real comfort to give, but my arm and my shoulder, which perhaps I do. I should like one day to talk to her of Jane. I don't see her myself as a girl I would get finally on with, and I don't think D. does either. Whatever her opinion of Jane, it has nothing to do with tonight. Ju bypassing her for MM. that's the pain of it. She comes to me tomorrow.

Friday February 25 1955

I can't write much about us these days. It needs so much longer, and so much more detail than I have room for. A novel perhaps! Well, a page or two. We are good at it together.

After at tea we talked about her story, which she lent me yesterday - her failure, 'The Fear.' Muddled technically, and too bold, too crudely or too subtly limned for one reader or another.

Saturday February 26 1955

A little disappointed is my first reaction to picking up my pen.

A letter from John M. the start of it perhaps, with news that Jerry Jarratt and Michael W. are to be at Twyford. I find that more and more I wish to be alone with her, and I find it harder to share my time with her, so short it seems to be now. It becomes more difficult every night almost, to leave her at the tube, because I want to go on with her. Tomorrow I shan't see her at all, and I know I shall waste the whole day. Which is silly. But I shall, waiting for her to ring, and then going out at the last minute to a film I don't really want to see to pass the time.

Now is all that at all true, or am I persuading myself of a sentimental attachment that simply doesn't exist? I shouldn't have chosen tonight to write anything at all. I'm too down.

Sunday February 27 1955

3.30 p.m.

Far too much in my diary about her, isn't there? Where's all the social comment gone?

All it would have consisted of yesterday would have been an account of a game called 'Rude Foods' which was convulsing the company all night. The high funny spots were 'Cliton's All-Sorts from Michael A. and 'Rape Suzette' from D. Julian contributed 'Nipple Dumpling' and later when the talk had turned to rude words, a little rhyme from the 'twenties,

'If skirts get any shorter',
Said the new deb with a sob,
'I'll have two more cheeks to powder,
And a lot more hair to 'do'.

10.15 p.m.

Went alone to the Olivier programme at the National Film Theatre. The extracts do show one what we lose by not seeing him more often. Even at the ordinary melodramatic tricks, he is so much better than any of the older film actors here or in America. As for 'Wuthering Heights', well, it's high-class rubbish, but there are one or two moments, when he has a line or two from the original to say or a long look to give, which do touch the fringe of Heathcliff's living figure. And that is remarkable enough to make the film worth seeing.

I stayed in until four o'clock, hoping that she might ring up, though knowing I would really be better away. There is that continual tendency to behave like a Good Housekeeping story, that nothing seems to get rid of.

I walked into London this afternoon, and in Piccadilly passed a hot petrol-leather car. By the side of it was a small schoolboy being very sick. Ooh! it did ruffle me. I had to keep reminding myself that I was grown-up now, and couldn't be forced to take long car-journeys any more.

I don't know what it can be, but I have a will to put pen onto paper tonight that won't be put down. I am restless and feel that I am doing so little. I expect that is why I want to be with her so much. I can't deny that I do wait for the few hours every night that I spend partly with her, and that the rest of the day seems only a preliminary. As for the real reason for that feeling, I can no more find the one or believe in the other, than fly. It may be because I think of our relationship as 'something worth doing.' Oh dear, if I do.

Tuesday March 1 1955

Rehearsal this morning, with Denis, I imagine, at his best, doing very little of actual change, but a great deal of positive encouraging, and reviving of interest in the show as a piece of creation to be kept alive, and not just as a job to be 'got through' somehow. At any rate the effect on the show in the evening, even allowing for a much better house, was remarkable. As Jackie said, he does not make people want to do their best, and without that gift, what producer can be any good? Of course, Newty and D. weren't any different, or very little, because they have dropped so much less than the others. John benefited very much, because although I daresay he would keep pretty steady by himself, he plays so much with Ella. She is unstable, and unthinking, and acts on the principle that a smile will cover up any fault or point any line.

My poor darling had a time of it last night. Julian asked her to supper, but through a sort of clump of misunderstanding, they ended up at the Buckstone. She left at one, feeling terrible, and wanting to come here. I wish she'd rung up. She hasn't told me yet whether there was any particular talk which upset her so. I suppose it was the usual. Why am I never properly there when she's upset.

Wednesday March 2 1955

More rehearsal. James very funny, though not rehearsing much. Denis incredibly patient, and seeming not to mind being teased in front of everyone at all. After D. and I came back here for love. It is the best thing of all.

In the evening she was talking of Newty, and what a good man he is, and yet how tiresome he was at times during their affair. How they saw far too much of each other, and of the guilt that she felt at not being able to love him more. Having suffered unrequited love herself, and attributed it to a lack in the other person, she felt herself rejecting the best man that would probably offer himself. How difficult it is to be realistic. It needs endless care and watching and revaluation for me to be true for two hours together, two minutes. When she was talking of Newty, she mentioned him spending all the evening in her dressing-room, which she shared with Prim, and of course how he used to come to lunch every day and spend the afternoon with her. Of course my mind rushed to my sitting in her room so much, although she has always said she would tell me when she wished me to do it less. My mind rushed, I say, and yet at the same time, I said to myself that I wouldn't ask about something so self-centred and trivial. Yet of course, I did. This was perhaps to conceal from myself that my real trouble was the thought of some other man at some later date being told about my affair with D., a fear not of denigration, but of affection passing, love ending. She has accepted that she is not a person who wants one man, but several, one after another. I haven't accepted that I don't want a wife.

Bill Bevir, the little cringing likeable contemptible upsetting publicity man, was talking in the pub tonight of the management. I knew they were frighteningly empty, but it makes it worse to hear it said.

Monday March 14 1955

I don't know that anything much has happened in the last near-fortnight, until Saturday night. Except that I went to see 'A Star is Born', and 'Carmen Jones' on two successive days, and thought the first high-grade rubbish with a splendid showing from Judy Garland, and the second a clever enough modern dress 'Carmen', but only clever. Dorothy Dandridge is sexy and quite accomplished and sexy, but the whole film is a manufactured affair.

Worse than films, I went to the Old Vic last Saturday afternoon to see the last matinee of 'The Taming of the Shrew'. Produced by Denis, it is, if anything, worse than the one I saw at Cambridge. It is unnecessary to labour at this point the desirability of retaining the induction to soften the hardness of the play by emphasising its lack of taste as the extravagances of an Elizabethan touring company. The induction is cut. Whether there are other cuts I don't know, for I left after twenty-five minutes, fuming with shame and anger. Paul Rogers, gabbling through Petruchio like a bookmaker, gives an utterly charmless and unsympathetic, hard and boring performance. Ann Todd does nothing positively wrong, because she does almost nothing. Michael Bates is a walking compendium of 'How Not to Act Old Men in Shakespeare' as Gremio. Alan Dobie has a fine voice and a fine presence and will I think make a good actor one day. He has still to forget his training. The costumes are colourful, but oh dear the bits and pieces hung all over them, the minute cloaks, the huge boots, the imagination of it all. And the set, like a background to a funny drawing.

Our weekend at Twyford went off well, except that there was still too much of John M., and I got too drunk to fuck on the Sunday night. We had another talk about my acting on Sunday. It turned out that D. really thought I ought to give it up. That was a surprise. It seemed to me something like finding out one was a cripple instead of a passably good athlete. She thought I ought to give it up not because an actor couldn't be made out of me and my talents, but because she couldn't see me doing it. All that she said I have come to see may have some

truth. If I go on, I might have some success, but it could never be the sort of success of which I had dreamed, or the sort with which I would ever be satisfied. As usual I feel divided between a wish to go on and prove myself strong, and the desire to take what...

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 29

Angus Mackay

Being the twenty-fifth

From March 14 1955

Monday March 14 1955

...really is true advice. She has never seen me from the front in any part that I could possibly call one that I am right for. She may be wrong, but I feel that she isn't. I have thought about it lately. There would be something to be said for leaving the theatre, that I might make a place for myself that would be true and lasting. In the theatre, according to her, my place would be contemptible at best, and in every way disastrous at worst. But the wrench of leaving it, and the shame of confessing to failure and worse to mistaken vanity, to others, let alone to myself, it wouldn't be easy. Nearly all my close friends are in the theatre. I should never see them if I left it, even if they or I were in London. The being one of a little community, the long nights, all gone. I shall have to think about it.

Last Saturday was our 250th performance. We had a bottle-party in our dressing-room, which went quite well. D. had been very tired all night, and made to go at about two. I followed her to her dressing-room, and persuaded her to come and sleep here. She was endlessly apologetic about not being able to make love, but I got her here - rather tight in a disturbed way. Again she kept on saying that I was drunk too, and as it gave her pleasure, I admitted it. When we got up here, she was distressed for a long time, throwing herself backwards and forwards in my arms, crying, protesting against the weight of the burden of guilt that she must carry. Her particular distress arose from a letter Julian had written to Bill Linnit of the management asking for a couple of pounds rise for the understudies. This was refused, contemptibly enough on the grounds that everyone else would ask for a rise too. As they are getting this whole company for a song, it is sickening. She was ashamed of herself for having spoken to Bill Linnit and been pleasant to him instead of saying straight out about Julian's letter, so giving Bill Linnit a little of the torment it had cost her and Julian to write it, and perhaps making him ashamed, too. She could not stop this flow of self-deprecation. She kept asking why she should have it all. Mary and the show and war and no new flat and Julian and now this. Again I had no help to give, nothing to offer her. My scruples and sense of fine shades just don't give me the continuous pain that they do her, and I suppose that is a judgement on me. My sense of shame or guilt or outrage just doesn't last as long, or I suppose give me as much pain. So that my natural answer would be what is the use of suffering about the fact that you are suffering, and how can suffering pass, no rubbish. I don't understand really, so I mustn't write any more.

A nice quiet day after a turbulent tho' touching night. We lay together without making love very happily.

1.30 a.m.

She gave me a tea-pot and two cups, and took me out to supper!

Tuesday March 15 1955

Tried to write the thing for 'Punch' that I told her about, but found it needed more planning, so did some and went out to lunch with Mary Steele. She is attractive, very, and it's a pleasure to look at her, but a bit dull.

The article wants to be very surely angled. So easy to be facetious.

She comes to me tomorrow.

Wednesday March 16 1955

Understudy rehearsal in the morning, which wakes me right up for the afternoon. D. came to me, and we made love. The soft clearness of her face lasts through the evening, to the moment together in the tube station, sitting on the sand-bin at the end of the platform at the Strand.

Peter Green told us tonight that there had been heavier advance booking today than at any previous time in the run. Isn't that strange? It's much warmer today - perhaps that's it. I saw in Lower Sloane St. a breeding cage which would just do.

Sunday March 20 1955

Thursday night was a black patch. Newty, D. and I went to the Buckstone, and I being a little drunk, was foolish enough and rude enough to join in a conversation between William Sylvester and a Sunday Chronicle correspondent called Bernard McElwaine. This poor little man took offence. I was right, but I had been rude, and there were some ugly moments. It upset me quite unreasonably, mostly disturbed vanity, the shame of making a fool of myself. But also for the little man being so petty and so wrong and minding it all so much because he must somehow secretly know what contemptible views he was putting forward, and the pain of finding so suddenly, that one had been rude and done harm, at the very moment when above all, the caring for the right should have made one specially polite, that was for a time really upsetting. D. was very good to me, came home with me and listened to my crying for some time. I made her go home then, for it was already late, and she had said she was to work on her story the next day. I came back here, and cried a lot more, of course, finding more painful still the accusation of poor judgement and lack of consideration. That I should have been overbearing and rude to him.

Friday was a day in bed. Last night we went to Julian's for a drink, and I somehow stayed till half-past four. Newty, Julian and I recorded a lot, and great fun it was. She was already tired before we went to the flat. I was cast down that she asked me not to forget her at Julian's, as I did over the record-playing before. I think I could scarcely do that now. Though it is only about a month ago or so. She curled up on the sofa, and was fairly quiet. Every time I looked at her, I surprised a very un-party expression on her face. I expect she was thinking

about her story - or about bed. All in a moment, it seemed, she had got up, I'd found her a taxi and she had gone. She was to come back here with me, but got the curse early, and so wouldn't and couldn't. Her leaving so suddenly was a reindication of the danger of imagining that we are a 'togetherness' in ways in which we are not. I do not mean that I resented her leaving before I did, (she had already stayed longer than she said she would) resentment or any feeling beyond the removal of the pleasure that her presence is to me, not being a part of my reaction at all. There was simply an emphasising of her independence, which was for some reason brought home to me, leaving me standing on the pavement watching the taxi drive off and feeling rather flat. It is probably only another way of saying that I was made to feel slightly foolish because I knew that I could not have left the party before she did. She might reasonably add, 'or before the party was over.'

I have been hoping that she might ring up tonight like she did last week. That would be nice. I suppose I might ring her.

I did.

Later.

Quite forgot to add that yesterday afternoon Patsy and I went to the Vic to see 'As You Like It'. Within the limits of this company, which are considerable, this production is a success. That is to say, it is a fair public success. As a piece of production, it is more or less non-existent. Mr. Helpmann is just not up to this scale of thing. Sets and costumes in the main delightful, particularly the first lithograph-like backcloths. John Neville is excellent as Orlando. Virginia McKenna and Gwen Cherrell are very charming as Rosalind and Celia, but as my classing them together might suggest, neither is right. V. McK. is very very pretty and is not just a visiting film-star, but has not the experience to clinch many of the effects she aims at. But oh she is young and pretty. G.C. is a much better actress, and gives an enchanting performance, but simply not a Shakespearean one. Eric Porter is a riveting exciting actor, and does very well with Jaques. Paul Rogers does all that can be done with Touchstone in the same elephantine vein. The really upsetting thing about the thing is that the overall direction of the season is so unsure. Of course young actors and actresses make mistakes and are inexperienced and bad, but that wouldn't be worrying if they did so within a proper and balanced framework where one could feel someone with real judgement and experience was watching over them. This you do not at all feel.

Monday March 21 1955

Stayed in all day, and got quite a lot done really, though I won't write anything about it because it's tempting fate. I find it a little daunting working in here all day, as I always have. There is no possibility of changing one's position in any way, if one is to write legibly at all. Wrote to John M. about Ju and MM's visit. Fear he will not find them very willing to be social.

Had one of my silly bouts or gouts of sentimentality over her this evening, paying silly attention to her cracks about going off me or our affair finishing. It's so cheap to work up false feelings like that, for false and picturesque they are, as I have known to my cost in the past. However, the pub and some visitors to scare away cheered me up, and I saw just how

silly I'd been. She is so right that not to accept you as you are is the quickest way to messing up everything.

Tuesday March 22 1955

This afternoon to the new Denis Cannan play, 'Misery Me!' at the Duchess. Really 'Carvallo' over again but not so good. He writes rather badly, tho' he has a lively mind and is inventive enough. There is no distinction there, nothing extra to give to his talk about love and life the interest that its lack of originality make so necessary. A mixture of satire, farce and comedy needs very flexible skilful playing and production, which it doesn't really get, and consequently the one big joke about suicide and death falls extremely flat through our not knowing in what way to take it, whether as witty comment, farcical silliness, or character-building. There is a great deal of heavy polysyllabic humour, of the wireless news, for instance, 'that nightly recital of the world's miseries must bring about a good many premature departures', boring and dull because it adds nothing but a false and what is more out of character pedantry, to the meaning of the line, which is simply that the news is so dreary it kills a lot of people off before their time. It is, not, as Owen Holder's (apparent) pedantry was, a deliberate carefully applied unified style, with something exquisite, flexible and subtle about it to justify it. It is just a sudden cheap trick introduced at intervals from the mouth of any character to raise a quick laugh. I'm surprised the show isn't more of a success. It is just what a lot of people take, and laugh at, for an intellectual comedy, and are proud of themselves for so doing. Incidentally Ju and MM who were in the same row enjoyed it very much, tho' I hope that wasn't the reason.

Cast was as good as the farcical prod. let them be. It changed its ground so often. Yvonne Mitchell rather good, so Colin Gordon. George Cole skilful but miscast. Too broad for this sort of thing. too obvious, too obvious. Leonard Sachs bad.

Having just read the Sunday Times and Observer, which I had deliberately glanced at before, I am flattered to find that I can agree with most of both, except that the charms of Mr. Cannan's prose as prose quite escape me. It does, and no more. It is better than an ordinary playwright's, but what is that to say? What I wish that I had said, is the sentence of Ken Tynan's about Denis C.'s mind being an attractive and true one. That it is, but not an original one, I should have thought. His paradoxes are, I would have thought old hat, his situations curiously expected. Certainly they agree with me that you could not laugh. Wednesday March 23 1955

An afternoon of love.

Thursday March 24 1955

This afternoon between the shows, desire came strongly to us both. How moving it is that it lasts so long, that we are 'together' so long. We kissed and played and 'got' excited. She told me that she had never gone on wanting a man so long after having him so often.

She is the only person I want to see now. Anybody else is an interruption, either actually or in my thoughts. I see nobody, I go nowhere except by myself. It is a pity in a way that Julian has Michael to go about with, for it has softened what I hope would have been the blow that

my desertion would have been. (What a lot of have beens.) D. asked me yesterday when the moment arrived at which I thought I might have an affair with her. I told her, of course, but feel I should also have told her that I came into 'Salad Days' with the knowledge that I was making a trio, a quartet, with whatever results. I had never speculated about those results; I sometimes wonder if Ju had. In any event, the result was as it was, because of her and because of me being the people, the bodies and minds we are. But I think I ought to say that I felt instinctively that I was to be the 'something' to distract Dorothy.

Now I think I have unconsciously done what I said to myself I must not do after knowing that she reads this diary, told her something through its pages. So I must tell her tomorrow.

Sunday March 27 1955

Last night I told her about Jeremy Spenser, the penalty, the regret, or insincerity and dishonesty is not just your own shame, not just my sense of loss, of not being to her as she had thought me; much worse is the inescapable knowing that I have added one more straw to the burden she carries. I wanted to be a something of support, however little, and now she supports me.

All the subsidiary pains of it, too. The slap to my beastly silly vanity, shown up to me as mean, mean, mean. That is the beastliness of it, that all the time I am saying to myself You are upset because you have hurt her, is really only because my picture of myself as her lover, looking after her, cherishing her, has been disturbed. I told her all my stupidities, all the pretences, all the falseness, and she called me 'a silly clod', and 'poor little one'.

It all came out because she told me of the way in which Julian betrayed their relationship by lying. I say 'because', for the phrases she used went through me so, the same phrases that have gone through and through my mind these last months. I told her my conversation with Julian the other week, a talk I couldn't write about because she would have read it here, instead of hearing it from me, which was the only way she could be allowed to hear it. Talk disturbed me partly by bringing out into the open of speech something which I had thought only in my mind, but much more by virtue of Julian's vindictive oh dear vindictive attack on my peace of mind, because she had disturbed his the night before. Because she had asked him if he had slept with Michael Woolley, and had set me up as a sort of example, he turned on me. Revenge, I suppose, because he thought I had told her about Michael Wooley, though he never said so. This was awful to me. It showed me that he really knew nothing about me, if he could be so openly cruel. There is so much that I have lied about to him, not facts so much as acquiescence in a thousand talks when laughing and seeming to sympathise and agree, was lying. Our whole friendship is almost all sham.

She stayed until half-past three this afternoon. We made love twice. She slept quite a lot, and she seemed fairly tranquil. I was invaded by waves of fear and inadequacy. I lay with her in my arms, looking at the ceiling, and thinking, 'What can I do or say? Will this mean the end of us?' How can I find a way of saying how more important than anything to me is my feeling for her, let alone hers for me?' I couldn't find a way. She said cheerfully that my spirits would come up, and I would be all right. I know I will. But I cannot go on for ever as a cheerful little soul. I don't want to stay as I am.

Monday March 28 1955

Had to go to lunch with Mrs. Eastman and Elsie Schroeder at Dorset House, which all seemed empty and dreamy.

I met her with awkwardness. In her room, she talked a little, saying 'You would do anything, wouldn't you?' but would not say more than, leaving me to imagine unpleasantly what she meant. She came to me after the rehearsal, kissed me and when I tried to say again how inadequate I felt, said almost irritably, 'No, there's no inadequacy. There's love between us. When one of us fails that, then that one will be inadequate. You're not inadequate.'

Otherwise behaviour was exactly as it has been between us, on both sides. She said at one point, 'Ah, how unhappy we both were yesterday morning. I'll come to you again, so that we can make love properly. I'm sorry that I can't when I'm sad or unhappy.'

Tuesday March 29 1955

I can't feel deeply or at length about anything. If I could, perhaps my diary would be not exclusively about me.

She was sad tonight, though the true reason she didn't show till the last moment, when she hinted something about Mary's sufferings that she didn't mean to say, but which gave me a sudden glimpse of how someone of real feeling can despair. We were sitting on the sand bin again, staring at the railway lines. It is the sudden sense of dimensions of feeling or pain unknown to me, which has come at many moments, and which is always so strange and disturbing. The continual discovery that you belong to a different sort of person is bound to be forbidding.

She was teasing me again in the pub about bad conversational manners. Oh dear. She comes to me tomorrow.

Wednesday March 30 1955

Thursday morning.

She spent the afternoon with me; we were both at our best with each other, I thought, physically, I mean. She was much happier than I had expected, and left me feeling lighter indeed. All wrong. Can't think of the right way to say it. She resolved my guilt by not taking her love away. In the evening she was still tired as she has been for about a week. She said once or twice during the show that she'd like to go on drinking, and quite decided to by the time we got to the pub, where we had a word with John Barton. We went off here, her excuse for having a bit of a drink being that John M. was here, (he arrived yesterday) but I knew that it was really to escape some unhappy thoughts, as it turned out to be. She had said she wanted to drink, 'as long as you're there', she had only me, for John had gone to bed. Her pain was over Mary, who has been a constant source of suffering to her for months, of course; she is finding now that Mary's unhappiness, her exclusion from almost all living, is making their life together difficult. Mary finds small things so much more painful and disturbing than she would if she were living an ordinary life that Dorothy does not tell her incidents or opinions that would upset her further. This withdrawal of confidence, (for such it is, whatever its cause) forces them apart in spite of themselves. As D. said wistfully,

'There's no answer and no help that anyone can give'. She told me this without any sense of disloyalty, which might be difficult to believe for someone not knowing Mary. But Mary is that millionth person whose moral integrity is absolute, and therefore she cannot be accused of lack of self-knowledge or hysteria or any of the failings which would spring to my mind when I was told of such a woman. Even I know enough of Mary to know that she as she is, has resisted the degenerating influences of suffering for longer and for longer more absolutely than anyone as they are, I can imagine. I won't write down the examples D. gave me of Mary's bitterness taking hold of her sometimes, because they cannot convey Mary's moral _size, and only convey their own pettiness. What must matter to me more in the end, try as I will, is the effect of her suffering on Dorothy.

I comforted her as well as I could. We drank a lot, and made love again, lying together after in front of the fire. I felt so cruel sending her home.

Thursday March 31 1955

Tea between the shows with Susan and her husband's captain's wife, Carol something, who used to be with Donald Wolfit. Very pleasant in a dull way, though Susan can never be dull. Julian split the bill with me, though he hadn't money to pay his half. How can he be so thoughtless to me on a Thursday? For all he knew, I might have nothing. He says he hasn't any money in that tone which only means none in his pocket.

Tonight John M. came to the pub. Went out halfway through 'The King and I' because that boring Dick M - something was hating it and making rude remarks. The importance he gives to it, the out of proportion of it all, the persuading of himself into feelings that he does not feel. What a boring boor this Dick thing must be.

Friday April 1 1955

Fool's day indeed. I have betrayed her again. Drank with John M. and never said to him all that was XX up to be said. All the lies and the cheating I have done to him, all to be said still. We talked about his convers. with her in the pub. By the way Maureen Blacker Joan's friend all right all right. I never agreed with him, never lied to him fresh but never told him how dishonest I had been to him. What is it about people like him? He seems terrified to talk about anyone but queer.

I wonder what Michael Aldridge's relationship is really like with his wife.

Saturday April 2 1955

Sunday April 3 1955

A busy morning, getting rid of a lot of little jobs before D. came to stay last night. Sent Bodkin some money instead of a present. Couldn't be bothered to choose something that she mightn't like, very possible with her anyway. In the afternoon to see 'The Pirate' again with Ju, who really is in the dumps these days. If only the dumps didn't make him snap at one so.

She had again had rather a poor night, but seemed to get through the two shows well. We went to the pub afterwards and of course were a little later than we had told John we would be. He of course was slightly tetchy. I do find him something of a burden, not only because of the false position in which I have placed myself with him, but also because of his craving for the same kind of sensation all the time. Gay, that is to say, 'queer' company, elaborate dinners with lots of drink, with if possible a touch of the glamour of fame, films with either a special sort of suspense that it becomes almost sensual, (so he tells me) or some young man that he likes, novels about queers or high society ('fabulous') or dons or something that is twisted and extreme in some way or other, prisoner-of-war memories with a lot of sadism. If any of these objectives in prospect are cancelled, or delayed or held up in any way, John becomes tetchy and disagreeable and can be rude, although he sets such an extreme value on good manners of his own definition. His definition of bad manners includes all the remarks which upset or disturb him.

Anyway he was down for a bit from irritation, and could not resist making a few remarks about our lateness. We had a pleasant drink for about two hours, with Dorothy and Julian doing most of the talking. I was most touched by their enthusiasm together, and not at all surprised when she reversed her remark of the day before, by saying that she wasn't going to be able to resist the temptation to write another show with him. I was in a stupid haze, and could not properly concentrate, rather as I was at Twyford that Sunday night. Naturally I wanted to break up before they did, and was rather tetchy with poor D. who went on drinking in here long after I only wanted to make love. She of course did it to make our love-making uninhibited. I find myself at those moments jolted out of love by her need for something artificial to stimulate her to be freer than she would otherwise be made by passion. Surely the excitement of making love, particularly with a partner who is known and trusted should liberate you to experiment easily together. At those moments I do feel as if the drink is coming between us, as if it's a third at the bed, as if she was confessing that I can't excite her enough to make her shameless. She stayed in bed in the morning, and I got her a boiled-egg, by dint of John ordering one he didn't want, and made some tea. We stayed in bed till well after lunch, when I took her to her taxi. I think she slept pretty well, though she still seems tired. There is a rarity about our sleeping together that I am almost glad circumstances force us to preserve. It brings out in me all the feelings of protectiveness and strength that seem to appeal to her so much. All the time that we spend together seems, no, is, too short. I hang around her at the theatre. That's all right, if probably a bit boring for her. But the depth of nearness produced by love-making is something different from all that. We get glimpses of it at our weekends together, but the closeness, the joined feeling engendered in bed, should be allowed to expand itself and grow into our ordinary lives during the day. But we are never together then - or almost never.

The rest of the day was rather a nightmare than a dream. Coping with John's fears and irritations, (for all his assumption of calm adjustment, so peculiarly over-emphasised by MW and himself, he is brought nearer to something not far from hysteria quicker than anyone I know, except Mummy. The better you know him, the more tetchy he gets. All his easy charm and control is kept for his sensation-seeking.) Rushed off to see Gerard's excruciatingly boring play, ludicrously produced, of course. One poor girl kept on talking about 'a terrible calamity'. They all went off to dine when I came in, for which I was very thankful, and I had a long quiet two and a half hours of writing.

Monday April 14 1955

That Red-Indian looking friend of John M's, who has been in South Africa for years, has come back, and took us both out to lunch, with a bottle of wine.

In the afternoon I went to 'Naughty Marietta' a richly idiotic musical Macdonald - Eddy.

Tuesday April 5 1955

Today we went to Whiteley's at lunchtime to register Dorothy for a flat. How strange that sounds. 'The man' was niceish, but with a voice so quiet and indistinct he sounded as if he were only adding up something to himself. He gave us three, two sounding quite possible.

Afterwards I went to 'Naughty M' _again. Became cast-down and tetchy in the evening because D. told me that 'The Star' is to be included on the record of Julian's songs to be made soon. So silly of me.

We talked about Easter. Of course I would like to stay and stay and stay and stay with her. Was foolish enough not to say so firmly, so as avoid those absurd whatever you want conversations. Oh how I hate not having the money or the house for her to come to me. I hate to feel I'm pushing myself on her and making her work.

Wednesday April 6 1955

John M. still a little tiresome. He will talk all about his affairs and affaires all the time, and about all his relationships, which are all wrong. He may know a great deal about a certain sort of tact, but it is always lavished on the same object.

Spent this morning in bed, interrupted only by John coming in twice to tell me about two telephone-calls I had heard him having on the landing. Also heard a song from 'Wonderful Town' through the floor, words and all, from Ann Dickinson's room. Lunch again with John M. and John Lathom. They went to the pictures; just managed to persuade them and get them away. Spent the afternoon working.

Told her I'd like to stay with her, and she said Come of course as she always does, and she would tell me if she didn't want me to. Ju asked me out to supper. Pretended for a long time that he wasn't worried about Henry R. and MM. But that was what it was.

Wednesday April 13 1955

She cried when I left.

I stayed until last night, which was my first night at home since Thursday. We didn't do much, except that we went to a cinema on Sunday, to see 'The Member of the Wedding' and 'Edouard et Caroline'. She hadn't seen Daniel Gelin before and thought him excellent. We both thought the other film well acted but pretentious in its conception and even more in style.

We went shopping twice. We went to the pub to drink with Newty, who got very drunk - for him. She had to cook an awful lot for me, but didn't seem to mind. We got on very well. She cried when I left because it seemed like a parting; in her dressing-room a couple of hours later, she said that she must be very fond of me. She's made me very happy.

Left my pen at the theatre.

Lunch with Bobby C again. How intelligent he is, agrees with me in every way! My poor darling got the curse just as she was going on for Out of Breath but it was all right. Stratford opened last night. I didn't know.

Thursday April 14 1955

Both houses full today. This evening a duller one. Newty and D. were angry with the company for playing faster and lighter instead of pointing more, and even angrier with John Warner and James C who said openly that they hated the audience. 'Unprofessional' and 'spoiled' were two of the words thrown out. Newty was especially angry in a way that surprised me. Not because I didn't agree with him completely but because he was so rude about James. It is perhaps fortunate that I am so inexperienced that I can make out no case whatever to be considered professional.

D. was a little 'headachy' and had a pain in her tummy from the curse. She asked me definitely about the prices of overcoats. I know I shan't be able to resist letting her buy me one. I suppose it is all right.

Bob asked us to coffee to his new flat, in Greek Street. Very flashy new door, part of the contemporary shop-front of a new Espresso bar. Rather less grand stairs, slight kitchen smell. He has one square room at the front of the building, three yellow walls, one black, and a kitchen almost as large, into which the front door opens. The place has a scruffy home-painted look and needs a good scrub. He was extremely hospitable, offering lots to eat and drink. I talked too much, but was quite funny. Ju talked about MM all the way home.

Monday April 18 1955

On Saturday sat through the first half of 'Macbeth', at the Vic. Visually goodish. John Neville's Macduff goodish. Everything else bad.

Felt off-colour the last three days, particularly yesterday, when I had a splitting headache all day. In the afternoon to tea with Ben Duncan and Dick Chapman. Ben pursued me here to invite me, and I found it very pleasant to see them again, or would have done had there not been also at tea two absurd old Oxford queens. One John Woodward, was slightly nicer than the other, who is a curator of the Wallace collection. J.W. is 18th C. with a purple flush beginning, heavy cheeks, protruding eyes, and more intelligent than the other. Roger something? is fat and round, with drooping slit eyes, wearing a light brown double-breasted coat and matching weskit with black trousers, black silk socks and black moccasins. They crushed the conversation already in progress (probably why I disliked them so much!) by talking the most trivial boring inanities and offering them as the most coruscating of epigrams. Their first exchanges were actually confined to a well-titled argument on the different aesthetic merits of the rooms at Buck House and Windsor. They also liked Dougie Byng and hadn't seen 'Salad Days'.

In the late evening John M. who had come with me to the tea, and boring John Lathom, who paid for the tickets, went with me to see 'South'. Sentimental melodrama about a queer love affair, where the queer gets his love-at-first-sight to kill him in a duel. Really! Denholm Elliott excellent. Zena Walker bright and engaging. Clare Austin agreeably competent but no more. D. came here on Saturday night. We could have made love, for her curse was nearly over, but I hadn't got an F.L. and she hadn't got her cap, so she tossed me off.

On reading the entry for the w/e she said I hadn't written enough about what it really meant. Deliberately. I had hoped that if I described it baldly, the meaning would come through. I farked anything more detailed, feeling I should not hit off the meaning properly.

Certainly another stage was passed, and safely. More than safely. We lived together for long enough to find the beginnings of a pattern that would last for much longer than five days - and four nights. We went out shopping together, feeling together, looking with the same eyes at the shop people. I kissed her as we were crossing a street. She didn't buy ST in a chemists because I was with her. In the flat in the afternoons (some of them) she settled down to story, and I wrote a letter for a bit before I had to go out; but she could, I think, have gone on writing with me in the room which, as she said of Newty, is a test. I couldn't write with her in the room, I don't think.

I still haven't begun to catch what we felt. I suppose it was like one of our weekends extended for a bit. We tried being married for five days, and it worked. No, I still haven't at all got to it.

Today we again went shopping; I was feeling rather light-headed, though I think I hid it till we made love in the afternoon, when I became light-pricked too. She bought two pairs of shoes, a dress-length and pattern, and some white beads from Woolworth's. The dress-length was very pretty, wintry-sea green. She also bought me an overcoat, the overcoat, £23, at Aquascutum. She said in the shoe-shop that she hoped it wouldn't make me love her less because it was harder to take than give. I think it will be all right.

It was rather comic that on an afternoon when I should have taken her at my best for her best, I should have been such a poor fish at it. I still felt rather there than here. Although she was very real to me, I was not very real to myself. I do love her, so.

Wednesday April 20 1955

Have just left her in a taxi from Henry's. She only stayed about three-quarters of an hour, wasn't very happy, and so we left. Michael M. came, too, this time, and the sight of Henry sitting at his feet and talking so much less well than usual was distressing to me, leave alone her-she? no. On the way to the taxi she said 'I wish I could see more of you.' I feel I lean entirely on her, except for sex. But that is only a foolish feeling of inverted pride. She is to me now the first interest in every day, the first thought in every company. I must try to get her a flat. My poor darling, she was tired tonight.

Yesterday I was so limp and withdrawn without wanting to be. The end of the newspaper strike cheered me up, as of course she never could. But oh dear the dreary dinner with John M after the show.

This afternoon we went to 'The Bad Seed', Mrs S., Julian and I. Goodish melodrama, or would be, had it obviously not pretensions to be much much more. Breaks upwards into comedy again and again without meaning to. Wynyard very good overall, tho' details I disliked. Miriam Karlin excellent, though she has to repeat her excellence twice which spoils it. Little girl odious and funny. As good as a child could be as a murderess.

Thursday April 21 1955

Papers back today, looking like parodies of themselves.

Felt better today, and was able to read D.'s sketch of her man for her new story. He is a complete thing, which is all that is important. It is a tricky business reading something which you know to be only a preliminary sketch, particularly when parts of it suddenly develop rashes of expansion. I found myself distracted into thinking how badly she'd done some of it when it wasn't important how she'd done it, but only how she's thought it.

Developed a very wearing pain round my shoulder. It was very bad in the cafe, and afterwards in the d-room - very bad in the sense that I could not _concentrate on anything else properly, not even on our play. I got excited, but for a shorter time than I would have done if I'd been well.

Friday April 22 1955

Dashed around in a mild way this morning, and got off to Whiteley's, but no flat. Back here to find John M. with 'flu and more dirty pictures. He went off to bed. Must try and be solicitous tomorrow. He does so value what he calls 'sympathy' and 'taking trouble'.

D. came this afternoon. I was worried that I would still be weak and remote, but I wasn't and managed well enough, though not quite back to normal. Promised her in the dressing-room a proper love-making, a wooing, next time. She of course, the silly, thought that I hadn't enjoyed it was much this time. I want her more, and more deeply, than ever.

Ernest Jay, the actor, and his wife, and son who turns out to have been at Cambridge with me, came round. Wife enchanting, warm and bubbling. E.J. a little stiff but very funny. Son I talked at a bit, but apart from a guilt that I'd been off-hand with him at C., I found a faint air of judging on and apology for his parents not attractive. His seriousness I thought false a bit, too. His imitation of an American behind him at the show was I must say exact.

Yours sincerely,
Angus Mackay.

Saturday April 23 1955

Sunday April 24 1955

She came back with me last night, and stayed until half-past three. It was all rather unhappy somehow. I rang her up this afternoon, late, when it seemed to be all right, but we must meet again before we are back where we were.

I don't know what happened to make us unhappy. She said early on 'Tell me six things about sex I haven't heard before' meaning, my sex life. She was in a drinking mood, because she was tired and she always hopes the drink will make her want me more, and more quickly. I wanted just to sit and talk quietly and slip into making love. She talked of two of her other lovers. This, through no fault of hers, cast a depression over me. I felt very sober and flat. She became more talkative and restless, started to undress, we got into bed. Suddenly I

wanted her; all her talk vanished, and I took her very quickly, coming inside a minute or so. She had not. She jumped out of bed, and said, 'Sleep'. As she was in a skittish mood, I pretended to do what she wanted, thinking she would come more or less straight back. I must have been tired than I thought, for I went off for about half an hour. She woke me up getting back into bed. I felt frowsty and dizzy and gluey and very very sleepy. Naturally the poor darling had come back to be made love to. I never felt less like it. I tried, but couldn't. We were both upset by this, lying in each other's arms, staring gloomily at the ceiling. The whole night seemed to have been at odds. Before we left the room she wept quite a lot, at having woken me up, at my not taking her, at my coming to the taxi with her. On the way to the taxi she said 'Let's be in love a bit then', meaning, I suppose, that the little sufferings the night had inflicted on us could only come to two people who were in love, who would suffer worse if they attempted to go on as an affair.

The real mistake was mine. If I had not been selfish and revengeful enough to take her quickly as I did, showing her that I would wait no longer and pointing the lesson by coming without her, there would have been no sadness at all.

Tuesday April 26 1955

Oh my darling what would I do without you? Stay with me, don't let us 'part'.

Wednesday April 27 1955

My poor darling. She didn't sleep until eight or nine o'clock this morning. All the same she looked less tired. It was a good thing that she had decided not to come to 'Kismet'. She would have found it very noisy and charmless. I tried to be fair in telling her about it, but I couldn't conceal, by any phrasing that I thought it an ill-written, ill-conceived pantomime type show, probably not as good as the old Oscar Asche things, and certainly not a scrap more up to date. Alfred Drake is handsome, commanding, energetic, with a voice of power and beauty. I am interested to find that he is actually Italian. He is an exact lyric baritone, the perfect Figaro. He lowers himself alas to cheapness that I was sorry to have to wince at. He does not know how to play to a metropolitan audience perhaps as yet. His leading lady is sweet gentle and humble, and gets in some delightful soft singing. The other woman has the biggest tits I've ever seen, and a fair amount of brassy self-assurance. And a very loud voice. The dancing is nearly all excellent of its Eastern derivative kind, and crisply performed. The sets are boring, and the costumes, though fresh and pretty, display little or no originality or overall sense of line and colour. Back home, John L. and M. kept me talking until now - 1.30.

Thursday April 28 to Monday May 2 1955

Thursday was John M.'s last night, thank goodness. I had to sit up drinking with him and John Lathom for quite a time, and spend more or less all the next day helping him pack, but it was all done with pleasure at his going, I am sorry to say.

The same afternoon I went to see Patrick Woodcock, Dorothy's doctor, to register with him and get him to look at a gland in my neck which has been swollen since last Monday week.

His surgery is in Lupus Street, a long shopping street with one end in the smart part and one in the slummy bit, of Pimlico. He is tallish, slightly round-shouldered, diffident yet not at all weak, in appearance reminding me a little of David Dodimead; we talked of 'Salad Days', he filled in a form about me. He felt my gland, looked at my throat, thought a moment, then said cheerfully, 'Well, I can't imagine why it's swollen, and I can't think of anything to do for it'. I was relieved; I hurried out into the street, full of spirits, finally getting quite annoyed that I'd thrown my laundry schedule out by putting on clean underwear in case I was taken straight to hospital.

She came for Saturday night, and I boiled an egg for her in the morning.

Tuesday May 3 1955

To 'Time Remembered' this afternoon alone. Enchanting production, with exquisite performance from Margaret Rutherford, all soft tenderness. She is a dear actress. Mary Ure is very beautiful, with poise and grace I have rarely seen equalled in such a young woman. Her acting is unfinished, her performance vocally tending to the monotonous, though I was not troubled by it. I found her more convincing, more touching less affected and more beautiful than I have ever known Claire Bloom to be. I quite lost my heart to her, particularly the end of the second Act, when she and the Prince start humming the very pretty little waltz-tune which runs through the play. Paul Schofield I found less affected, less mannered than I have ever seen him. It is such a relief suddenly to see a strong, virile, young, man playing the lover instead of someone apparently effete - like me! Mary L. apparently thought him worse than ever. He must have improved or else she has seen more of him recently. I have seen him so seldom. I loved his strength and quietness and control.

Some of the small parts were bad - Richard Goolden very lazy and silly. Geoffrey Dunn a bit tasteless. Sets and costumes superlatively good. She said she was very pleased with me.

Thursday May 5 1955

She came last night, and I couldn't. It hasn't been quite all it should be since I had 'flu or whatever. She is understanding about it, but I suppose I was about her, too. It isn't pleasant when you can't love someone you love.

Julian rang up this morning, a bit upset by having been shut out of his flat last night. He arrived to find his keys wouldn't work, rang the bell, thought Chris couldn't hear because he was asleep, and walked (no money on him) to Notting Hill Gate to ask Michael M., whom had just left on the tube, to put him up. When he got there, Michael wasn't in. Julian said naively, 'I waited ages, sitting on a bench on the other side of the road. I couldn't think why he wasn't in. What could have happened to him between Kensington High St. and home? He waited there writhing in the words of his songs for the new record till half-past one. Then he wanted to pee so badly he walked to Hyde Park corner loo instead of peeing round a corner, going on from there back to the flat for a second look. This time he decided that scratches on the door must be new and made by burglars; although Chris might have been lying _senseless inside, he didn't call the police, but walked to the Vaudeville and slept there the night. I told him to come straight here. He had some breakfast and a shave, and everything was finally straightened out. Chris had been out late, arrived at the flat at three, after both J's visits, and

called the police at once. The burglars had made their attempt at nine o'clock, and had been disturbed by Mrs. Hathaway-Jones from the floor above, calling 'What exactly do you think you want?' down the well of the stairs.

I am afraid that Julian, in taxing MM with not being in, has found out about him sharing the flat with Donald Pickering. He came in more or less crying tonight and thanking God for Dorothy and me. So here we go again with it all.

John and Caroline Neville came to the pub tonight. Oh how I envy them, as much as any two people I've met. They're so _straight. She and I had a very satisfying exchange about John and a film contract offer from Paramount which he turned down. Newty persuaded them to go to the Buckstone, much against Caroline's will, because of the new Maltese nurse. She is a marvellous girl; almost the most extraordinary thing about her is that she is very nearly coming up to being objective about John's career.

Friday May 6 1955

This afternoon to 'Ninotchka' with D. to see Garbo for the first time. She is very beautiful, thorough, soft, vulnerable, gentle, simple, natural, unself-conscious, to an almost embarrassing degree. As D. said boldly, 'She's not really much of an actress' or rather not really an actress.' her complete freedom from self-consciousness makes it impossible that she should be an 'actress' in any sense of a glamorous and deliberately spell-binding personality. She has no tricks, not much technical ability, (the famous laugh is forced and amateurishly extravagant) yet no fault that could be found with her, could in any way affect the magnetism, the warmth, the intensity with which she is herself, one of the few originals the world has produced. I did cry a lot. She is so quiet and soft.

Poor D. had a headache during the show, not improved I daresay by the hot cinema and all that crying. Julian was on the edge of tears all night again, and did cry, I think, though I was asleep at the time, and only came to to find him washing his face.

D. rushed past Mr. Gatti in the pub, not wanting to speak to him because of him selling the Adelphi. I said I would tell him how I despised him, but I mustn't because I would make a mess of it.

May 7-8th 2 a.m. (WRITTEN BY DOROTHY)

You're snoring like a beast, my darling, my darling. I wish I could get into bed and stay with you. I can't, not yet, not yet. You're warm and sweet and familiar and exciting.

"Life is very long"
Eliot.

Sunday May 8 1955

She stayed - almost by mistake. We fucked twice, deeply, refreshing it was. She rang up tonight to say the curse had come early, and to say 'I love you'.

Monday May 9 1955

In a fit of hurt vanity, so think I had better not write.

Tuesday May 10 1955

Took up my story again this afternoon, and made better progress with it. Oh the pleasure that the tiniest and most obvious triumph gives one, like 'When her husband was alive' to reveal that he's dead! Hope it's not going to be awful.

Wednesday May 11 1955

Lunch with Bobby C. and a walk in brilliant sunshine back to his office in Eaton Square. He is pleasant. Richard Brain dropped a whole wall with him.

Got on a bit with my story in the afternoon. An immense reluctance to begin and get down and through to it. It may be all right. She said to me tonight that she waited for me arriving at the d-room with complete confidence she'd never felt about any other man. That is a terrific! compliment to come up to.

Friday May 13 1955

Not getting on very well with 'The Curtains', but thought of a few corrections for the short 'Punch' thing, after D. said she found it quite gay.

Martita was in front tonight, but alas! didn't come round. Oh we had a good night last night. I love fucking. We must do it more. Mary's got a job.

Saturday May 14 1955

3.30 a.m.

To supper and drinks with Julian, the two of us. She very gay and him really, discussing the new show, and Ella and Jane being the ingénues with Ella the open clear one, Jane turning out nice after all. She slightly distressed, came back here to tell me, that she kissed J. when I was out of the room. It's all right. I know you love me. But you loved him before in a way you can never love someone who gives love in return. Oh that sounds unkind. She said, on the way to the taxi 'You love him, too', which of course I do, tho' why I should react to it as if she's said I was queer I don't know.

The important thing is her love for me, that she accepts me as her lover. That's why I could leave her with Julian, because what is between her and me is solid.

Sunday May 15 1955

She's in Birmingham in bed, asleep I hope. You are a long way away, my darling, and today has seemed empty. Silly because I never see you on a Sunday.

Julian said firmly last night that if I was to go on with the stage, I must audition for 'Zuleika', Peter Tranchell's affair, in which I would be frightfully good. He is ringing Bob Fenn up about it in the morning. Don't know what to think about it itself, should I get the job. I have saved nothing; how can I take a risk for a show I don't believe in? I think I know what to think about J's motives. First kindness of heart, allied to a guilt about me because of boring me with Michael, and not having me on the record or in the next show, general guilt about his general promises about my career. That's all right. Is it unkind of me to suspect also an unconscious motive to get me out of S.D. so that he may, now MM is apparently left behind, once more be first with D. and settle down to writing the new show? I can't quite believe in the urgency and enthusiasm otherwise than this; he doesn't believe in 'Zuleika' either. His behaviour on Saturday night also makes me believe this may be his real motive, unbeknown to him.

How could I leave 'Salad Days' now, leave her behind now? I suppose if I cared for my career at all I would have tried long before. It's no good pretending - I don't in the least want to leave.

Of course she does still love him. She would never have bothered to come back here to explain unless she had been. I didn't leave her with him from weakness. I thought it might be right to allow her to encourage him to kiss her, if that's what she wanted. It is hard to see him, as he was at lunch today, getting back into the comfortable feeling that she loves him the better, but doesn't bore him any more with the bits of it that don't interest him. But she said she loved me, not him, and she doesn't lie. Darling, my darling, Tuesday night.

Monday May 16 1955

2.30

Must record that last Saturday I went to see 'Henry IV Part I' at the Vic. Although the company is no more adequate than before, this time their best has been brought out by an excellent production. Indeed all that one carries away from the theatre is the conviction that the play is wonderful, and Douglas Seale the only man fit to be trusted with a Vic season. John Neville's Hotspur, lively, witty and virile, is the only piece of acting to engage my attention, and even that is not particularly original - perhaps all the better it is not.

Last night to see 'The Prisoner' - the film version. Intelligent and subtle up to a point, but alas only to the point of making it a pretentious melodrama. Alec Guinness is miscast in this sort of part. He has no weight as a serious actor. Jack Hawkins pretty good.

12.45 a.m.

The poor girl was worn out by the weekend. No sleep last night, and shopping all today. She bought her mother a dress with a matching 'coatee', just what M. wants, and her sister a beautiful shirt, whose price she had to conceal. Her mother sounds in so many ways exactly

like M., circumscribed and cramped into just the same strange shapes of unreason and prejudice. But much sweeter. I do think Molly sounds nice.

Wednesday May 18 1955

She came back here last night again. Oh it's so terrible her having to get up and go miles home to Clapham. I ought to get up and go with her to the taxi. She always says, 'No', but I am sure it makes just that little bit easier.

She was tired again tonight, with a splitting headache. She must not write every day. She isn't a Trollope.

Yesterday to St. Joan. Poorly attended. Siobhan McKenna much overrated unless her performance has deteriorated. Good, particularly in the first scene, but otherwise monotonous and sentimental. Rest of the company pretty awful, and production Fernald at his worst. Casting so bad.

This afternoon to the Watergate for a dress rehearsal of their new revue, 'Happy Returns', Peter Myers' assembly of good old numbers. That 'Intimacy at 8.30' lot have no real taste, and are so on the defensive. Thelma Ruby and Jimmy Thompson both excellent.

Thursday May 19 1955

1.10 a.m.

Rather drunk, can't think why. She made advances to me between the shows. We got excited. Isn't it marvellous that we still do? She asked me to help with some dull people tomorrow night.

Bobby C. and Ben D. came round for a drink tonight. They are nice. And so quick and intelligent and right. I hope she liked them. She seemed to, very much.

Monday May 23 1955

Forgot to say that on Thursday, my toupee at last arrived. Although the parting is not quite right, it really doesn't look at all bad; even the parting might prove worth keeping. It makes me look like a 'twenties film villain. I might bring it back into fashion - rather a snip.

Friday fiddled about, read, went to the library, tried to settle down to my story, only managed an hour, and didn't do anything good at that. On Saturday went to 'Red River' and thought it handsome. D. came here on Saturday night. We sat facing each other on the bed with nothing on and legs entwined, titillating each other for a long time. In the middle she made me get up to listen to some people talking on the landing in case it was a good row.

Yesterday a very pleasant lunch with Colin and Mary; the baby coming has made a great difference to them. Instead of spending their time dramatising their picture of themselves as the happiest young married couple they know, they have to be it, without time to think about it. In the afternoon to 'Animal Crackers', at Hampstead, very slick and funny. Later to the NFT for Buster Keaton in 'Sherlock Junior'. I like it; he has great charm, very smooth and

subtle. I liked it. A lot of newsreels of Chaplin and the Fairbanks. A bit of their 'Shrew', awful, and 'The Cure', which made me laugh much more than the Marx Bros.

Today we went shopping. It was sunny and warm and I was tired of all my old broken clothes, so I dressed up and wore my bowler, and we enjoyed ourselves. She bought a black silk coat, a very pretty black blouse with a very deep very frilly collar, a black nylon skirt which literally stood up by itself in the dressing-room, some pyjamas for Julian's birthday, and a thermos-flask for Mary. She looks lovely in it. Jean Watts arrived, shy, gentle very nice.

Tuesday May 24 1955

Lunch with Peter Lewis, must get him along to the pub one night. Wandered about a bit in the afternoon, and then capitulated by going to see a film - 'Brigadoon'. Pretty awful. Why do I do it? I had my story all under one arm ready to be done, and felt it nagging at me all through the film.

John Neville in the pub tonight, genuine, funny, obscene.

Wednesday May 25 1955

Lunch with Bobby C. Always a pleasure. We have not yet got beyond the point of having so many opinions and ideas about the theatre to exchange that we do not want to talk about anything else. This is only to say that the theatre matters a great deal to us, that we both think it worth spending a great deal of energy on, all of which bodes well for the expansion of our conversation in the future. I suppose English people nearly always build up their relationships from the outside in. He asked me to the Night of 100 Stars next month. Isn't that splendid?

Julian and D. off to the 'Caprice' tonight. She looked very beautiful in all her new clothes. I wish I had been going, too, because I should probably have enjoyed it much more than either of them. Perhaps it is as well really. How odious a life of luxury and fame might make me, goodness only knows; I don't at any rate. She said the other night, by the way, that I was still affected by Julian's being in the room. To a very large extent his effect on our relations is only the effect of any third person coming into the room. Add to this, that an accusation of being more affected by him than by another, has enough weight to make me so the next time he comes in, and you have a truer view of the situation. Nevertheless there is a residue of actual literal truth in the charge, which remains unaccounted for. I must admit that I am inhibited up to a certain point from displays of physical affection, knowing as I do, how any such display even on his own part, sets in motion an almost reflex satirical defence. His instinct is to laugh at lust! I must admit again that I tend to sit back and allow his and D's talk to take the lines it had before I was ever sitting there to listen to it. Her relationship with me has nothing to do with either of ours with him, therefore they cannot be expected to fit very well. This is particularly so, when we have advanced to a point of which Julian knows little or nothing, whereas she and I know exactly to what point we have progressed with him.

I wouldn't have thought by the way that she remained unaffected by him either.

Thursday May 26 1955

Election Day. As I was lying in bed this morning at 11.0, I heard Joyce Grenfell's amplified voice in the street, inviting me to vote for Commander Noble.

Was a little late for the half, found D. very tired. She didn't sleep till five. She didn't enjoy the Caprice, too noisy. Mrs. Day of Francis Day, and Hunter, apparently said, expecting approval, 'I asked my char what she was voting, and when she said "Labour", I sacked her on the spot.' She (D) didn't come back tonight because of being tired.

In the pub tonight we were talking about our material difficulties. Heaven knows they are slight enough, but it would be lovely to see more of her. As she said though, she's never stand me all the time, - nor I her, I suppose, if it comes to that. Julian being very emphatic about our living together, very slightly overdoing his back to normal line. He walked me back in torrents of rain.

Friday May 27 1955

The Conservatives are in - with an increased majority.

A long solid rehearsal this morning, mostly for Jean Watts, but valuable for all of us. She is excellent, completely unfussable, just getting on with it. Afterwards Judy and I went to see 'Horse Feathers' at Hampstead. Not quite as good as 'Animal Crackers', but still very good, though I must admit they don't make me laugh out loud much. I find their sense of paradox so determined and obvious sometimes as to be irritating, needing a few minutes to get me back into a charmed mood again. With it a touchingly bad little film about the Stratford Ontario Shakespeare Festival. It made me cry to think of that boring little place, and those apparently crude dull little men wanting it so that they fought for it for three years, and to fight for the best to start off with.

Saturday May 28 1955

Sunday May 29 1955

A lot of shopping in the morning. Bought Julian a blue pottery tankard for his birthday. He seemed to like it all right. Poor Julian. This is a disturbed time for him. He went off with Newty to the Buckstone, turning back most particularly to say 'Good night' to us both. We knew very well he was only going because he wanted to go on drinking somewhere, and not be alone.

We spent a very pleasant hour or two talking. She read my story, such as it was, long before it was ready for her. She thought it had possibilities, except that there was much too much in it, enough for half a dozen stories of that length. I never realised till I tried to write it that it is the choice of the point at which the story is begun, which makes or mars it. 'The Curtains' ought to be only about the curtains and nothing else. I've attempted what amounts to a full-length study in the space of a short short story. She did give me a lift by liking it enough to talk about it for a bit. she gave me an idea for a Punch story on Saturday night; an umbrella from which its master suffers in all sorts of ways, ultimately lending it somebody, hoping not to get it back, furious when he doesn't. She cried when she left me. She is touching.

She rang up this afternoon, seemed all right, though I don't really know how well she slept. I can't be reconciled to upsetting her like that. I wish we could find some way of being more together without living together. She is coming to stay here for a week when her mother visits London. That will be lovely.

Went to 'Way Down East'. Lillian Gish is certainly remarkable. Film has great narrative gifts. Barthelmess also good.

Monday May 30 1955

A bright hot sunny day, the best we have had this year so far. In the afternoon I walked in the park. In the big open space among the trees by Park Lane, there were sheep-dog trials being held. The people watching them looked fairly happy, but oh the dreariness of most of the others, hot, sticky, irritable. Perhaps they enjoyed themselves - the children do, anyway. She wasn't very well, felt queasy a bit, and didn't sleep properly last night. I hope she's all right. She suggested tonight we could come back here between the shows on Thursday. Very occasionally she teases me about not being enthusiastic enough, or masterful enough. The truth is, I leave most suggestions, apart from our usual ones, to her because I am frightened of suggesting something too tiring for her. I thought between the shows was inviolate.

Tuesday May 31 1955

Rang her up to tell her about 'Duck Soup', but was not too pleased by the way she sounded as if she felt. She wasn't really well at the theatre, I thought, and it was an effort for her to respond as they expect, to Michael W. and John M. Back here they seemed to me suddenly watching them eat, so far away, so tiny and ridiculously unimportant in comparison with their own sense of their importance coming out of their mouths.

Wednesday June 1 1955

Understudy rehearsal this morning. I didn't have very much to do.

After lunch Julian and I went and sat in the park. He began to give me a little talk on not having any ambition, trying, as he said, to remind me that there was another side to the question of what my abilities and career are, or are to be. He meant, another side from D.'s judgement of them. He said among other things that one's own opinion of oneself could not be abandoned because of the judgement of only one other person. He could not believe that he himself could be wrong about me, or not so wrong as all that, and, I can see, cannot believe in her seriousness.

She's serious all right, except that she seems not to realize at all how she has removed all my pleasure in performing. If I ever broach the subject, she tells me not to worry, and that I don't really care about it, not really, do I? To which I say no. When Julian asks me if I really care about it, I say yes. She tells me that I can be nothing but impossible until I change my voice, which I can only do by going into a rep. A little later she decided that she 'cannot see' doing that at all ever, and yet does not tell me to leave the stage. Oh I do wish she hadn't said

anything. No, I suppose I don't, but every now and then, I feel a revulsion from this everlasting weighing up and finding wanting. Why was she so dogmatic and final about what was wrong, and so vague and uncertain about how to put it right? Surely a bit of responsibility rests with her?

It's not all that, of course. It's just becoming reconciled to the fact that I'm ordinary, with nothing extra at all, except mistakes needing hard work to put them right.

Thursday June 2 1955
2.0 a.m.

She came back here suddenly, on an impulse tonight. I am glad she did. We had played and toyed between the shows, and she might have slept badly. On our way here we talked about Mary. I was glad to find

(How strange - a loud noise outside, like a flight of 'planes some indeterminate distance away, which suddenly began and as suddenly stopped)

To find that she feels something of the same irritation and sense of falling short with Mary that I feel. She feels it at once more and less, of course, more because she knows her more, and can measure and be made to know her own failings more, less because she is herself so much 'further on' than I.

We made love - for the first time oddly enough with a Fr. I couldn't come for a bit, but it was all right.

For some reason I showed her that old Ken T. notice (because she asked what those books with the red backs were) which led her to say, though with no reference to my acting, that Julian did not value me enough as a person. I suppose I know what she means.

Why could I not have met her when we were both twenty-five?

Friday June 3 1955

I spent two and a half hours sitting staring at a blank page this afternoon. After cutting the story to the bone to exclude all the strands I shouldn't have brought in to start with, and leaving it still a coherent piece, I could not think how to rewrite it satisfactorily. She said 'Start with Mrs. P's attitude to the curtain drawing.' That's all very well.

Saturday June 4 1955
Sunday June 5 1955

In the morning I at last bought the tickets for that midnight thing Bobby C. and I are going to. They cost three guineas each and are huge, twice the size of this diary.

Saw 'The Southerner' at the NFT in the afternoon. I had forgotten that it was a bit sentimental and that the old granny was rather bad, but I enjoyed it very much.

She came back with me and gave me two good 'talking-to's. I had lost my temper during the evening, which accounted for one of the lectures. The other was about my voice again. She wondered why I had done nothing about it all this year, when I might have preparing perhaps to try to qualify for a small part in the next show. I truly hadn't realised how much it was my voice only that needed correction. I felt from her previous criticism that I ought seriously to consider giving up any idea of the stage. Which I did. For the first time she has made the criticisms in such a way that I feel there is a measurable problem ahead. This afternoon I read to myself to try to find out first of all what it is about my voice which she finds so unpleasant. I tried various tests out, speaking a whole speech on my lowest note and so on, but of course it's difficult when there's no one to say, 'That's awful'.

Monday June 6 1955

Spent the afternoon writing the umbrella thing, and got a couple of pages done. Only thing is that it doesn't seem very funny.

Her curse still not come. I had dreams all day of bouncing in and reciting to her at once, but the moment never came. She will help me though - she said she would.

Tuesday June 7 1955

1.30 a.m.

Sudden little whirl of events.

She came back with me on an impulse again. How lovely it is, but how much lovelier if we had longer together in a bigger room. I worry so about her not sleeping if she stays, which she almost never will do. Of course Mary goes tomorrow. She must be there for that.

Bill Linnit discussed an American production with them, I got an audition letter about Zuleika and about drink at XX XX.

Wednesday June 8 1955

Oliviers' 'Macbeth' notices bad, and depressing even when they're not so bad.

Understudy call in the morning. I am just beginning to feel really rehearsed - only to be expected, as I suppose we have now completed about three weeks rehearsal.

In the afternoon to 'Wild Thyme' alone at Streatham. Couldn't see it at a worse place. Very small house, but enough to give them the impression of there actually being an audience. Show still chancy, and a trying clash between various styles in acting production and writing. But I was not bored for a moment, (except when Ronald Ward was on stage, because he scarcely knew his part). Music is nearly all delightful though some of the numbers need shortening and tidying up. Story and characters are also good in conception, but his style and ear betray him time and again.

As for the cast, the two 'stars' are the worst drawbacks. Betty Paul is as hard as flint, as cold as dry ice, and as boring as a drill.

Ronald Ward is a mess. Jane W. is a delight when she gets an opportunity to be in the last act in 'Kiss Me Again Like that'. Denis Quilley, the hero, is every bit as good as I thought he would be and better, lovely easy performance, a singing voice which is entirely unforced and yet with plenty of power, a good healthy bright gay personality, warm, ease is the word with no affectation and plenty in reserve. There is a good double by Gwen Nelson, particularly as the inn-keeper's wife in the third Act. She is a delight in the 'Beetle & Butterfly' song with Archie Harradine. The Hikers are funny, particularly Stella Chapman. The sets are wrong, except the last. I wonder whether it will get better. I hope it has a chance.

Thursday June 9 1955

Julian was gloomy last night at Lyons' where D. took us out to supper, and gloomy tonight in the pub. He said would I share his taxi in price alas as in fact! I did, because I could see he was upset about something. We walked her to the tube. Her curse has come, but she isn't better - much. It's come slowly. She has been so down today, really. How she feels about Mary. I was quite right about him (Julian) being upset, because no sooner had we got into the Mall in the taxi than he started to cry. He's in a generally low state, partly genuine tiredness, partly reaction of various kinds. One kind is away from Michael and all his works, resulting in remorse for the whole of the last year. This produces a strong impetus to being as normal as possible, which means having an affair with Jane. His initial outburst was incoherent but produced mutterings about wanting to go back to a rep., and this life being all wrong for him and so on. By this life he means living at home, it seems to me. I was very depressed by the way he dried his still wet tears, and went in to his mother's bedroom to make bright conversation, finally leading up ever so gradually to the fact that I was waiting in the dark hall.

We sat down to continue talking in the kitchen, over his huge heavy supper, all of which he ate without any of his usual fuss, because his mother would be upset if he left any, I suppose. We went on talking about his troubles; he admitted that he felt he had been very spoilt at Bristol by the concentrated adoration (my phrase, needless to say) of D., Denis, Jane and Liz, (and if he'd been in the mood to mention it, J.H.S. and James as well). Spoilt because, although he knew 'that there are a very few who are deeply deeply fond of him always', he does miss the sort of affection which shows itself in small ways as well as big. That I took to mean that D. and I haven't quite so much time for him as we once had. I do wish he hadn't this silly liking for admiration which makes him value the silliest fan letter from queer young men, because it gives him a kick to be thought attractive by someone he thinks attractive.

It all came finally, as I knew it must, to the actual practical point of his admitting that he wanted to have an affair with Jane, and though he never managed to say so, he wanted some practical help. I tried in every way to allay his fears of him 'doing something she wouldn't like', or of not being able to do it at all. He actually said he would try. I said nothing, but looked hopeful. I suppose I was right to encourage him - about Jane, I mean. I imagine she can look after herself. It was no use either jollyng him along or scorning out of the fears that every ordinary eighteen year old gets out of by being forced by his glands to take a poke at a girl. That would only have antagonised him, I should think. But what a fool he is about it all - to be so fearful. No, I suppose not.

Friday June 10 1955

An empty day. Tried this afternoon for about an hour on the umbrella thing, and found that I was thinking of her suggestion about it being in the third person, and not about going on writing it in the first.

Julian has got a car for Sunday, so we're off. Won't it be lovely coming back to her on Sunday night?

Saturday June 11 1955

She was upset by Henry coming to the pub. She wanted to talk to him alone, and Newt would have gone with her and made it a jolly evening instead. She wanted to talk to him about Mary. No, I won't write more on that. I don't know enough about her (Mary), even to speculate.

I'm so nervous about tomorrow. I hope J. hasn't felt obliged to sing with me, because I was there when Jimmy asked us.

Tuesday June 14 1955

Last night and the night before spent at Clapham. We slept long together, especially this morning. I draw such strength from her. That isn't as it should be perhaps, but she does find my being there a help, I know, so that's all right really. No, I won't write now, because of getting up tomorrow and that audition. She did give me a wise note, don't forget to write about that, too.

Wednesday June 15 1955

12.30 a.m.

To start at the beginning, Cambridge went off very well. We drove down in the hired car. Bob Haber drove us down, with Mrs. Haber in the back. Bob Haber is an American, more I cannot tell yet. He has, with his mother, a devastating act of comic rudery. The lunch was hilarious. In the Audit Room with its boring portraits and big frenchy windows giving onto the Provost's garden. We had been to have a drink with Donald B. as jovial and sweet as ever. He hasn't that soft core which is so unsympathetic in Dadie and all the other old maids of King's. Among them might be numbered Arthur Marshall, a short plump prissy man, looking and behaving not so unlike one of his school-mistress sketches as he probably supposes. Nevertheless his great charm and cheerfulness would redeem far worse failings than his. Quite another matter is Basil Bartlett. A once-handsome young man, with a tired mechanical charm, he seemed to me to have exactly that quality which disgusted me in Lionel Gamlin - a man who has grown old without ever growing up. It even seems to show on their faces, the childishness showing through puffy lines and sagging cheeks. B.B.'s wife, Mary Malcolm, was also there a brittle pretty woman. Nasty shoes. At the lunch she was sitting between her husband and Michael Redgrave. Julian was on her husband's other side. Opposite were a lot of the old queens, including M.R.'s boy-friend (or so I was told) Bob

Michelle? Suddenly Lady B. leant behind her husband and said, 'Isn't it a scream listening to all these old queens? They're all telling Michael (R.) that he hasn't changed a bit in the last twenty years. Well, I knew Michael R. twenty years ago, and he doesn't look a bit like he did then. He looks old and bloated and debauched.' Julian was slightly taken aback.

The lunch was delicious, but we were too nervous to eat it. I only had three strawberries; very irritating when you consider they were the first I'd had this year. We left rather early to settle the mums and make up a bit and have enough time to walk nervously up and down. We were first on the bill, and, as I seemed to be the only one with any makeup, everybody used mine. David King and Toby Robertson had driven down from Stratford, and were convulsively preparing for the quarrel scene from 'Julius Caesar' which they had learnt in the car. Tony Church and Dudy Nimmo, were muttering a 'bit' from 'Antigone'

We went on and were quite good, I think. They seemed to like us, and we were satisfied. On our way back to take off our make-up, we passed Redgrave pacing in and out of the star dressing-room, looking almost as nervous as we had felt, and calling out hearty red-faced 'Good lucks' to anyone who passed the door.

The rest of the show we saw from a box. Arthur Marshall was very funny, Lionel Gamlin dull and embarrassing. Michael Redgrave read Hans Andersen's

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 31

Angus Mackay

Being the twenty-seventh

From September 10 1955

To April 4 1956

Volume 26

From June 15

To the middle of August

Lost.

Saturday September 10 1955

To 'Julius Caesar' at the Old Vic. John Neville extremely good. Subtle strong, graceful, melodious. The production Michael Benthall's usual poor stuff. No single performance can stand beside J.N. in sheer familiarity with Shakespearean idiom and verse. Paul Rogers gabbles disgracefully. Richard Wordsworth has the right idea, but is harsh and monotonous. Wendy Hiller is, I am sorry to write, - sorry because I believe her to be sincere - very nearly absurd as Portia particularly in the scene with Lucius. Gerald Cross is as good as he could be as Caesar, but cannot help suggesting the ageing Tiberius rather than Julius, so womanish and limp is his aspect. There are some fine pictorial moments, but how can one approve them when they are at the expense of instead of the by product of, the beauty of the play.

Sunday September 11 1955

A quiet day alone in my room.

It is a pity that I lost my diary at a moment when I was writing badly in it. It has been a greater effort to begin it again, and I have missed recording one or two things - The Anniversary party, our holiday - which I should and would have written about with pleasure.

The holiday I enjoyed very much - more than I had thought I might. I am still becoming used to her honesty. I can still find myself 'talking to stop her thinking I'm boring her', and, in a messy way, I had had an idea that she did not know what she was doing asking me to come to her perhaps to disturb her precious rest, and certainly exposing hers and worse Mary's cherished holiday place. As nearly always, she 'knew me better than I know myself', and there was nothing but the enjoying of the great circle of the curved bare fields and the sky. We walked the first evening and she lost the way. I led through thick bracken and tussocky grass down the steep side of the cliff. The brambles were thick, nobody had walked there, and when we came out onto the path, her bare legs were criss-crossed with fine bleeding scratches, whose scabs are only now vanishing. It was, absurdly, a good start.

Monday September 12 1955

This afternoon met D. at the Roxy, Westbourne Grove to see 'My Man Godfrey'. W.C.7. is a long shabby street, once the middle-class Bond Street. 'My Man Godfrey' is a famous 'thirties talkie' comedy, and although it now seems slow, and sentimental, it is still a splendid example of its kind. Carole Lombard is miscast, I think, but Alice Brady is very funny still. C.L. is attractive enough, but is not allowed to stop fluttering. The way they talk - half-an-hour over something which would be concentrated into one shot nowadays.

I am always excited to go out with D.

I wish that I did not get involved in these absurd roundabout conversations with her. She says something vaguely critical. I deny it, then remembering that that must mean it's probably true, admit it. Then deny it again, when I realize what I have admitted to.

Tuesday September 13 1955

Today we went off to Rotherfield in Sussex, to look at a cottage whose owner, an actor called Denis Thorne, had thought might do for Dorothy. It itself was quite possible. The village was pretty and not too bad, - but the tentacles of suburbia are clutching, and at every turn of the roads around are smart gravel drives and bright new real houses, many of them built since the war with more to follow. The largest pub, the King's Arms, once old and attractive and real, has been carefully be-chintzed and be-refectory-tabled, with a saloon bar which doesn't sell beer. We had lunch there, served by a nice fair dowdy girl, soft and a bit down-trodden, I should think. We went up a little 'lane' bordered by houses and bungalows, obviously thought by their owners to be daringly primitive and rural. We found a real field eventually and lay down very comfortably in the sun, blazing down as it has all the summer. I went to sleep, suddenly sat up to see thick grey clouds gathering. D. put on her stockings again, we hurried to the shelter of the station; hardly had we got there, but the heaviest rain-storm I have ever seen began, the temperature dropped, and after a little it was impossible to believe that anyone could ever have lain in a field ever, so wet and dull and cold and lonely was it.

Wednesday September 14 1955

To Victoria again, and down to Wallington. All arranged, (very much so) now. Mummy so absorbed in welcome meetings and 'grand' church members that she said 'And then Lady Parks came up to Mr. Mackay - I mean Daddy of course.'

I brought a great deal back with me, and feel comfortable with it all around me now. D. tired after a depressing day, including dentist, dressmaker and tea with Yvonne. She gave me the cheque for my suit. I ~~will~~ ought pay her back one day. We went out to supper at Lyon's

Lalla suggested while I was down there that I ask D. down 'while Mummy and Daddy are away at Torquay'. That would be lovely. Strange after D. had suggested that she and I and Lalla live together! Fun, of course.

Friday September 16 1955

Last night Henry R. came to the pub, and had the bad luck to ask D. and I back for a drink before he had secured Michael as well. M.M. sheered off, having been antagonised so D. tells me, by a remark of mine about Rupert Brooke (can he really be so silly?) and Henry was saddled with us. The evening went off delightfully, for me, even though I left a case full of books in the taxi. Henry played us heaps of records on his 'transatlantic' gramophone, including some of 'Emily Butten'. It is too good.

I went back with D. afterwards, and I have just rung her up. We spent a long time in bed together in the morning. I couldn't come the night before, drunk, and a bit now.

Saturday September 17 1955

D. tells me that Denis behaved more than like himself in the pub last night. Julian introduced him to Mr. and Mrs. Hedley, his Eton house-master and wife. Mrs. H., a woman with little intelligence but well-poised, said smoothly, 'Oh, how we enjoyed your show tonight'. 'Why?' said Denis sharply. 'Oh' she said, very much surprised. 'Well - er, it - er - well, it was like magic.' 'How do you mean?' rapped Denis. Poor woman, probably it was the first time that anyone had ever challenged her to explain one of the social counters which she had offered for so long in the confidence that it would be properly countered with another of the same value. Later Julian apologised for Denis' abruptness. 'Oh dear!' she said, 'I wish he'd given me more time'.

Denis might be summed up might simply live, in this exchange with Julian. Julian said, 'I always find that D.'s scenes are so much easier to play than mine. One just walks into them.' 'Oh I shouldn't worry about your contribution to the show, Julian.' 'I don't exactly worry about it.' 'Well, you should.'

2.45 a.m.

John and Michael came back with us - here -, and we talked drearily for a little. After they had gone, she talked for a little of borrowing and lending - she said, in fun - but she must have been feeling how remiss I've been all the same or the fun would never have entered her head. She went on to say that I ought to try to get some wireless work, and/or try to write some pieces for the wireless, either a Wednesday afternoon play or a short story for the 'Mid-morning Story'. Try as I would, and I try very hard in those ways, I could not help looking and feeling weary at the thought. My spirits were not improved by her saying how much easier it was now that everyone wanted to get on to 'commercial TV'.

I hope that my weariness - depression is not just the result of laziness. That would be unbearable. It is partly the result of having made my mind up to something else. She said that I must not give it up almost before I'd begun, that I must carry it through. That's the truth of it - I've never been able to do that. Now at last I am having to accept that my natural talents! are not enough. Hard work is the thing, but it doesn't seem to me likely that I shall be able to do it.

Sunday September 18 1955

A quiet day alone, or would-be alone. Lunch - a short one - with Colin and Mary. Their new house is very pretty, small but excellently planned, and done out with conventional, 'chee-chee', but attractive taste. The baby is expected next Sunday. They hurried me out the moment I said I would go, about five minutes after coffee, an offer I had made because I thought they were a little restless. I wonder if the baby had started? - it was only 2.30. On the way home I turned into Earl's Court Square, with London stucco terraces round three sides, and a lower two-storied red brick terrace on the side furthest from the tube-station. This is where D.'s new flat is. I looked at it for a bit. Then I came home - walked it took me twenty-five minutes - and decided to settle down to think about writing. Turned to on the umbrella, but hadn't done much when it was time to eat, and then John Merriman turned up. He sat and talked for ages, ultimately asking me to Harold's. I wanted to get some pennies so I went for half an hour. Met there a dull young Ulsterman, Lexy Campbell, who talked like a disciple about a friend of his named Desmond Boal, who hates women, always has six of seven on a string, and who was discovered, at four o'clock in the morning in the most respectable residential quarter of Belfast, stark naked except for a bowler hat and umbrella, pelting with stones a lady's naked arse, which he had ordered her to poke out of an upper window.

I telephoned D. Mary answered, Newty was there. They had found him in a pub! the old fraud. After being off three days. We had a 'nice' talk in which she suggested we write the 'umbrella' together as a play.

Monday September 19 1955

Before I knew it, the day had gone by, and I had done nothing. This inertia, this wilful 'not doing' clings to me more and more, but if I can only give myself the one push, I shall go ahead finely. She is in a slightly distraught mood, and I was not helping by reacting to it in a cringing way, - a sentence she would probably not understand at all.

Bobby C. could not lunch. I was at the theatre early. They will think I am hanging about.

Tuesday September 20 1955

I have written that date quite a number of times today. I wrote to five or six B.B.C. producers. It cost me a lot of writing-paper and many hot flushes inside. Foolish.

Lunch with Peter L. was, like yesterday's, something of a failure - Peter could only come for half an hour because he had a 'client'. We had a restful little talk, during which he told me, with a more animated air than I have ever seen breath, that he was getting £750 for a job worth £2000. It isn't the money with him, of course. He feels as I did over that soldier in Burma with the mad wife.

D's new dress came today. The material, which Julian gave her for the anniversary, is one-sided. If someone smeared a piece of cloth with a very sooty wet hand, leaving egg-shaped holes which were then blocked in with vivid lumps of colour, he would arrive at this material.

Wednesday September 21 1955

Drunk a bit tonight, so took D.'s ticket (tube) home with me again. Have told her that I'd do all the move. It's no use her feeling all upset and 'crisis' about it. Either do something or don't go on about it. Hopeless to do both. Though like me in parallel situation she doesn't realise she is.

Sunday October 2 1955

Wallington.

Since last Thursday week, I have had no time, and no strength (almost) to lift a pen. She was so weighed down on that Wednesday evening by the slowness of solicitors and agents, that I said firmly that she must think no more about it, and that I would do it all. As it had turned out, it was essential to get the keys of the flat on that morning, the only time D. had to look at the flat before the Tuesday, by then the latest date on which she could move in. The sudden pressure had been brought about by Mary at last having a little luck, and the chance of a part in the new Betti play at the Haymarket 'The Queen and the Rebels'. She was coming back on Monday night, and as Dorothy didn't want her to be troubled with the move at all if it could be helped, Tuesday became the only day. With all this in my mind, I rang up the agents early on Thursday morning. A fairly jovial voice answered, with no knowledge whatever of the whole transaction. Such was its ignorance that it agreed that I might come and pick up the keys there and then. When I arrived at the office, alas, there was no sound of the jovial voice, but only the dry unyielding, ineffectual ginger man who first grudgingly showed us the flat. He greeted me with a careful politeness, hunted for ten minutes through several large files, and finally said calmly, 'The man who deals with this case is on holiday, and I can't find any of the relevant correspondence'. I had already given him a little talk in my best 'cool' voice, 'Miss Reynolds is a very busy woman, and it would be as much as my job's worth to keep her waiting. Our solicitors tell me that they are willing and able to complete, and that there is no reason why the keys should not be handed over at once'. The nasty one said that it wasn't quite as easy as that, and called in the jovial voice, which turned out to belong to one of the partners. He was still sanguinely casual, and said, 'Oh give him the keys. You'll bring them back in an hour or two, won't you?' 'Excuse me, sir', said the nasty one, 'You do realize that there is a lot of valuable furniture in the flat?' I interrupted at this piece of 'gratuitous' impertinence, to say, I hope, coldly, 'And you do realize that Miss Reynolds has already given you her cheque for £750 on no other security than your inventory?' This served to increase the nasty one's nastiness, but gave the jovial voice more of an idea that I was serious. He suggested ringing up their solicitors whose number the nasty one had previously purported to have been unable to remember or find. The nasty one repeated this lie. Both their telephones then rang, the nasty one also having to deal with a woman making an enquiry about a flat and its heating arrangements. By this time it was getting close to the time we had arranged to meet at the flat, and when they returned to the struggle, I made another frigid speech about the concentrated dove-tailing of Miss R's timetable and the huge business issues at its mercy, combined with a few words on the poor opinion I held of estate agents in general and Farnham and Coigley in particular. This got me the keys. At the flat we moved the bed to the other room. Such is my feeling for the fitness of things that it quite troubled me to move a bed and chest of drawers from a room which they perfectly fitted to a room for which they are too big, particularly as the furniture to replace them is small and shabby. The reason is that Mary must have the better room, and will want her own bed. All right, and goodness

it's their flat, but it gives me the same feeling as being made to paint Gerard's bookcase badly. It's also because of a certain jealousy of Mary. Not of their friendship as such, I don't think, but of their living-togetherness. That is to say I would feel it much the same if their friendship was the more usually casual affair of girls living together. I am not looking forward all that much to going to the flat with Mary Always there. I find myself behaving as if she was an invalid, or mad, so much have I heard of what she has undergone and of the ghastly capacity for suffering it. Even when she isn't in the room, I feel constrained, particularly in the evenings, when the scarifying intensity of her insomnia burdens me with the thought that I might disturb her. This is only a statement of course, and might be modified by D.'s needs. In fact, she is too busy looking after Mary to need looking after herself. Very muddled. Chosen the wrong moment.

Back to Thursday. The nasty one was sitting at his desk when I got back, and accepted the keys with a bleak smile. I found out from 'our' solicitor afterwards that he (our s.) had rung up to say that there was no reason why I should not keep the keys, before I had brought them back.

As the German tour is in full rehearsal, D. had to spend all Friday in the theatre at a run-through. I determined to have a crack at the loft, which had seemed to be weighing on her. It certainly took me the whole day, and then I had hardly finished. The loft is a splendid one, quite a room, with lino on the floor, and not as dirty as all that. I found up there a wardrobe with three cushions and an ironing-board inside, two lovely arm-chairs in perfect condition, covered in pink and white striped silk, with soft cushions, a bedside table, a small Victorian writing-desk, a dirty linen basket with a pair of glazed chintz curtains inside it, a Hoover Dustette, an electric iron, two trays, a quantity of assorted china, and about forty books. Oh and a framed panel of Chinese embroidery, a reproduction of a piece of the Bayeux tapestry, and an oil-painting of an early Victorian grandmother, with a high lace cap and ringlets. There was a great deal of rubbish, piles of old newspapers and magazines, quite fifty carrier bags from Fenwick's, Peter Jones', and Harrods and trays of opened pots of paint, clotted paint-brushes, old rags and crumbling firewood. The dust was very thick and very black, and I was glad to climb into the bath. The Ascot heater needs seeing to; its flames soar out into the room and up the wall behind it.

When I got back to the little cafe, she was sitting among the German company, so that my tale, told at the wrong moment, fell rather flat. Very like me! It was strange, all alone up there in the dusty dark discovering things. I wouldn't have been surprised - much - to find the flat full of Victorian furnishings when I came back down the ladder.

On Sunday the 25th, we went, on Henry's invitation, to see 'The Burnt Flower-Bed' at the Arts. Even through an indifferent performance, Betti's quality came through. It's the first time for ages that I was immediately aware of a 'new voice', not just of new mannerisms. He is an individual right through, and a very sizeable one. His skill in deploying an argument is completely stageworthy, yet the quality of the argument is first-rate. There is great nobility, and an enviable lightness of touch. Henry's translation seemed to me perfect, as far as one can tell about it. Production, in the sense of pace and movement about the stage was more or less passable, but Peter Hall has miscast and misconceived drastically the two main characters, John and Louise. Yvonne Mitchell's is not even a respectable failure. From her elaborate dress to her painfully mannered voice, she shows no signs beyond the most inward, of having understood what part Louisa must play what qualities she must bring. She is not ordinary nor dowdy enough, not odd nor natural enough, sentimental and not pathetic.

Alexander Knox is large and splendidly loud and sizeable in every way but the only vital one. D. who has seen him a good deal before, said it was possible that he is a character actor and simply cannot present himself even or perhaps primarily physically, as he actually is, at any rate not with success or point. He was certainly astray in looks, too American on holiday looking all together. Set terrible, lighting good. Can't wait for 'Q and the Rebels'.

Monday, after a last night at Clapham together, we spent at the flat, cleaning and fixing and moving. The gasman came, so that was one thing all right for Mary's home-coming. That night I slept at the new flat, and got it ready for the furniture to come into it. It was a slow job, sitting waiting. The men were late and Mary arrived long before them, so I had a great thrill showing her round, though she's not much fun at that sort of thing. Never mind, I expect the quiet and size of it will be a help to her, even if she didn't say so. The furniture came soon after, preceded by a slightly distraught Dorothy. It was a very simple affair, and from door to door took only two hours. I ought to have gone at once, looking back, so that they could have relaxed by themselves, but I never thought of it. I'd done everything I thought of doing, except buy some lamps, and I'd spent the money D. gave me for that. I don't know how I can be so casual.

By that evening I was quite tired, so that next day I was quite glad to lunch with Bobby and go a matinee. 'Clerambard' it is plain, has been completely misunderstood by the producer, Murray MacDonald. The result of sentimentalising much of the satire and three of the characters, is to make the play a most unpleasant mixture of cruelty, revialism and bad taste. Clive Brook, for all certain critics' rudeness, has more of the right 'feel' than anyone else. He is rude, unpredictable, energetic and maddening. Valerie Taylor and Helen Hays as his wife and mother train echoes of a hundred drawing-room comedies behind them, and their combined attempt to impose a theatrical conventionality, (as opposed to the actual conventionality right for the characters) on the performance, simply gives the majority of the audience the comfort of a false standpoint to condemn the rest of the play from. We can't accept satire, and this failure makes of 'C' a mawkish sickly mess. The St Joany final curtain is really quite repellent in its misapprehension, and flatulent religiosity.

On Friday, September 30, our salaries were raised - by 15%. This means eleven pounds, fifteen for me, instead of ten. The next day I had lunch with John Holstrom for the first time for a year. He has advanced even further into his private boy-reserve. His rooms are lined with paintings, drawings and photographs of boys, and most horrible of all, in his bedroom by the wardrobe, stands a life size model, such as one sees in outfitters' shops, of a boy of about fourteen. It is a Danish model, which he has dressed in leather shorts, canvas shoes, short socks, tartan shirt and lumber-jacket. Seeing it suddenly gave me a thrill of sickliness such as I haven't felt for ages.

Today at Wallington.

Saturday October 15 1955

Nothing much in the last fortnight, except laziness. D. told me last night before we went out to supper, that she had been dashed by embezzlement. As well she might be. It was partly special moving feelings, but how could I?

I went back with her, and spent a lovely night. Woke this morning with lumbago, I suppose. Bent double, and literally could not walk. Better this evening, but still painful. I walk so comically, like a bad character-actor. I find myself having wild fantasies of frightful illnesses. Getting out of bed this morning I looked at my legs, and thought that in a month perhaps they would have wasted to skin and bone, and - what a good thing we fucked last night. I hope it's nothing boring.

Sunday October 16 1955

So far today, lumbago on the whole better. Yesterday entry written in the theatre. She came back with me here to give me a final rub and drink! She had delightfully brought some whisky with her. How foolishly I behaved, giving in to the vaguest sensual whim, and how funny we much both have looked searching all over the bed and floor for my last FL. She rang up as she had promised, but luckily I was well enough not to bother her. It was too much to ask of her to let me come to supper, tho she gave in gladly. Last night she complained pathetically of housework, and wished herself back in her Bristol digs. I was glad that I could get to Caletta's. This lumbago has given me another reason for moving. I can't expect her to look after me if I'm ill - and I'm certainly not going to Wallington.

Monday October 17 1955

Went at 11.45 to the Osteopathic Clinic in Dorset Square. A cosy portrait of 'H.M. The Queen' (Queen Mary) made the waiting room very friendly. A woman doctor, very good, a little abrupt but most sensible and convincing. Bent me in all directions to find where it hurt most delicately turning my pants down each time she prodded low. Pressed my knees against her twat a lot. She said that it was either a slight displacement somewhere, or one leg was shorter than the other. All she did today was a little massage to help me. Back on Wednesday. Very pleasant and soothing. So far it doesn't seem to be serious.

D. had her hair done. If I were her, how tomorrow would be weighing on me! With her it's just the inconvenience, I think.

Thursday October 20 1955

Wallington. 11.30 p.m.

I have just spoken to her on the telephone. She seems to be only fairly well. Tuesday was an awful day. She refused to tell me when she must be called for at the dentists. I stayed in bed in the morning, my whateveritis being no better, and got to the flat at 2.30. By her bed was Mary's not giving her the details of the operation, and that it would be over by two. I couldn't imagine why she wasn't back. I hobbled backwards and forwards, trying to rest and then fiddling with something else useless, until my back was aching beyond anything! About four thirty a taxi drew up. By the time I had got down the steps, she was out and paying. She had dropped her bag, and was looking very pale. We tottered up the steps together. She said feebly that she felt beastly drunk, and had been sick in the taxi. Until we got upstairs I thought she was all right, but once in the living-room she became quite wobbly and weak and ill. She had a little weep about being sick in the taxi, and kept on saying that they wouldn't

let her come home to me 'like she wanted to'. She had told them to telephone me earlier, in the middle of all that awfulness. I got her some soup and she managed to get down two whole tins. Her teeth are very good indeed, and she was pretty good considering everything. I persuaded her to sleep for a bit, which she did. As she was determined to go on, she had a boiled egg, and off we went to the theatre. She got through marvellously, and has altogether been very brave. Yesterday she felt it more, of course, and today apparently too. I was so annoyed with myself yesterday. My first thoughts are always better. I deal with her so badly, making her feel responsible for my pains, and being careful to remind of 'all' I do for her. I could kick myself for telling her that I only stayed in London yesterday afternoon because she had said she couldn't do without me. Why do I waver back - well I know why. It's because I will not believe she means what she says. And unlike me she always does.

Why have I got to have this absurd complaint at a moment when she needs me so?

She said on the phone 'Stay over the w/e. Shall?'

Friday October 21 1955

She didn't ring up today after all. I expect I gave her the wrong instructions. I hope she's all right.

Back very little better. I got up to have a bath this afternoon, and although I never had any pain after standing and moving around for about half an hour as I have before, I couldn't stand really straight. I simply don't see why the muscles should have collapsed in this way.

Later.

I can't sleep, partly because I am already so rested, partly because of a sense of foreboding. This back thing has come down out of the blue and for these few days at any rate I suppose it would be strange if it did not sometimes occur to me that it might alter my life in some marked way. The real source of disease is simply that I am not exactly ill, but unable to say when I shall be fit or whether I shall get worse. What?

Sunday October 23 1955

Up, about and much better. Drying myself after my bath, I noticed that the small of my back was thickened, like middle age spread. Only temporary, I hope, a swelling like a sprained ankle.

Wednesday October 26 1955

Mary's first night tonight. I hope that all has gone well. D. is in no state for anything else. Her ribs are still hurting, and she is still very low. When I got back here tonight, disgusting letter from M. in my parcel, cringing, sentimental, prurient, bigoted. Oh well, there's really nothing to be done except see that she doesn't hurt herself.

I shall make D. go to the doctor if she doesn't go herself.

Thursday October 27 1955

I cannot seem to get out of bed these days. Yet I am too tired during the day. I need some fresh air, I think.

She is low today. Another little weep between the shows, just after she's asked whether her breath smelt of false teeth. She must not feel sensitive about them. They do nothing but improve her looks, and to think anything else of them is to be guilty of Huxleyitis. As she lay on the divan, and I sat looking at her, desire came upon us unawares. Lovely, but all in bud as she has the rags on. After the show I had to rush away to meet the Calderwoods, (after all these years) at the Berners'. I was glad to find that I had been right about them at fourteen and even more gratified to feel that now I could if I would run circles round them.

Friday October 28 1955

A cool and satisfactory day. I went to the Haymarket after lunch, and got two seats for Wed. right in the middle of the front row of the dress circle. In the morning I attempted, and waded through, fifty more pages of 'The Boat' (L.P. Hartley, 1949) but only as a favour to Yvonne. It is really disgracefully, and even disgustingly bad. There is a cringing niggling adolescence about it most distressing in comparison with 'The Shrimp and the Anemone'. And so much too long, nearly 600 pages. There isn't material in the book for more than an indifferent short story.

In the afternoon to 'It's Always Fair Weather', Gene Kelly's new musical. One or two good ideas and moments and not really boring, but weakly held together.

She was feeling better tonight, and I think, after the weekend she should be more or less all right. She still finds many voices and personalities harder to bear than she generally does. In the pub tonight, too, Michael Aldridge was at his more insecure and jumpy, at his most unsympathetic, desperately telling frenetically funny stories and at once becoming depressed by his own frenzy and insecurity, Newty was being unseeing and long-winded and self-centred. I added my quota of boredom by talking firmly to anyone who showed any disposition to talk boringly to her. Between the lot of us - well. Quite without overtones, I can't think why she can stand me any more than any of the others except that I want her and fuck her. No, that's unkind and ungenerous and foolish. She can stand me because I can stand her, and we're a 'togetherness'. But all the same I'm more boring than she is.

Sunday October 30 1955

Piddled about all day after getting up late until the evening. D. rang up and asked me to bring a bottle of wine. I scrambled off to see Theatre Workshop at the Theatre Royal, Stratford in the East End. It took me almost an hour to get there, so that I was a little late. The theatre is a small Victorian affair, pleasant enough, except that the curtain, of flimsy bronze figured silk, clashes violently with the crimson walls, and doesn't quite reach the floor. However they are poor and are probably lucky to have a curtain at all. The play 'The Good Soldier Schweik' is adapted from Hasek's novel by Ewan MacColl, and is a rambling picaresque affair, simple,

faintly and intermittently facetious, crudely propagandist, and, overall, boring. One good performance from Maxwell Shaw as Schweik, thin, big nosed, cheerful and endearing, he wanders through tediously over-written and underacted scenelets, and was to me the only passable part of the evening. The scenery, a long low white screen, crudely daubed in a rather old-fashioned way with black cartoons representing the various locales of the action, was poorly executed. The acting was student stuff, loud, obvious, jerky, messy and curiously remote. The pace was constant, and on the slow side. The general effect is diffused and therefore diminished playing. There is no tension, no continuity, and no build at all about play or actors. As I say, the acting was in any case of very poor quality, but Miss Littlewood, judged (unfairly, I know) by this alone, deserves few of the compliments lavished on her by the Left-Wing press, or indeed the Right. They are suffering, it strikes me, from inverted snobbery, to D.

Monday October 31 1955

We stayed in bed until about half-past one, fucking again at a quarter to. She is very soft and shrinking just now, very unprotected. A quiet day, topped up by a huge meal at the little cafe and an announcement from Princess Margaret in the evening. James' father rang up to say he had heard it on television. I heard it myself tonight. So she's not going to marry him. How sad if she wanted to, as I suppose she did. What a pity they allowed such publicity.

Tuesday November 1 1955

Rather drunk tonight. It is about time that she stopped reading this, because I never write it now without one eye on her.

What am I going to say to her on Saturday? I haven't thought of anything real. I don't know about myself any more, that's the real trouble. I waver. I can't like me as I am, and I resist the old Actor line. I had a mad idea of writing to Robert Atkins.

Wednesday November 2 1955

Earl's Court Square.

Yesterday to 'Small Hotel' at the St. Martin's. Nice little play, with no harm in it, and might have been written fifty years ago. The author has no idea of his own snobberies, and his own simple delight in his characters comes over. Production slow and flat to a degree. Everyone in a separate retort. Marjorie Fielding nearly very good. Gordon Harker slow, but all right. Little girl, Eleanore Bryan has special things about her, but needs production.

Today to 'The Queen and the Rebels' at the Haymarket. Very moving deeply felt play, splendid first-rate performance from Gwendoline Watford as the real Queen. Great stuff from Irene Worth as Argia. Warm dark-brown richness. Her last act, with its break-through to the realisation of her own and every human being's worth, _shaking. Mary perfectly adequate. D. didn't hear a word of her first speech from nerves, and thought she was inaudible.

Thursday November 3 1955

She slept scarcely at all on Tuesday night, and wanted me so much at about four o'clock that the fear and need had lasted until she saw me. We lay for a bit, until she felt that I wanted her, which I had meant to forego, and then we slept, preciously, together.

How did I live without loving her? How did I fill a day which did not finish with her?

I dashed away at lunchtime to book a room at the Court for her aunt next week. Bought Punch with a slightly more perceptive notice of 'The Queen and R' in than most. At the theatre I'm dressing her at the moment because Fletchy has 'flu. Very restful for both of us. Liz C. turned up from Germany, very tired. No Julian, so D's conference about the Royal Command Variety performance on Monday did not take place. I can't wait to see the German company.

Friday November 4 1955

Before the rehearsal to 'I am a Camera', the film of course. Poor stuff, no atmosphere, nothing in it but Julie Harris, very special and touching, but even she is miscast. Laurence Harvey, who, I see today, has announced his engagement to Margaret Leighton, poor thing, is not good. He has such a horrible personality and such a cruel face.

At the rehearsal had to stand in for Michael M. who was filming. Made a fool of myself getting an entry in the 'Look at Me' wrong again and again. After the third time, said something careless about it to D. to restore my confidence. She changed suddenly from a woman to an actress and snapped at me. I got it wrong again and again, all but once. The whole day was odd. I over-slept and missed breakfast perhaps that was it.

She had a headache tonight, but it got better. The German company is back. We met them before the rehearsal. Ju looks well, and gave D. a pink petticoat and me a stud-box. But I think something has happened in Germany. A XX has come between. Liz said he was fraught and it was more than the R.C.P. that did it. D. says no, but I wonder.

She's asked me to do the flowers and get the drink for Monday night.

Sunday November 6 1955

To Royal Variety Performance rehearsal tonight. Usual display of blare and ego. Our company looked very sweet and real in the middle of 'all that'. No funny hats.

Julian was around quite a bit last night. He had brought me a present, a lovely little leather box. A stud and cuff-links box, I shall use it for. It's got gold squiggles on the top. I have found myself avoiding him, because I suppose, I don't really want to find out how much our friendship has changed. I know it has, and him being away, even for five weeks, has meant that we must find out now because we have forgotten the style for talking to one another. He had, I think, not realised that we were still employing the skeleton, without the flesh, and now we must start all over again.

Friday November 11 1955

Today we had arranged to meet this afternoon to fuck. When she rang up this morning to confirm it, she said she thought that she could manage one quiet fuck and then sleep. To that I answered that perhaps she would prefer to go to the pictures instead. She told me I was getting out of it. I suppose she means that if I really wanted it, I would say, 'No, you must fuck three times if I want to.' Not true. I am so conscious of her fatigue. How can I add to it? She has been miles away all night. I lay in bed this morning, thinking of getting the room ready, clearing up, scenting the pillow, putting a clean towel out, a cup of tea, perhaps. As it was, what would have been a free day was full, for her, I mean. I'm all muddled as usual. But I still want her, and she doesn't seem to want me, not much anyway.

Read last two pages over, and they're silly. I wanted her very much today, and said no because I thought she was too tired. That I thought, and after considering, think, to be my real motive. At any rate I lay in bed for an hour with an erection at the thought of her coming.

Saturday November 12 1955

I must record a little of the chaos of Monday. The dress-rehearsal was fascinating and horrifying. Variety people never make me feel that I could possibly like them in private life, never. They have the need for self-advertisement so strongly marked in them. But some of them though nowadays fewer and fewer are most appealing personalities on the stage. The one I liked best on Monday was Tommy Trinder. I'm told that his own act is not good, but his flow of impromptu fooling to keep us all amused during the long waits between the acts, was quite delightful. The most disgusting was Johnnie Ray, showing off, laughing like a madman, exploiting hysteria without art, talent or charm. The best things in the show were the Tiller Girls; the American conjuror, Channing Pollock; a Russian who did a brilliant dance dressed as two urchins; and Lena Horne, the American cabaret star, not my sort of singing, but a really controlled affair.

I stayed behind at the Vaudeville, and watched the German company take an ordinary Monday house delightfully through the show, with all the spirit of it working as usual. There was a lack of polish, of course, partly to be expected, partly chronic. Jane was not at ease in her numbers. Her dialogue was perfect.

Saturday November 19 1955

A full week for me. At D's on Sunday, Wallington on Monday night, D. again on Thursday. But all my days depend on her now.

We had a tiny sort of tiff in the taxi tonight. She has the curse, and this has been a full day for her. I hugged her in the taxi, and she rested on my shoulder. I put little dabby kisses on her cheek and temple to show I knew she was there. She turned up her mouth, so I put one there, too. She asked me if I wanted to kiss her properly. I said no, meaning yes, my cock wants to, but I don't because you're too tired, in my opinion, to be bothered, which adds up to no. This weakness of hers is the only flaw. It doesn't matter, but it seems to bother her. What does she think I would do if she said firmly 'You mustn't kiss me tonight.' She's so

funny about it. Can't I make up my mind not to make demands on her if I like? I wonder, I suppose, does she see it as a defence of mine against making love or what? Surely not. She must know I would make love every night if we could. It just must be a tiny trace of uncertainly left in her. At this stage - really.

Tuesday November 22 1955

I have been oppressed all day by futility. In the tube tonight she said to me yet again 'There has been the whole year in which you have done nothing about your voice. How easy it is for you; that is all you need to do.' It came through to me for good and all, without dramatic self-pity. I don't think I can do it alone, I haven't even tried. She told me that Martita, whom I wrote to on Saturday, was in a dilemma of her own, and had rung up to ask advice about herself instead of as I had fantasised, about me. Oh dear, I said some silly things too about literary taste to her, drunk a bit, and bolstering up pride. If I weren't so vain, and so determined to do anything rather than make a fool off myself, literally anything. She'll help. I can't imagine a teacher helping.

Or rather, I can, after she has fixed it for me. I must make this one further demand, to let me speak to her, read to her, and stop me when it's right or wrong. But I must feel it strongly too. She could have made me do it, at any time this last year, but I must myself only get rid of this voice which I have laboriously created.

Wednesday November 23 1955

A pleasant though slightly dotty letter from Martita, asking to see me.

She does put up with a lot.

Thursday November 24 1955

Martita out both times I rang.

Made D. listen to one or two noises in the train. Must get her to listen to more, and then I could go on a bit by myself.

Two Income Tax demands one for £132 and the other for £66! Ha-ha!

Friday November 25 1955

A quiet day, after the nerve-strain of ringing Martita. Very gracious and sweet and a bit silly. The right advice surrounded by a lot of nonsense. She's going into 'The Rivals' at the Saville. I do admire this managerial adventure of Clements', at least in vacuo.

Spent some time this afternoon speaking to myself. Was much struck by two or three discoveries I should have made years ago. One that my voice has half its range unused. Questioned her about it tonight, and she was most helpful.

In the taxi on the way home, we kissed nicely. She had asked me if I had any food here. I hadn't, so she didn't come up when she otherwise might have. It would be difficult tonight. I have so much to get around to tomorrow, with her present and all, and before matinee-day for her. Anyway I hate F.Ls.

Saturday Nov 26 1955

3.15 a.m.

She's just gone. We fucked and slept. I do wish she could find it in her not to say, as she did tonight 'You've turned me out.' I thought as I always do nowadays that she wanted a quickish fuck and a good long night in her own bed. Oh and she hated waking and going so. If only she'd said before - it tears me up her wanting to stay with me, and me feeling I ought to make her go. What state would she be in for tomorrow evening if she stayed? I hope I did do right.

Anyways there's Dorking next week. She'll be safe there with me.

Sunday November 27 1955

A quiet day; to the African films in the afternoon, and then on to Michael Edward-Evans' party, where I met three actors fresh from weekly 'rep. Herbert and Angela Poland are hoping to go back and run the rep. they were at, until October, but won't be able to begin until Easter. They are working in Whiteley's. He is tall, with masses of ungainly wavy gingery hair, and for an actor, a poor, though nice-spirited face. She is sweet, round and cuddly with fuzzy hair and a lovely little pearly moustache. The other is Eileen Bucknall, who was with them there a year earlier. I behaved very badly, talking about myself, sentimentalising, to the extent of not really knowing what they were like after twenty minutes' talk. However I was able to think enough to ask them if they'd like comps. for the show. They're so out of work.

Monday November 28 1955

Iris Warren not in. Lunch with Bobby a delight. Told me of a great literary fuss in progress over Rupert Brooke's letters. Geoffrey Keynes foolishly wishes to publish a 600-page book of them. Everyone who really cares for R.B. thinks it to be boring and only do harm to his reputation. Everyone being Noel Olivier, Dudley Ward, James Strachey, Cathleen Nesbitt and Frances Cornford, with whom Bobby was staying. He told me (horrifyingly) that the unpublished letters reveal that R.B. was living with another girl at the time he was engaged to Cathleen Nesbitt, a fact Cathleen N. does not know. Geoffrey K. said, 'Oh, Cathleen won't mind' when told. More shocking still, C.N. sent G.K. the letters as asked in an old shoe-box. He expressed great surprise, had them copied, and wrote back saying 'have had these letters worthily bound', enclosing a bill for 7 1/2 guineas for a tooled green morocco binding. Contemptible.

Apart from all that, how pointless is the fuss one might imagine that Brooke was a major literary figure, or at least a minor figure of major historical or germinatory interest. And he's

nothing but a show-off beautiful undergraduate who thought he was a great lover because he had three girls and two men waiting in bed for him five nights a week.

Friday December 2 1955

My incapacity for receiving clear impressions and drawing conclusions from them is well illustrated by my blindness to the advance in our relationship. It is only when I am presented with an identical set of circumstances, as I am by tomorrow's weekend in the country, against which to set the progress of our affair, that I can tell that there has been a change, a tightening of the sympathy, an extension of the understanding.

She talked to me for some time of this new project, in which Julian has become so interested, the using of a fragmentary script of a film musical play by Dylan Thomas as the basis for a complete stage 'musical'. It was first offered to him a year ago, and although I remember reading the first lyric and thinking it enchanting, it seemed to me then quite unsuitable in feel for Julian's next venture. The man who had offered it him before, Jan Read, had now supplied a provisional synopsis of the show to be built on the fragments Dylan Thomas had left. I haven't read it, but the bits D. read out and her general opinion of it, made me wonder that Julian could ever have thought of it, especially as Jan Read would be working on it with them. Julian is lucky to have a partner to pour cold water when his urge to work grabs at such a straw. Mind you, I can see the attraction. The Dylan Thomas stuff has a simplicity, a glowing positive simplicity that is attractive to a hypnotic degree, as many other people have found recently. I suggested if he really felt he must set the D.T. bits, he should do them for the third programme as the literary curiosity they are. Jan Read sounds awful. All the new numbers he's suggested are sung by different people, including one called 'Ten Per Cent', by a woman agent.

Saturday December 3 1955

Here we are at Wotton Hatch Hotel, at Wotton, near Abinger Hammer, outside Dorking. A pretty roadside inn, white paint, done up but not so far too much, brass bedsteads, what _she calls 'biscuit' mattresses but wouldn't if had been in A.T.S.

Spilt coffee all over tray. Guilt about staining napkin. But the room is simple, and although the road beneath our windows is a main road, tomorrow is Sunday and there may be a little pocket of country at the back.

Monday December 5 1955

There was - or were, a lot of lovely ones, quite real country, too, unlike anything one might have expected.

To me it was a long time of unclouded 'togetherness', silence and quiet and peace. I disturbed her, staring in the tube tonight. But she draws my eyes, because I look to her to see myself. She makes me more myself, not kind or truthful or unselfish, but kinder, more truthful, less selfish than I was before. This year, wasted year, may not have been so wasted after all, if it has made me, as I know it has, more a man.

We all had quite an argument in the pub about sneezing loudly. She really quite minds about loud sneezes, and she never really said. I might have alienated her forever without even knowing.

PAGE MISSING

Wednesday December 7 1955

I have been asked to review the film of 'Richard III' on the third programme. She seems to think it all right.

I doubt if the management will let me do it, but oh how lovely if they did.

Sunday December 11 1955

A very chilly weekend at Wallington.

I rang her up when I got back. Their lights had fused, the fire wouldn't light, and I had the screwdriver. A wretched day. I certainly seem to have poor luck as a handy man with Mary.

Monday December 12 1955

Written in the nude.

Oh! I hope I see it tomorrow all right. What if I overslept - did you get home all right, darling?

Saturday December 17 1955

Robin's party awful. Full of old Cambridge people going on as if they were still there, and thinking I was living a very glamorous life. Thought of you all the time.

I thought of you so fiercely that I expected to find you in my room when I got home. Can't we be together always?

Sunday January 1 1956

She suggested to me that I write my diary more carefully, that the reason for writing it must change. It must not be an emotional refuge, or an emotional refuse-heap. A description of each day, perhaps in a page, and with every word weighed and valued, that would be it, something I've never done.

Monday January 2 1956

I went down to Wallington for the day, escaping reproaches for a week or so. Lalla and I had a few moments talk about budgies, and I like the children. The visit left me, as usual, in a state of trivial volubility, caused, I think, by forcing the pace and pattern of the talk so that I won't have to listen to theirs. A loud woman paid a visit in the afternoon. I can't seem to talk to D. property.

Friday January 13 1956

Mary L. sent her some flowers this evening. I recognised the writing on the envelope. When I came in after the show, she was reading a letter with an air of unostentation, also from Mary. She was supposed to have a drink with M.L. and Philip Ingram at a pub near the Comedy Theatre; I said 'Good night', and found that she had followed me into the Bedford. She mentioned, apropos of apparently nothing, my interview with Douglas Clevedon, on the tube platform. As her train drew away from Sloane Square, she did not look round for a last smile, as we always do.

All these little things added up, mean what? A decisive moment of some sort is likely in hers and Mary's relationship. She is deeply deeply troubled about it. Thank God for a country weekend tomorrow. I've been too lazy to help her - much. As for our relationship, that is on its own level, secure. After what she told me the other night, I cannot see why she pursues the cottage. If she feels that she is not the sort of person to live with anyone, a cottage for two for life seems a sad mistake.

Perhaps, as I wish her, she looks to Mary to put things straight. Interesting her inquiry about my 'career'. I suppose she had had a solid little think about Mary, and had just realised it.

Monday January 16 1956

After the Saturday night, a calm and refreshing weekend at Wotton Hatch.

There had been a quarrel - and she was much troubled. There has been gossip about her of one sort or another - us, for one thing, though, as she said, one had imagined all the awfulness before it was said, but the change in her that success has brought. The charge which worried her most, (no, at all) was one of hypochondria, that her understudy had often been worried by D. claiming illness. There were others - grande dameishness, for one - rubbish, nobody could be less - but it was the hypochondria one which troubled her most, suggesting the understudy's distress. She has certainly talked about feeling ill a great deal, but to me much more than to anyone else. Mary was distressed because these things were being said at all, and apparently kept repeating 'You're a laughing-stock in the company.' It was a shock to me to be made to realise that a company I had thought blessedly free from malicious fantasies was nastily subject to them at the very point where I had imagined them freest. Who has Mary trusted to judge whether D. is a laughing-stock? It means so little, that bit; one might say Ella is a laughing-stock, an impression I could easily give, if I unloosed my tongue, because she is with D., Ju and I.

But the hypo charge matters, even if it isn't true. Oh dear, how it makes one regret all the pleasurable gossip.

Tuesday January 17 1956

She told me this evening that Mary had accepted one play at Coventry - a surprise. Even allowing for the active(!) day she had spent, having lunch with Newton and his sister, and seeing a film with them, I was struck by the spirits she was in. There was first a bubbling over at the liberation which Mary's going has meant, the physical freedom of banging about in the flat at night for instance this is tempered by conscious shame, faced and realized; added again is a heightening of all the little irritations, the actions and reactions, which the high spirits gives her the energy to bother about.

Wednesday January 18 1956

A day to which I could not look forward with unclouded pleasure.

They only flaw was the cancellation of my interview with Douglas Cleverdon; 'cancellation' is perhaps the wrong word, as I see him again in a fortnight. I called on her at about 12.30, and found her just about to have her bath. She felt warm and steamy as if she had already had it; she'd done a lot of washing, I think. We had a quiet lunch, when even I did not talk very much, and made off, rather too early, to the Comedy for 'Mornings at Seven'. I thought a soft warm humorous truthful play, respectfully and respectably acted. The ensemble work (my!) was some of the best I'd seen, and it is wicked that it must come off at the end of the week. A friend of Mary's, Philip Ingram, is understudying, and told us that it was the management of the theatre which was forcing it off. It seems that the Comedy Theatre management, looking for something special to open its newly-decorated and almost reconstructed theatre, sent its accountant up to Liverpool to see this play. He said that it was just what they had been looking for, and wished it a long and happy run. Now, although the play management, Clift and this William woman, are willing to keep it on, the theatre management have taken the first opportunity to squeeze it out. In its place goes in the second edition of that revue 'Airs on a Shoestring' that ran so long round the corner. And it is said that it isn't very likely to run.

Added to the depression of all that we had a talk from Bill Linnit about holiday and people wanting to leave the company, a talk full of the usual evasions, and applause-catching, and lies. I think D. and J. have done the very best possible all the same. At least they have made it possible for anyone to say that he feels he ought to go. When Michael Meacham originally asked to be released, he was refused for a reason which was never mentioned this evening.

Poor D! how she raged after the talk against its dishonesty, and hypocrisy and stupidity. They both do very well, I think.

Thursday January 19 1956

'Salad Days' has won the Evening Standard Award 'for the most enjoyable evening of 1955'. Very pleasant, though now I suppose we shall have to regard the E.S. as a responsible organ.

In between the shows I went to see 'The Atonement of Gosta Berling', Garbo's first film. I don't think it would be revived but for the interest of seeing her before she was really Garbo. She is very beautiful and acts very nicely for a student.

Since Mary went to Coventry, D. has been luxuriating in her freedom to an extent that has disturbed even me. If I were really in love with her, I suppose that I would have faced Mary more bravely; by that I mean of course, faced the problem of their relationship, with its complete exclusion of me. As it is, I don't think I mind enough about her to be as courageous as that, even if I had the wisdom to go with my courage.

There are three false statements in the last paragraph, false in expression, not intention. I am really in love with her, as much as I shall probably ever be with anyone. She has been the cause of more change and growth than any other single cause in my life. That's one. The second is the phrase 'complete exclusion of me.' By 'complete' I meant physical as well, since D. told me that she could not ask me to the flat because it troubled Mary. It also seems to suggest to me reading it over, a sense of grievance. I honestly believe there to have been, and to be, none. Perhaps when I hardly knew her, there was a superficial jealousy, soon seen through and discarded. The third 'I don't think I mind enough' ought to contain more regret, more despair at my own inadequacy, that I can't give her a home and a strong right arm to run to from what seems the ruins of their friendship. No, that's ridiculous. But there are grave cracks in the walls. D. said with such gusto yesterday, 'I'll go home early, and have a bath and eat my supper. And have Julian round to talk about the new show, and he can stay the night. And I'll get lots of drink in.' I know that anyone might relax like that, up to a point, but when you are to spend your life with someone whose tastes and troubles seem to stop you doing many of the things you most enjoy in your own home, the relaxation can take on a somewhat hysterical defiant note.

D. said when she talked of Mary the other night, that I wouldn't understand from what she was telling me, what Mary was really like, and she was right. I can't help feeling that Mary has become much more difficult to live with lately. If I didn't take on trust D.'s love of her, and her opinion of her too, I would think that she hated people and was gradually retiring into a smaller and smaller circle of intimates. As each one's faults became more painful to her, she would reject them till none was left, and then she would be mad. D. talks so differently of her when she is rationalizing it all. That night when she was a bit drunk, she gave me glimpses of the inconvenience of living with Mary. Even the char. troubled her, was an invasion of privacy. Either she is laughably, maddeningly fussy, touchy, irritable and slightly mad, or else she is the one out of every million. Irritatingly enough, she is the one out of every million.

Friday January 20 1956

I am not very happy tonight. It may be the champagne to celebrate the winning of the Evening Standard poll, or just tiredness. Mainly it's shame. Patsy came in to say that she was going to leave the show. This made me think for the first time, seriously, about leaving myself. I ought to. I said so. Some time later she said 'So you've decided not to'. 'Yes', I said, though I hadn't really thought about it. 'Because of me?', she said; and horribly, I said 'Yes'. That's not fully true, and only added a little to the weight on her tonight, with Mary back for the weekend, and possibly another climax in their relationship.

On this awful see-sawing between my important career and my love for her, with neither of them, only expediency, being the compelling reason for it all. I wish I were a real support to her. And yet I wish she hadn't stopped thinking about me.

Thursday February 2 1956

I have decided to leave 'Salad Days'. Bill Linnit, in a talk of more than usually amorphous dishonesty, gave us the opportunity, and, after some persuasion, I took it. For three or four days after his talk, I was miserable with shame. I knew that I ought to leave, quite apart from knowing that I ought to want to. From this unpleasant corner Dorothy prodded me. She made me look at the real reasons for my timidity, instead of wallowing in a vague self-induced sea of sloppy nostalgia and purposely unidentified fears. The strongest fear is, I think, that I shall have to allow myself, and order myself, to change and be changed. There is a fear of having that fear, a fear that I shall allow that anger at such a demand, to flare up into useless and disintegrating temper. (All windy - will write later tonight, I think.)

Sunday February 12 1956

At Earl's Court Square for a few days.

Last night Julian gave a party to celebrate his leaving the pit. I thought it very dreary, and went out to sit in a cool dressing-room three or four times. The only bright spot was shed by Newton playing the piano, and all of us screaming out the old songs.

D. drank too much, and was very wobbly when we left.

Sunday March 25 1956

Birmingham.

I arrived here this evening at half-past seven, to start tomorrow an engagement with the Birmingham Repertory Company lasting until August. I got this job four days after leaving 'Salad Days', and the refusal of two more at Salisbury and Oxford, and think myself very lucky indeed.

The last four days I have spent with D., most perfect and most happy. Our relationship is a marriage with a continuous absorbing interest in each other. No, that's wrong, that's my side. She doesn't feel an absorbing interest in me in that way, she feels a large protective omniscient tenderness. She sees me very whole. I am attracted and absorbed by her body, her brain and her wisdom. She gives me more support than anyone I have ever known. To feel that we belong in some way to each other, allows me to face tomorrow's adventure in a different way, in kind not just in degree from any before. I wish that I gave her some at least of the conscious support she gives me. Our love, physically alone, has lasted longer and more fully than any I have ever had before; at this moment of stock-taking, I can face separation fairly easily, not just because a new job steps in to distract me (me being me, it may make me miss her all the more), but because our relationship is, on its own level, largely due to her, honest, solid, and based on facts.

All the same, I do miss her badly, already. 'Of course', she'd said, 'that's just the time you would. You'll have forgotten me in three weeks.'

Monday March 26 1956

1.30.

Letter from Lalla this morning. Just off to first rehearsal. Must remember to be quiet.

11.30. p.m.

I managed to be quiet, and stayed in the background without being standoffish. Colin George spoke to me as I arrived. He introduced me to Charmian Eyre, a cheerful chatty bright girl. I sat through the reading on tenterhooks, for the casting was not announced beforehand, but as each individual part came along. I am playing Caesar's servant, and Cinna, the poet. Before the reading Bernard Hepton, the producer, said that he wanted the play to be a murder story primarily and not to have 'Shakespeare' written all over it. He made no further remark, except to say during the reading, after Cinna's scene, that he wanted that to be the most frightening in the play, and that the audience must feel glad that the house-lights came up when it was over. This reconciles me slightly to the inevitable casting. It is after all the part that the fop of every company plays when it comes to 'Caesar'.

As for the company I dashed away at once so as to avoid meeting them all at once, wandering about. The level of competence is not high, if the reading is a criterion, tho' of course it's not. They seem, watching them, nice enough. I thought Kenneth Mackintosh as Brutus all that the part should be in essence, warm, timid, intelligent, manly, beautiful voice, most expressive and musical. Geoffrey Taylor as Anthony, electrified me by objecting to the producer's request to say 'Lethee' and not 'Leath' because it made a false quantity. After the Old Vic horrors, that was beautiful to hear. Nancie Jackson may prove a friend.

Tuesday March 27 1956

7 o'clock.

Rehearsal this morning did not impress me with Bernard H's qualities any farther. He is prosaic, which is splendid in these Benthall days, but he is dull, I fear at the moment. Still if he is competent enough, a good ordinary production will result, and that will certainly be a change. I spoke to Geoffrey Taylor. His wife who has made some dresses for D., wants to see me. We had a nice talk enough. I mentioned my pleasure at his 'false quantities' remark. That made him an ally at once, and we had a common hate-purge about the Old Vic. I also spoke to Nancie Jackson. At the mention of D. she was all eager questions, and egged me on to tell about all the fruits of success. I am afraid, I must have disappointed her a little. She wanted a glowing proof of golden days, and I had only 'dull details of flats and cottages and, 'yes, some nice clothes'. She said wistfully, 'How lovely to think of Dorothy making some money! She never had any. Now she has some security. What we all long for.' We went on to talk of the company at the Vaudeville. When I mentioned Newty, she said, 'Are Dorothy and Newty still together?' 'No', I said. 'Has she any gentleman friend now, any nice attachment?' 'Me', I said, thinking quickly, and hoping I did right. Hope D. thinks so, too. I felt it to be less embarrassing to tell her outright than leave her to discover as she's bound to do, and be doubly embarrassed in retrospect. I don't see that it will expose D. to anything. Hope I am not being stupid about it. Nancy J. went a bit pink, and said, 'Have I said anything

awful?' 'No', I said, squeezing her shoulders, 'You've said nothing but what was nice.' Then felt I'd been too familiar, and we spent the rest of the rehearsal exchanging nervous smiles.

Now off to 'The Chalk Garden'.

Well, it's a light comedy really. Real chintzy drawing-room stuff with Eliotese overtones to make everyone think it's advanced without stopping them enjoying. It'll be good if it makes it all more recognizable. If only it had all been played for comedy, how delicious. How perfect Edith Evans was in that little scene questioning the governess! How well Peggy A. used her heavy figure to point her characterisation, though altogether it did not reward her. I bet Siobhan McKenna was maddening, playing up all the embarrassing wisdom and down all the almost farcical side. It was well received - 'shocking' but not too shocking, not too real, just a dear old problem play, in fact. It will certainly run.

Thursday March 29 1956

Rehearsals all today until five - for the first time. Little to do until the Cinna poet scene late this afternoon, when I am torn to pieces.

Find the company pleasant, but still for me, ungrouped. There seems to be no pattern even faintly perceptible to me yet. Nobody seems to have a 'character' for anything. Perhaps they haven't been together very long. Life has settled down to move very slowly at the moment, particularly as tomorrow, Good Friday, we must pass the time till the last rehearsal before the holiday, on Saturday morning.

Like Charmian Eyre as much as anyone. Seems charming, hard-working, straight forward. Albert Finney, the new RADA sensation, arrived today. Is at the moment modest and sensible. May get swollen head if he finds things come easy. I feel lost without my letter to write to D. tonight. She wired to say don't come till late Friday or Saturday. She naturally wants Prim and Edna to herself sometimes.

Friday March 30 1956

Very quiet Good Friday. Rang her up at half-past six. As Newton and Edna were already there, she could not talk properly, but still I was a little taken aback when she delivered a long lecture on not playing Cinna 'camp' or for comedy. She apparently doesn't know that it usually is, but in any case I had simply mentioned in my letter that at the reading I had played it nervously, putting in above as an afterthought 'a bit camp?' This was a reference to my general feebleness and foolishness of voice and a recognition on my part of the silliness of trying to sound nervous and frightened. Any intensification I attempted at the moment, was my implication, would make me sound camp. She simply would not leave it alone, and did not sound at all as if she was missing me. Quite the reverse. The only reason her voice seemed to imply why I should come back was so that she might more effectively tell me off about the way to play Cinna.

Seriously it quite cast me down for the moment. I walked away down the road feeling hurt that she hadn't asked how I was or how I'd got through my days. Then I thought, well, she had got her friends there, and she does love you.

Monday April 2 1956

10.30 p.m.

Back in Brum after a weekend in Earl's Crt. Sq. D. very tired on Sunday, not able to do much more than sit. I am so apt to exhaust her more by not doing decisively what I want to do. I hope she finds a visit from me relaxing. I think so. I go to her next w/e, and we see 'The Comedy of Errors' which opened to condescendingly mild notices last week. Going to her this week has certainly made me feel much less that I am away from her, much more that it is to be just the few months it will be. Talking of me for a bit (poor D. how she is obliged to) she said smiling that I needed someone to admire and had transferred my admiration from Julian to her. She would be impatient with me for writing down something so obvious. It is obvious in one way to me, in the sense that I now see that that is what I had always done. But it is a thought which has never been crystallised in my mind, and stated, before. 'Minding' so much what 'people' think, particularly one or two people, is of course not a rarity, but it has been a controlling factor in my life to a ridiculous extent. So, when she said I needed to hero-worship, that is 'mind' to an extreme degree, I resisted that judgement. I have stopped expecting of course to reach an omniscient self-sufficiency. But I passionately long not to be so weak and easily swayed.

She has helped me very much. My entry into B'ham has been the most careful and the most honest and unforced entry I have yet made into a new group of people. So at the least I am not getting worse. She lent me the typed draft of the Christmas record. I think it very good. It is her line at its best, a little morsel of truth. One or two of the lyrics strike at one as a new carol as good as the old ones. 'It Snowed in the Night' for instance, has a simplicity which must I am sure, satisfy - even her own preview of it. The shape is good, the lengths of dialogue right. Must read it again tomorrow.

I ache for her. I've been to bed and read some silly novels on a shelf here. As I put the last one down, I turned lonely. It's the sleeping together and the justbeingwith that's so lovely.

I don't feel sleepy and I can't lie with her in my arms and wait to go to sleep. My darling, I'll have to wait till Saturday.

Tuesday April 3 1956

A very slack day. 'Rep.' so far has been much less exhausting than understudy rehearsals, and if I could only find some decent 'digs', I would be as lazy as I have ever been! This week's are pretty impossible. They are just too dirty, for one thing. Thick dust on the carpet, nowhere to hang clothes, not even a hook on the back of the door; the bed smelled, only slightly, of a long unwashed mattress. The bathroom windows are always wide-open so that it is piercingly cold, the water wasn't even tepid this morning, my glass of milk tonight is crusted with dust in every crevice of its design. Good things, a hot gas-fire, food surprisingly good, though no lunch and no late meal. But worst of all, four other people in the house and I only got my high tea in here today as favour. I write all this down partly for interest, but mostly to marvel at myself that I don't rage and fume and get it all out of proportion, as I certainly did a very few years ago. Without sitting down with my laurels, I have come forward a step or two.

The rehearsals jog along slowly. I think that it should be quite good - heaps better than the average now, but that is saying almost nothing. Jill Forest, the ex-Hansonian, said today that she guessed I was probably Scots because of the beautiful English I spoke. I don't think I was really cut out to act in crowds. I make myself scream at what I must sound like.

Wednesday April 4 1956

A lazy rehearsal for me. Nothing to do, except for four lines at the very beginning of the Act. This is a tiny skirmish, compared with what I expected. I am starting to talk too much. I must remind myself and remind myself again, to speak when I have something to say which someone else wishes to hear; at the moment my impulse is to ingratiate myself with anyone who happens to be by, or to find an audience for some opinion of mine, even changing the opinion to keep the audience. Even expediency ought to tell me the idiocy of talking. How often have I 'got in with' the very people I have wished afterwards to repudiate. The dishonesty of it, the offence it causes to them, it's all foolish. I have certainly done better here than anywhere, and I don't think that yet I have spoken irretrievably much. Two snobberies combine to plague me here. I have managed not to speak again to Kenneth Mac or Nancie Jackson, only because I know them to be perceptive and sympathetic or Kenneth - I am not sure how perceptive she is. This is personal relationships snobbery. The other is the snobbery or, no, just vanity, that I form an opinion, am asked (or not asked - it makes alas little

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 32

Angus Mackay
Being the twenty-eighth
From April 4. 1956.
To.

April 4.1956. (cont.)

Difference to me) to express it, think: No, I must be humble: and then, 'No, I must be honest before being humble'. I haven't by any means completely, found my way out of that maze yet. But I try, and I don't despair of Birmingham yet. Nor, as yet, does Birmingham seem to despair of me, though, I am sure, some kind judge is already weighing up what to say to me when he, or she, launches on what I ought to know about myself.

This afternoon we nearly all went to see 'The Devil's Disciple' at The Alexandra. Tyrone Power played Dick. Noel Willman who produced, General B. It all struck me as pretty humdrum and ordinary, and in places downright bad. The Judith (Clare Austin) was very poor – I am glad, and sorry that I was right about her in 'South'. Tyrone P. is quite strong, and swashes away well, but has a dull colourless personality. Noel Willman ~~really~~ quite good. By a complete chance, I found myself sitting au pair with Mark Brackenbury. He is a boring young man. He brought his guitar into the theatre the other day, and sang snatches of Spanish songs. He is the sort of person who sings with his nostrils distended with unself-consciousness.

We went back into the theatre where Nancy Burman, the Company Manager, gave us a talk on Paris. It made me feel lonely to think of being shot into Paris in July. With a strange company, but as I wrote to D. tonight, I suppose they won't be by then. It's weighing a ton on me already. We're flying both ways. Oh dear.

I rang up D's mother, and her Aunt Marion answered. She was surprisingly spry after the decrepit old lady I met in the theatre. I'm going up on Thursday night, tomorrow, in fact. Later her mother rang up to confirm it, and after a pleasant talk suddenly said 'Are you happy?' and when I said 'Yes, rang off.

But what pleased me most was that Aunt Marion told me that Dorothy was missing me. She must have told them she was. Oh poor dear one.

Friday. April. 6. 1956.

Digs, digs, oh! I'm sick of them. Finally found some, and Mark Brackenbury is in them! Still London tomorrow, thank God, and my darling – and 'The Comedy of Errors' oh dear. One or two lapses but am still doing fairly well. Bernard Hepton turns out to be a great one for not saying when he doesn't want you.

Monday. April. 9. 1956

Back in Birmingham, after a full and, in the main, happy week. Und. She is very troubled, and I can do nothing except make her sure of my love.

She was in when I arrived. My poor darling. She had booked for me to see 'The Mulberry Bush'. She need not have bothered, for it was scarcely a third full. The play is poor stuff really. Up to a point, it is worth putting on. It is in touch with many ideas and fashions which have not yet reached the theatre, always happy to be twenty or thirty years behind even the fashion in ideas. He isn't a dramatist, and never, I believe, will be. Perhaps the best reason for it being put on is that it may encourage other novelists who may turn out to have real theatre talent. I doubt it. A real playwright will surely write for the theatre first. The production was good unexpectedly. The fragmentary set served a purpose; the physical reality of the action was quite striking. Acting not bad. Kenneth Haigh good. Gwen F-D good. Helena Hughes good, Agnes Lauchlan very good and careful with the part, killing the silly laughs she could so easily have got. Angus W. has a nasty little mind.

On Sunday we stayed in bed all day, until four. We had breakfast and made off for 'The Comedy'. As we came down the steps into the square, D. said 'What a lovely morning'. 'The Comedy of Errors' I much prefer played straight. Lionel Harris is a vulgar styleless producer. All that is good in the piece came from Ju. Three or four pretty tunes, Jane & Pat Routledge perfect in the burlesque style. My poor poor love. As was David Bird and to a lesser because in expert degree, Lally Bowers. The two Antipholuses were bad. My part was simply incompetent, poor chap and got nothing out of it. The other was unsympathetic. The Dromios, played idiotically – by the same actor, Bernard Cribbins, are very cleverly done, but I don't take to him. Ju came back with us, and I expect we depressed him. Poor J I suppose I have deserted him.

Tuesday. April.10. 1956.

She wrote me a letter just after I left. I've tried to answer her four times, and the fifth I shall have to leave until tomorrow to vet. Now her letter will be late. Oh I'm so feeble and useless and, inadequate. I can't think or feel or write. I want to give and give to her, but don't even recognise what and when she is willing eager to take.

Wednesday. April. 11. 1956.

All that fuss yesterday because she wrote to me saying, on the page, how much she misses me and how little she can bear our parting. I say 'all that fuss' because it is time that I had the perception to tell the extent of her feeling and therefore the extent to which I can cause her suffering. I must grow up. It's no use yapping on. The thing is to do it. To grow up. She pulls me forward.

Thursday. April.12. 1956.

Last night, as I forgot to write, I went to see 'Anatol', the current production at the Rep. I was not very favourably impressed. It is a difficult play, especially for young actors, but it is the first sort of play to test sense of style, and nearly everyone fell down on the first hurdle. The production was probably most to blame, though I would never have known that if I

hadn't worked with Bernard Hepton over 'Caesar'. It is poorly set and staged and abominably lit. The two young men, played by Robert Chetwyn and Alan Rowe (the two who have been most remote and stormy of all the company) are just not good enough, not poised except from the outside. All the girls with the exception of Barbara Atkinson, who's dull and Nacie J., who's splendid, are cheap and modern. Doreen Aris is not very pleasing, in this part at any rate.

Tonight I saw 'Free Exchange': it brought the house down, tho' not quite for me. Too old-fashioned, too cumbersome, too predictable. Oh the misunderstandings and complications and explanations! I hardly laughed at all; not nearly as much as I have at the reading of one of Ben Travers' farces. Martita is a little naughty, and it is a poor part. And she has to take her calls with a black eye. Irene Worth looks marvellous, but isn't absolutely first rate. D. will probably say she is, to compensate for thinking she's like Pauline Jameson! Alec Guinness very good, but I still resist him. Too self-conscious. Some beautiful moments. Set must have cost a fortune.

Friday. April. 13. 1956.

Two run throughs today. Both good: the first, only for sound effects was rather hilarious, the second very serious, as Sir Barry was in front. He is very upright, very straight featured, very bright blue eyes, unbelievably seventy-seven.

The production is going to be good, if a trifle flat. The play will come through, though it will do its own work. Geoffrey T. asked me if I played canasta: like a fool, I said Yes and was let in for an evening of awful 'chatt' and cards. Still I expect that's what would have happened anyway if I'd gone up to the Taylors, as I was already committed to do.

Commented when I got back to Mark B. on the boredom of card parties because of the poor talk. Was well ~~rewarded~~ paid back for my idiocy in speaking to him by being told he was a card expert, and hated anyone to speak. I must keep quiet to everyone.

Sunday. April. 15. 1956.

A very soothing, quiet restful, day, except for the last two hours, from eight to ten. The landlady went to bed leaving a tiny fire and no means of making it up. Maddening. The last two days have been piercingly cold, and life in this unheated house has been unpleasant. Still, the summer is coming, and I mustn't get cross.

I rang her up tonight. A bad line, but very good to hear her voice, yet not good, because it sent me back here more alone than ever. I enjoyed the day alone and enjoy my freedom here from every old friendship – except that I want her with me.

I went to see her mother last night. We talked a lot of D. which is very pleasant and unburdening. She gave me D's £15 to get their railway tickets for the holiday, little knowing that I had been told of the whole business. She wrote me a lovely long letter all about everything; it was the first ordinary letter I've had from her, with news in it as well as love and longing. She wrote me a lot about the play - repeating three times think of the character and not of the impression you're making'. I imagined I did, but on looking at it closely, I

know that this is a long apprentice task, the losing of self-consciousness. Not Stanislavsky, but conscious thought, the double-thought which I now recognise to be the force which has informed tiny moments of the very best bits of my Cambridge days. I can't see that I'm anything as Cinna. As for my voice, it seems impossible to do much onstage with these parts. In both of them I have been asked to raise my voice. No, strictly, I have been asked to sound frightened. Why should I do it by raising my voice?

She has had a sheet of notepaper from Mary, with her address at Sidmouth – no more.

Monday. April. 15. 1956.

It seems like a week since I last wrote. I got to the theatre at 10:15, in the morning, and have just now got in at ten minutes past midnight. Well, I've known worse. A lovely lovely letter from my only darling.

Tuesday. April. 16. 1956.

Everything went well. I am still expecting too much from a first night. The theatre wasn't full. That was a shock, and the applause only held for four calls. My scene went all right. Didn't see any of it really.

Friday. April. 19. 1956.

Company party tonight. First drink I've had since I've been here. Desolation without her. I couldn't bear it and left early.

Tuesday. May. 8. 1956.

These last few weeks have been very happy. Working away up here has proved very much easier and slacker than I thought. Though that last has been a disappointment rather than a happiness. But having a respectable job while waiting for her lovely letters and seeing her most week-ends, has been real happiness. It was worth leaving her to read of her need of me and write of my need of her. It has advanced my confidence in her and my knowledge of our relationship enormously. Indeed that is one reason why I haven't written here because I have stepped confidently into full dependence on her. I believe I am only writing this morning because this weekend a silly piece of indecision and petulance on my part, disturbed my complacency. I wait almost in trepidation for her Wednesday letter. She still of course speaks to me out of another dimension of perception, and can always give me a complete surprise. But how she hates me to leave. Her poor big face!

Sunday. May. 13. 1956.

Early in the morning, about three, I think, and I can't sleep. How strange. I put down my book, Catherine Carswell's memoirs of Lawrence, sleepy enough, and yet two hours of darkness finds me still awake. I have lain and thought – about B'ham and the people here,

and us, chiefly us. How much good it does me to have her confidently to fall short of! I have found so much more in myself through her, and moved forward so; pathetically little it must seem to her, but a great deal to me. I have for the first time conquered my fear of ridicule. I am stronger at last and react no longer. Oh the relief. Now I must guard against the pretentiousness, the passing of my own poorly-learned lesson before it's my right.

Thursday. May. 17. 1956.

I wish that I wrote here more often. It is true that my daily letters to her preclude much writing here. It isn't only lack of energy. It's more that the power of selection seems exhausted after using it once. There are so many exciting twists and turns of personality and incident in my 'new life' up here, which are gone by the next day.

The main thing about my 'life' at the moment, apart from my separation from D., is that I find myself much in advance of the other four in my dressing-room. I say that carefully and after six weeks or so together. Not one of them has touched my vanity yet (except complimentarily!) which is how I know. These speculations have been touched off by one Kross Leigh. He is a strange mad little person, more or less hopelessly maimed by, I imagine, his home. For instance, he is the sort of person, who, with fairly unself-conscious smugness, refuses to judge, or 'we're getting analytical, aren't we?' He is naturally given to judging and analysing but of an oh! so wild inaccuracy. When he asked if I didn't want to go abroad, and I said 'No' he replied, 'It will do you good to go to Paris. I think you're getting too set'. Poor little man, he's going to get on the room's nerve, with his smugness.

He affects me not at all, except as a nice rather than nasty personality on the whole. He is a real feminine crypto – queer, very good at sewing. It thrills me so to find that I am free at last from minding about the opinion or approval of people who don't matter to me.

Wednesday. May. 23. 1956.

Today Albert Finney ~~said to me that~~ asked me for my advice. Charmian had told him that his long pause before 'God in Heaven!' at the close of the play, did not hold. Doreen Aris, who had been in front, thought, independently, that it did. Albert did not trust Charmian, because 'she is too technical'. He was more disposed to trust Doreen, partly because she agreed with his view of the pause. One or two points occur to me as important. First the pause is too long. Second Doreen, for all we know, may be no judge of acting at all. Third, Charmian is too technical because she hasn't imagination enough not to be, but Albert is too much whatever the opposite is. Fourth Albert is very inexperienced tho' very level-headed. Charmian is very experienced and pretty calm herself tho' two-faced. I simply told him to make his own mistakes; if he can't trust C. he mustn't, if he can D. he must. If he can't trust himself he must find some tactful way of presenting the case to Douglas Seale. He didn't ask for my opinion of the pause, so I didn't give it.

Friday. May. 25. 1956.

I am sitting in a cinema and missing missing missing her.

Saturday. May. 26. 1956.

There was a letter from Lalla this morning telling me that Emily was definitely dying, and one from Mummy saying that she had slipped in the street and broken her ankle. I rang up this evening and spoke to Lalla first. She was of course very brave and sensible. M. cried, also of course. She asked me to visit them, not believing that I could. It has of course weighed on me. It would certainly cheer M. up, though that doesn't weigh with me much. I am most of all against it because it will show them that it's possible for me to get there. I am also against it of course because it would mean cutting one of our weekends. And so I can find heaps of other reasons to back up that one overwhelming reason. For instance, it would trouble them all that I'd spent 'all that money' for a few hours.

This has been a strange disturbed day, with, in it, tiny little moments when a chasm seems to open in the beautiful comfortable surface of the very day. This morning I thought I'd better get some money out of the savings bank, and found I couldn't because I hadn't ~~put~~ left it in long enough. That was an odd shock, leaving me feeling that I was pinched! Not helped by my shoes being ready, at last, and costing 28/6 for soling and heeling. Then I hadn't time to get Ju's present, for Monday, and felt bothered about that. Then I was nearly off tonight. I'm still troubled about home. M. will only think it's made her better. I daresay the day hasn't finished surprising me. Perhaps the train will crash, and of course D. has been at a party.

Tuesday. May. 29. 1956

A letter from her this morning, full of love and worry for me. I was queasy yesterday morning, tho' quite well by the time that I got onto the train. We had a beautiful quiet day, just the two of us.

Rather a beastly sort of a day. At lunchtime I went home having worked out, carefully I thought, that I need not arrive at the rehearsal until a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes after it had begun. I did so, and was off, and on with a worrying flurry. In this scene, I had to say two lines as one of the Roman soldiers who are tempted by Apollodorus with a bag of money. I hadn't my script, got one of the lines wrong and in any case said both of them rather unconvincingly. Mike Robbins and Mark Kingston were both killing themselves in the wings. This made me self-conscious and made me sound sillier and sillier. I flamed with embarrassment and, while I was waiting for that bit to come round again, was lost in it – first time since I've been here. I stood and prayed that D. Seale wouldn't ask me to do a different voice of anything. He didn't, or not in the way that I'd dreaded.

I went away, feeling very ashamed of myself. Ashamed that I wasn't able to act easily like the others, and ashamed to be flaming with all the old furies about being laughed at for being grand and not laughing back for being common. I had a nice think, however, and quietened myself down very much better than I expected. I still mind far too much but at least I found out today that ~~the boys would~~ the laughter was a compliment, that they wouldn't have laughed if I'd been really awful, nor if I'd been really going to mind too much.

Friday. June. 1. 1956.

Did the same scene again today, and I only write about it to record that I have, I believe, for the first time, conquered the silly vain embarrassment. Douglas Seale got Albert and I to change our delivery of the lines a little, and it is probably all right now. But the great thing is that I haven't asked anyone for reassurance that 'it's all right really', and that I have got through without playing up to the embarrassment. I still won't be very good as the soldier, but that's only a worry, not a morbid 'vain thing'.

(Oh dear, just had to protest about the ceaseless poker game being joined by two outsiders, a little shaking, but I'm glad I do protest, it's good for both sides.)

I'm less and less impressed by the way this theatre is run. The students aren't made to realize that the half is important, noise in the wings is only comically frowned on, so of course goes on. I was shocked to hear the electrician, quite a nice boy called Humphrey Stanbury, say with excitement, that he was going to 'try and work it', to get himself appointed full-time Public Relations Officer next season. He now does this job as well as his own for a small extra sum. He hopes to do it and nothing else for an increased salary. More admin, overweight.

I find most depressing the tone of those in charge. The Bullock brothers, Stage Director and Production Manager, Nancie Burman, Managing Director, John Henderson, theatre manager, Tom English, Sir Barry's secretary – none of them impress me as people, and the temper of their personalities doesn't fit with a theatre.

Monday. June. 4. 1956.

It struck me last night that for ten days I have not thought of my voice, let alone my exercises. As I don't speak in 'Anne B.' that may be the reason. I long for a lot of work.

Since I have been here, I have felt more myself, and I have found myself more successfully with a new group of people than ever before. Bother I'm too tired.

Tuesday. June. 5. 1956.

I was very foolish today. I was 'off' for two runnings of my soldier bit. Mark B. told me he had said my ten words for me, in Scots as Douglas Searle has first wanted me to, until he found out I couldn't do Scots. In a panic of repulsion for the whole idea of the part and the scene, I told Mark B. that I would ask D.S. to let him, Mark, do it instead of me. I also ~~told~~ said this to the others in the scene. I felt very miserable, and went and sat under the stage.

When I had come round a little, I saw what an idiot I was, and withdrew all I had said to Mark and the others and did not speak to D.S. I realised that this was the first real obstacle I'd come across here, and I was screaming with funk before I had properly tried to get over it. I must get on with it, that's all.

Wednesday. June. 6. 1956.

Between waking up and getting up, I had a dream. D. was in bed, and I came in later, as it might be to the Hyde Park; across the room and Donald and Joan were asleep in a double-bed. I started to get undressed, and was very cross to find that the windows at the far far end of the room, through which the light was beginning to show, were uncurtained. Beyond the immediate area of the beds, the room seemed to be the food department of a large but not expensive store, as it might be the Civil Service Stores. I was complaining about the windows to the Birmingham stage management, and also about the noise of the shop being got ready for the day. I felt no sense of exposure or invasion, just irritation at the noise and worry that D.'s rent might be spoilt.

Friday. June. 8. 1956.

Between the shows on Wednesday Albert and I were left alone in the dressing-room. He asked me, in his simple serious way, various questions about the theatre and acting, and we talked of some of the company. I was flattered by his assumption of my capacity to answer him wisely, flattered that he chose me, flattered because I believe he ought to have chosen me, and flattered because he may be famous next year. His questions were not easy to answer. He asked, for instance, what comic acting was, how you felt doing it. I tried to answer from my absurdly small experience, feeling that the chance to get over a little dig at his over-intensity was too good to lose, even though I was perhaps unqualified to deliver it. His judgement of people is excellent, always right in essence. His humour is delightfully simple and his enjoyment of acting so obvious, that the discovery that he detested the poker-playing as much as I and wished to relax and be quiet, made me feel that I'm lucky to be sitting next to him. It's very touching. He asks me about his makeup, and when I admire some tiny change in it, he ties himself in a knot with joy. If I do nothing else in this engagement but persuade him to persuade Philip Pearman to let him go to a good fortnightly instead of starring him at the Old Vic in 1957, I shall be very pleased with myself.

This engagement has been a good clearing-ground for me. I have rediscovered a number of acting problems, and I have solved, or seen the solution of, a lot of personal ones. It's funny coming straight from a long dose of D. and 'Salad Days'. I wasn't adventuring with that company. I had my place, and kept my explorations for D. Though it was, and is, more like a jabbering native being hauled along, and at last pushed off on his tottering own, than a real exploration. The main feeling I have had is how easy I find it to understand everyone here. There isn't a single person in the company, I don't think, whose mind I can't get round. That doesn't mean that I feel cosily superior to them all, tho' in my moments of depression about acting I do, but that I can understand their motives for more or less all they say and do. This in its turn means that I can usually (sometimes I am too slow) treat these sayings and doings justly and confidently. People like Colin and Albert have never turned to me for advice before – the big simple people.

This reminds me to record that I am reading 'War and Peace' and enjoying it.

Sunday. June. 24. 1956.

This afternoon I plunged and talked Scots to myself for ten minutes or so. ~~The day had been clouded for me as if a visit to the dentist's was before me.~~ I put off the moment as long as I could still my conscience. As last I put down my book, and blushing angrily began. It wasn't very good Scots, but the main thing is that I arrived at a stage where I didn't care. Now I must carry the one line I fixed off to Colin. That will be another test again. The sensation of achievement is absurd. And yet it marks a step surely. Last week I tried the same thing, and ended up only raving at the necessity for having to do it at all.

This is the result of a letter D. wrote me, in answer to one of mine in which I said that the resistance to putting on a voice even in private was fierce. Her letter has been most useful and inspiring, particularly as it contains examples of her own practical difficulties. Her advice is useful because it formulates thoughts which were wandering vaguely in my own mind. Therefore, it at once seemed possible to carry it out, no less difficult but more possible. It is her capacity for, and love of, stating what is actual, what really happens instead of what we should like to happen, that appeals to me. When she says that even if one plunges and does the hated action, it will be just as difficult to do it again the next day, I am relieved and inspired. It is the fresh eye for results which attracts me in her, just as it does enormously so in Shaw, or indeed Tolstoy. To be able to look at an action or series of actions, and see clearly that they are absurd and not what you, you want to be doing, no matter how ~~accurately exactly they may coincide with the ideals which~~ faithfully they may reflect the ideals which prompted them, that is a most attractive and exciting capacity. I'm glad that I possess it enough to recognise it in others, but I am very much too easily satisfied ~~and find feel shamed often.~~ In general, I accept 'life' very much as it is, and it needs someone else to remind me that it has shortcomings, and as for myself, I remain a pretty stodgy mess ~~with a wish to find~~ which is given a stir now and again. But her letter was more than a stir. I think the mess is on the move – sounds rather ugly. Anyway I feel an urgency to be aware, thinking, noticing all the time.

Friday. June. 29. 1956

I haven't yet exposed my Scots to Colin G., as she suggested, but I have talked 'Brum' to the dressing-room with success. The favourite sentence is 'You mustn't touch me like that. I'm a virgin'. That feels to me like two steps forward at once.

I wish that I wrote more regularly, and had more energy for ~~the~~ recording my relations with the company more fully, let alone the surface details which I might find it interesting to remember. For the moment I would say that I've got further with Albert F., who is a clear and warm person, very likeable.

D. is having a rather tiresome week at Ilfracombe, it seems to me. Her leg is bad, so that she can only go on drives with her mother and Mollie. Say what she likes, it is a strain for her to be with them, not because relations are strained, but because their life has a different pace. She says in her latest letter 'Don't be silly about Paris'. What can I have written, I wonder, about the Paris visit? I think I'm fairly clear about it myself. I'm scared of the air trip, and feel that the stay itself will be rather a tiring jumble. Otherwise I'm looking forward to Paris itself. I daresay that my fear of the air-trip may have been by bad phrasing mixed with my feeling about Paris.

Later.

Mark B. ~~was~~ idly mentioned today that he'd had several long chats with Kenneth M. and I was surprised at the spasm of cross jealousy I felt. ~~I still often find that I am jealous even when as in this case there is no need to me, of~~ I was jealous because I have made no attempt to talk to Kenneth myself, and didn't see why Mark should either. I was cross because, if Mark were a success with Kenneth, whom I respect, my judgement of Mark would be upset. Now this 'spasm' was just a spasm, a momentary stab coming from one's nastier side. But I am ~~rather~~ disgusted at how unwilling I am for those I think boring or rude or unattractive to become more interesting or more polite or more attractive. I find it difficult to want it enough. Because they would be competition, I suppose, and once one has people settled below oneself, that's where you want them to stay. Well, that's a very boring rude and unattractive attitude.

Saturday. June 30. '56

Very interesting. Mark B. and Mark K. were talking about cards and then went on to talk of table-tennis, and of their various irritations. I became slightly irritated by their serious tone, and unwisely said: you really mind about all these games, don't you? You really mind about them! They were a bit cross, of course, but that's not what's interesting. Of course they would be. I was annoyed with myself for giving way, for almost the first time here, to a piece of self-assertion. Although what I said was true, and I am in a position to say it at the right time, this was the wrong time, and the motive behind my saying it was wrong. Although I would find it hard to say how the wrongness showed itself in my voice or manner. I know at once that I had indulged myself by the sense I had of a weakened position via a vis the two of them. It also reminded me that ~~my feeling that sense of progress has an adverse side~~ the progress I've made brings with it an added, not a lessened, responsibility. I have caught myself quite often lately, in a pleasant dream of superiority. Now that has always been a fault of mine, but, at a time when I have at last begun to gather a little self-respect, it is doubly revolting.

I would never have believed that I would want to be alone so much. I'm alone as I write, in the train to Euston, except for one rather dotty Irishman, when I could be with half the company at the other end of the train. In the past I might have avoided them because they didn't like me, a state of affairs which I wd. have represented by telling myself that I mustn't waste time with shallow fools, while all the time longing to be accepted. Now I sit alone because I don't want the interruption or to be exposed to the demands of anyone except those I have bargained for, while taking great pleasure in all those peoples' company when I have to be with them.

I haven't thought much about our relationship lately. I have accepted it as I think she has done, and gratefully taken it for granted. But the separation has developed it. Her letters have been a revelation to me of the extent and depth of her need of me such as my insensitivity and lack of knowledge had not allowed me to believe in before.

Tuesday July 3 1956

I went to see D's mother today. The telegraph boy came while I was there. In spite of herself, for she isn't a fearful woman, her talk faltered in case it should be bad news. It was for the man upstairs.

I wasn't so good at the Scots tonight. (Which I put in last night!) It seems credible, but I didn't remember it all day. It must have been suppression still going on, for I do want to improve it. I must be bold bold bold. The accent itself is all right will do. I must act it boldly.

Wednesday July 4 1956

Most pleased today about two things. First, Albert F. is sympathetic and warm and has the same hatred of noise and demanding people and privacy. He's a find. Second, the Scots went v. well tonight and I think I have it.

Not so good. Ronnie H. was 'off'; Geoffrey B. hissed at me 'Say something'. I couldn't. He sneered.

Thursday July 5 1956

I have been reading Freud's Interpretation of Dreams - at last. I haven't yet begun it systematically, but looking up my commonest dream - floating past everyone, feeling very proud of doing so - I found a gratifying explanation of it. 'The intimate connection between flying and the idea of a bird makes it comprehensible that the dream of flying, in the case of male dreamers, should usually have a coarse sensual significance; and we should not be surprised to hear that this or that dreamer is always very proud of his ability to fly.' There's a suggestion that all flying dreams are erection dreams 'since the remarkable phenomenon of erection, which constantly occupies the human phantasy, cannot fail to be impressive as an apparent suspension of the laws of gravity.' Well, it certainly pretty constantly occupies my human phantasy.

Later.

Now the Scots was all right tonight. The first line got very little laugh, and I thought 'What have I done to it this time?' but the second got a very good laugh for the first time, so I think both were all right. What a relief. Now I can fix it, I think.

Wednesday July 25 1956

I suppose that I ought to write about Paris. But at the moment it's too hot. I'm sitting in a shady bit of the Winter Gardens at Malvern. The little orchestra (trio) is playing a selection from 'Merrie England', and I'm feeling fairly peaceful and forward-looking.

Sunday August 19 1956

'Since I last wrote' is a beginning which would launch me on a short book. Paris, Malvern, a fortnight at the Old Vic, and a week out of work at 9 Draycott Place - that's all I can manage.

Birmingham is over, and, by a letter I had yesterday, Salisbury seems about to begin. Altho' B'ham didn't bring me many acting steps forward, I don't at all regret it. It's been a splendid gentle introduction to the working theatre, and Eric J. and Albert F. turned out to be two good friends. Albert especially if he goes on as he has begun, will be a very rare person indeed. The main impression made on my by B'ham has been of my own progress as a person. For the very first time in a new society, I waited to be approached. The result was extraordinary to me, who has always found a mess of unwanted pseudo-intimacies to get rid of. Not only did I make two real friends, (real in that I actually had something in common with them) but also commanded a real respect from them and the company by doing nothing to beg for it. This was a real advance.

It's all the result of my love of Dorothy. I'm not looking, directly or indirectly, for a heart to come back to, as it were. Consequently I have no need to deceive myself into believing that people are nicer than they are - or indeed nastier, if they happen not to like me.

On the debit side I must put that I have done little or nothing to my voice, which still has to be broken down. The best acting thing I did was to speak Scots on the stage for twelve words! I had never before spoken with an accent on the stage. It cost me a lot of embarrassment and it was only due to D's letters that I did it at all, but I did it.

As for the company itself, I can't believe that I would ever artlessly _enjoy working there. There is a constraint, a sense of secret wheels within wheels, a half-toned mediocrity of spirit (rather than talent, tho' that seems to be there also) which made it easy for me to leave. But I was there brought into my first intimate contact with actors and heard the first flood of life-stories which I suppose are going to follow me all my life now.

Tomorrow I must write about the plays I've seen since I've been back and perhaps I'll have definite news from Salisbury.

Tuesday August 21 1956

Still no news from Salisbury. The days are a little empty, with everything conspiring to make them more difficult to fill. D. and Julian are working hard at the new show, to start with. I am in a room with nothing round me, and no library tickets yet, nothing definite to do except look for a job which is definite, and now I have to find another room. Really I'm more uncomfortable than I was in Birmingham! As if that wasn't enough, my leg is painful enough to drive me out of any chair after ten minutes. The pictures are the one thing. The seats seems to suit the pain and I'm forcibly distracted from it in a way that a book can't seem to manage at the moment. It's all infuriating, and I won't be put down or made cross by it.

On July 18 I went to see 'Cards of Identity' at the Royal Court. The theatre was rather less than half-full, but there was no air of failure about either the audience or the company. The play, taken from the novel which I thought dazzling, witty and unsatisfying, is dazzling witty and unsatisfying. Unlike the book, it has some parts which become commonplace as well as boring, and there is no suggestion anywhere that the author has any real theatrical talent, beyond his wit. All the same the doing of it has been worthwhile, for a few ideas that are

commonplace intellectual jugglings in the outside world have been aired for the first time in the theatre. That's a good sign possibly. The acting and production were on the whole good, and there was certainly a definite togetherness in the playing. Michael Gwyna and Joan Greenwood, as guest stars as it were, gave performances well above their excellent average. J.G. in special tiptoes delicately about on the most stylish edge of affectation. Nobody, except a young man named Christopher Fettes was really bad. Oh except Rachel Kempson as a very old lady, bent double. D. much admired Joan Plowright as the nurse, and I think, Peter Duguid as the doctor. For the second, I can understand her liking. As he was speaking, I remember thinking D. will like this specially, and being irritated at the thought. My irritation was partly at D's liking, as I knew she would, quite without affectation, something so actually uncouth. That's a poor word. What I want is a word meaning the opposite of 'urbane'. Bother. I must go.

Monday August 27 1956

To go on. When a performance irritates me in this particular way, it is because it is real, nine times out of ten. I feel the rather despicable irritation with it that I feel with such people in real life. Sometimes when D. praises such a performance, I feel, and occasionally express, a frantic hatred of the odd, and a wild longing for the normal. This little illusion needs a lot of resisting.

With Peter Duguid she classed Joan Plowright. Here I agree with her, except that I think J.P. a bit obvious. It is I must confess, borne in me sometimes, that I prefer acting that isn't real. I just stopped myself saying to D. of Joan P. that she doesn't act enough.

On August 1 I went by myself to a matinee of 'Look Back in Anger' by John Osborne. This new play has attracted more attention and more comment by far, than any new play since I first began to go to the theatre. What is much more interesting, it has also been more talked-of and written about in non-theatrical circles than any other play new or otherwise, in the same period. The theatre was about as full as for the evening performance, of 'Cards of Identity', and I may as well note that it has been more successful than any of the other plays in this first season, now holding the theatre for two months by itself.

I made another visit in the evening on August 13th, so I'll write of both together. The first time I went I was in a muddle over it. My reaction to the main character, Jimmy Porter, was strong, against rather than for, though I felt a vague disquiet, because I as well despised those whom he despised. I felt also with the impossible Helena, that I wanted frantically to say 'Rubbish' to his self-pity and rudeness, as I told myself they were. In addition, and this I knew, the play is a mess, and of a worrying kind. John Osborne doesn't seem to me to have any or scarcely any special dramatic gift. He can certainly write, but most of his best bits are contained in the great monologues of the central character. So difficult does J.O. find it to get him to reveal himself in action that the monologues turn for chunks into internal soliloquies prefaced by some line like 'I don't think I've told you this before, have I?' His next play will have to be a great deal better than this before I get excited over a great new gift for the theatre - as opposed to literature.

I found myself in disagreement with D. over it when I told her all this. She thought the play every bit as bad and worse than I did, but demanding of me that I see in Jimmy Porter T.S. Eliot and Jesus Christ, not to mention Mary. I said what I thought of him, and realised, as I

did so, that I had personal reasons for resisting him, not detached ones as I had thought. On my second visit I found myself listening and watching more carefully, and whether by luck or instruction, managed to catch the note of angry despair, which D. had lectured me about. Luckily I happened to see 'The Family Reunion' on the Wednesday, the 15th, and the character of Harry gave me fully the clue of which Jimmy Porter is only a tiny part. Jimmy Porter is young and it's all right for him to be angry and tear at those around him not out of hate but out of despair at their unreality. Harry is long past that sort of attack, he has gone down into despair and come up again and lived with it and taken it into himself. There is another dimension into which I shall never go, or never perhaps catch a glimpse of. The important thing is to remember its reality for others, and not to deny or distract oneself from, a sight of it if it comes to one.

Thursday August 30 1956

Oh dear, the days are empty just now. I am at last in a room which I can keep for a bit, and can join a library again. The worst torture has been being without any books. I spend the time waiting to be with D.

Both the productions (to go on) were pretty good, only marred by one or two performances. I thought Kenneth Haigh v. good and Alan Bates excellent in 'Look Back in Anger'. Mary Ure is too stagey and pale and non-U for the girl, Vivienne Drummond a joke. John Welsh v. good. Set brilliant.

The Family Reunion seemed to me very well produced indeed, except that some of the poor acting must be his fault too. Sybil Thorndike, though basically splendid had one or two barnstormy bits. Lewis Casson most endearing and right. Gwen Ffangcon-Davies not at all bad, except in the big scene with Harry, where neither she nor Scofield came to grips with it. Scofield good and bad as only he can be. Right, but affected. Heaps of it came over clear to me all the same. Patience Collier splendid. David Horne v. cheap. Cyril Luckham and Nora Nicholson though right, a little at sea. Olive Gregg dead-right, but a technically incompetent performance.

Monday September 17 1956

Salisbury.

10.30 p.m.

I've written to D., and marked my script and learnt a few more lines. And so - here I am waiting for weekly rep. to carry me off. It may be only one play, if I'm no good. At the moment I feel I will never learn what seems a huge part. Or if I do learn it, never be able to push it out again at the right moment. In just a week shall I be able to believe I'm actually going to do it at all? I don't feel so adventurous as I did at B'ham. I expect because I sense that it's more likely to be a real adventure. I wish she was here with me. And that's not selfish. She'd enjoy it.

But oh darling think of me tomorrow - and today week. I'm not thinking enough or firmly enough about it. I must keep silent and calm and think of the part and not myself.

Wednesday September 18 1956

Since Monday it's been only lines.

The company is young and extrovert - my first experience of that. I like them I think, but I don't believe I can see them at all through the little world of part and line I'm utterly in. Maggie Jones, peasant-plus, solid could be awkward, Helen Jessop silly butterfly could be more as is v. competent, Josephine Tewson, hyperthyroid, very warm but silly. Tristram Jellinek silly young conceited just ex-Rada. Snapped at ASM for prompting him in a pause, and then promptly dried stone dead twice. Don't know that he's vicious, but needs someone to tell him to come off it. No-one is even vaguely us, with only one dark horse, Ian Mullins, who is older and could be boring or nice.

Monday September 24 1956

Just back from a weekend with her in London. How I enjoyed it, so safe and peaceful. First night tonight and feeling almost as desolate as last Monday. See myself coming to complete disaster. Which is foolish, I suppose - I hope.

Don't know what the Co. thinks of me. So far I like them, and don't suppose I shall be any less taken by surprise by them than by anyone else.

Later.

The first two acts have gone without disaster on my part, but they haven't been at all good. I must work much harder, I can see.

The dress rehearsal was dreadful, starting again because of me. Dreadful for me, of course. The others all did well.

Thursday September 27 1956

In the end it went after a fashion. I was, and remained until last night, entirely unrelaxed. At every performance I have made one or two or more, stupid verbal slips, once or twice without knowing. More worrying, I haven't in the least caught a sniff of the character. Forcing forcing all the time. It is a long part and a difficult one to push off for me, but I ought to have done better. Last night the audience was ready to laugh, and this encouraged me very much. Although I am well aware, from seeing the show last week, that a roar can be raised by a by no means subtle stroke of comedy, it was inspiring enough, as it's bound to be, to make me absolutely better. Now that I have naturally touched one or two edges of the character as last, I may be able in the rest of the week to go further into it. The performance last Friday of 'School for Spinsters' was pretty good, I should think for 'weekly'. It 'went' splendidly to a full house, which, no matter what the actual quality of the performance, is not to be at all despised! The set was good, the costumes perfectly adequate, though in almost no case worn to the best advantage. The acting varied from very good to very bad, sometimes in the same person. Far the best was Josephine Tewson as the girl who gives up her lover to look after

her father. It is, by the way, an efficient sentimental very run of the mill play. She has a touching bright joyous quality in her personality, which made me think in terms of Tchekov - not fantastically. Her mistakes were due to lack of experience not taste. Margaret Denyer, the leading lady, playing the spinster aunt, has plenty of talent, but gives in to what I take to be 'reppy' tricks - looking at the audience at the end of every line; saying a line in a large incredulous voice; or much too definitely so as to produce an effect of startling eccentricity. Ian Mullins as the heavy father perfectly all right, but would be at once shown up by any actor with an ounce of distinction. Likewise Bob McBain, as the medical student son with a comic drunk scene. There were one or two very bad performances. Helen Dorward simply hasn't any talent. Sad for she is a sweet little thing. Tristram J. is very self-confident and very bad. He annoys me on and off the stage most because he is most like me. A horrible thought but true. I find it difficult to believe I'm worse than he is. Perhaps it is that he has unblemished self-confidence in HIMSELF, which I, thank God, have been made to lose. There's nothing nasty about him, he's no Mark B. Indeed he passes for charming, I think, in most places, with his picture-collecting and 'my mother was in the Aldwych farces.' If only the poor cow could realize what a worn-out furrow he's ploughing.

She sent a wire to say that she was coming this weekend. I do hope the weather is good. 'The Marquise' the next play, is being produced by John Maxwell, who was at the Arts with D. in the 'forties. He is a tall ramshackle unshaven bald grubby man, very quick to the point of nervyness, with a great deal to say, all good, and a very Oxford way of saying it. He is a bit of a ruin, I'm afraid, but will make a great difference to me if I stay here, to talk to at parties. I probably do sound like Tristram J, you know. After all, the producer of this said I made him a Coward chaplain!

Friday September 28 1956

Rehearsals of 'The Marquise' go well. I shall be all right in it, it's a small part with no range in it. In 'Both Ends Meet' I've been cast as an old man again. Very good for me, too. If I'd had 'Jimmy Scott-Kennedy', I would probably have been all bright and brittle. As it is, Ian Mullins is playing it. He will be all right and of course is much more experienced than I and therefore stronger. And he would certainly be sadly miscast as a ex-Diplomatic Baronet, who has to tell someone off for being nouveau-riche. As I've written all this about the casting, I must have minded more than I thought, missing Jimmy. Partly I had adjusted myself to that part, and don't like being disturbed. Partly, I suppose, that I do want to play youngish characters after all.

Later.

And yet the casting so far has been ideal for my purpose. A big, difficult unme part, to plunge me in and make me act, then a nice short easy and rewarding enough part, to give me a little relief. Then another but different sort, of hearty old man. I realised tonight (I'm writing in the middle of Act II) in the middle of Act I that the trouble is in fact only with my voice. My imagination and my impersonative faculties are perfectly adequate. My technique is good already. All that fails is my voice, and hearing it fail, I shrink into myself and abandon what the other parts of myself can manage, instead of making my voice follow. Not bad tonight compared with last night, but still only efficient in patches, let alone right.

Party tonight. Don't want to go much. Tomorrow is full, as I'm moving digs, and two shows and a run thro'. I want to be fresh for Sunday. Oh dear one, I wish you were with me.

Tuesday October 2 1956

The first night went fairly well, of 'The Marquise'.

I was, and have remained, in depressed spirits. Partly it's because I feel so bad in all the parts I play. As I come up to this new one this morning, I feel it grinding out of me, not flowing. Of course I'm inexperienced, and painfully out of practice in the little experience I've had. But I'm not working hard enough. Partly it's because I behaved idiotically over the weekend with her. I can't be bothered to write it all down. She will forgive me, I daresay, being the person she is. I am depressed at myself, for depending on her to understand and control my sulks, caused, I'm sure, by my loneliness and sense of inadequacy here.

Wednesday October 3 1956

For the last hour I have been working on the part of the old baronet in 'Both Ends Meet'. His first entrance is in Act II, Sc. 2, and only lasts for two or three pages. He is a flat two-dimensional old Edwardian diplomat, tetchy and irritable. The producer wants me to do a high piping voice for it. I've learnt the lines trying out a new voice already. I've gone thro' them dozens of times, and seem to get no further. I can get them mechanically perfect, so that it all means what it should. But every now and then I break down in despair because the voice and delivery suddenly sound forced, artificial, and absurd. This is the same problem of course, as the Scots accent at B'ham, except that a Scots accent is more definite a noise to recognise. I shan't know whether my old man is awful or absurd or all right until I'm doing it in front of them all, when I shall stiffen from self-consciousness and probably do it all different anyway. The answer is as always to forget myself and think of the character, and then I will at least be making the best of whatever characterisation I've got together, because it'll be relaxed.

Later.

I had a wire that she's coming this weekend, too!

Thursday October 4 1956

This morning was rather awful. Waited in painful nervousness, made worse by being ashamed of it, from ten until 12.45. When I did go on, I seemed to myself to be as forced as I had imagined. The trouble is that I might be good or bad for all I really know. I felt all the time within an inch of giving in altogether.

Saturday October 6 1956

Something happened yesterday - I don't know quite what, but my fear largely vanished. I didn't act any better, but I felt free, and alive, and relaxed - it was pay-day, and I had a new script and she was coming and everything was bright and happy.

Today has been a long grind, but it's over, and tomorrow is all lovely. Margaret Denyer, whom, I forgot, typically, to record, I kissed and cuddled at the first party, asked me to go to the movies tomorrow. I must have a word with her or it won't be 'playing fair'.

Oh my goodness me, how lovely everything suddenly seems! My darling, then, my dear sweet little one, come to me then.

Tuesday October 9 1956

Last night I was flat and dropped it badly in my first scene. The whole thing went well, but we two old men both dropped it. The second bit, with the quarrel was better. I felt tonight a little more 'in it', the character, I mean. I think, dispassionately (fairly) that the first scene is flat in the writing, too, and that I work too slowly yet to be good on a first night. I am still almost completely inexperienced, but I feel it coming now gradually. It'll be good to have a part with less characterisation about it, so that I can just concentrate on the pace and the speaking of it.

Thursday October 11 1956

'Sir George' went still better last night, apart from a silly fluff, about which I will not worry.

At rehearsal today 'Henry Moon', a nice pompous Bill Linnit part, I didn't do too badly. Kenneth Dudley is warm, intelligent, very sympathetic. He says just the same to me as Peter Aldersley, only less so because the part's easier. He keeps on telling me what to get over, which I nearly always know, so it's obvious that I'm much too restrained and underdone and lack projection. I listened carefully to all that he said to the others to measure what he'd said to me. He said much the same to them, in their different ways, as to me. So I was pleased. At the moment I am still so easily word-bound. I must work much harder at study before rehearsals, or I shan't get the full benefit of them. In this part and the next, I shall be all right I think.

Friday October 12 1956

6 o'clock

Spoke too soon. Oh dear oh dear, he told me after the run thro' that I was a cipher, no character facile and so on and so on. Did almost the whole of one of my scenes in front of them all. I just feel as if I want to give it all up. And Freddy Peisley told me off about Sir George and will be in front tonight.

Saturday October 13 1956

Run-thro' of 'K & M' a little better, T. Dudley reassuring and kind, so pendulum of depressive mania has swung other way.

Had a lovely letter from her yesterday. But even that couldn't cheer me up.

Ah then tomorrow.

Saturday October 20 1956

Any other thoughts overruled for the mo. by Reggie S. telling me this morning that there are no more parts for me after 'School for Wives'. He used the phrase 'we'll have run out of parts for you'.

It's very good to have it all straight, and a month to look round. Of course I'm depressed to be out of work, but I shall get used to that! The interesting thing to me is - what does he really think of me? He said kindly that I had obvious talent and that the jobs I'd had before were useless. I needed rep. and if I was free after Christmas and there was anything, I might come back. I must make an effort and ask John Maxwell about myself. Now for letters again. Oh.

Friday October 26 1936

Once I knew I was leaving, the tension slackened. As a result, I haven't so far fluffed once in my small part, and have been rather good, at my present rate. I am certainly having a very gradual initiation into the grindstone of the theatre. Now at any rate, I know I can manage the pace of weekly, and I am pretty certain that I've got my feet on the track, and it's just a question of walking, plodding, on.

It is a wonderful release to find, as I did in B'ham, that I don't finally mind what impression I'm making as a person. Or do I mean that it's only finally that I do mind? Yes. As a person, I am so much more fixed, and give so much less of my mind to what others are thinking of me.

Saturday October 27 1956

How quickly, by a glance or a word, one's spirits can be depressed, my goodness. I haven't thought about 'Lady Audley's Secret' because I knew it would depress me that I wasn't in it. Just a glimpse of the run-thro' did today. The two men seem worse than I feel, in appearance, for instance, I'm better, more suitable than either of them. The depressing thing is that I must be with all that advantage worse than either of them.

Tuesday October 30 1956

This weekend was as beautiful as any. Every day, every hour, and minute I spend with her, has some special wonder for me. I wish that it was a wonder at all communicable in words. My letters never tell her all that I want to say. Love can only be expressed through a few set phrases. What is it that is so precious to me? Physical attraction, community of taste - the words are dead. There is an excitement and a deep calm in being with someone who knows you so well, whose glance goes through you. All the minor zests of love are so wonderful, the choosing of food, or the casual 'Well, will you do - whatever-it-is - darling?'

The show went very well, and the boys were good. Hope my turn comes!

Wednesday October 31 1956

The news from Egypt is terrible this morning. I must do something about registering straightaway. Though whether fear backed up at a distance by conviction, is a respectable reason for not fighting, is a question that worries me. 'Respectable' internally not externally, of course.

In my calm, and probably most sensible moments, I see that all I need to do is to act. Experience, I know now, will bring out all that I can do. It's no use thinking about anything else, is it?

6.0

We have started to bomb Egyptian military targets. We.

11.30

What she must be feeling. And Mary. At least they have the cottage - not to run to, but to live in.

Friday November 2 1956

5.40 p.m.

Drunk at lunch with John Maxwell and Mrs. Henry Fairlie, who we picked up in the Haunch of Venison, and the main thing is that I love Dorothy.

Monday November 5 1956

Beautiful she is, perfectly beautiful.

We listened to and viewed Mr. Gaitskell's speech last night. Excellent, sincere, heartrending. Oh dear, oh please let them just stop, just stop.

I wish she wouldn't talk about her having my baby as if she meant it. She doesn't realize, I don't think, quite, how much of my dreams, fantasies, or whatever, are made up of imagining our making a continued life together, and of course a baby, a child, is the sign of that.

Tuesday November 13 1956

'The School for Wives' went very well last night. I was smooth enough, which is a great relief to me, but very little else. At any rate, I'm back where I was when I left Cambridge!

The weekend was lovely. I went up on Saturday, after a drink-session at lunch time with the girls. I went to tea with Prim. Oh what a sensible responsive dangerously sympathetic person. I never asked her about her work, only talked about mine. She suffers a great deal from that, I'm sure.

I heard the score of the new show. Thought it very good on the whole, so much more _shape than any tunes he's done before, and some lovely quiet ones. I liked best 'I'd Like to be Like You', 'Nothing But Sea and Sky', 'I Want a Man from the Mainland', 'Terhou'. and 'Let The Grass Grow'. Those are the tunes that first occur to me, tho' I liked everything in the score, except 'Make Yourself at Home' and 'It's an Expression'. The first I thought jerky and a bit difficult, never got going! The second not funny. J. was in a very sweet mood, as he has been for a long time. The opening chorus is v. good, gets you into the story, and is gay and attacking in just the right degree.

Friday November 16 1956

Party for Bob McBain and I over. Not very drunk, as it was only red wine. Enjoyed it very much.

Thought last night that I might find myself having Maggie D. tonight, but somehow did not get drunk enough, and the need never arose. I would have done if it had, and could have done had I made it arise. But my heart wasn't in it, which is why I didn't, I suppose.

Tuesday November 20 1956

So I'm working in Canterbury. I went down for the first rehearsal today. Not much impressed. The producer kept on apologising for doing Christie. There's an atmosphere of limpness and lack of application about. Still plotting, in the second week. The company is young and has no, as far as I can see, personalities at all, nobody with weight to say yes or no. The prompting was terrible and nobody complained.

Wednesday November 21 1956

Canterbury continues unpromisingly, tho' in some ways I am glad to be in a bad company at last!

Came back to find her very upset by a meeting she, J., Denis, Jack Dunfee and Phil Algar had with Gatti, in which G. refused to consider the releases and the transfers into the new show. He turns out to be bone-headed and as money-mad as all the others. He said some very wounding things, among the worst being that if someone had been offered a fat Hollywood contract, he'd release them then. Also said the show owed more to the actors than the writers, 'if they'll excuse him.'

I've come to bed early 'cos I'm so tired, getting up at 7.0.

Hope she'll be all right.

Thursday November 22 1956

Fresh developments. Plans to postpone new show for nine months at least. Even then they may not get the people they want, but they will show Gatti that they are shrugging away from

themselves the stigma of disloyalty or underhandedness - of undermining the unity of the company by asking them if they'd be in the new one. That is his view. Theirs is that if a friend of ten years' standing asks whether there's a part for him or not, one says yes, and in any case, 'S.D.' is deteriorating and must have new blood. Postponing the show of course, won't show Gatti anything - he'll simply think it prudent, and so it's a difficult horrid dilemma. Whether their duty to the new show shouldn't be to go on and do it, if necessary bear the horror of a different cast. Or whether they should concentrate merely on getting people out of 'S.D.' This is the central distressing problem - that Gatti Dunfee at XX, cannot ever be brought to see the possibility of something that is making money as usual coming off or being revived.

Friday November 23 1956

Canterbury.

Last night to Prim's, at seven, when we were joined by D. at eleven. I was glad that I went early, for we talked of Mary. It was a great relief to me simply to hear of her from another angle, and, even more purging, to hear Prim call her a small destructive personality. D. doesn't, can't, talk of her to me, and that suppression is doubled for me, by having to suppress in myself, a deep rejection of Mary. I have pushed it and pushed it away, trying to believe D's estimate of her, and feeling doubly guilty because Mary has never liked me and has stopped us therefore being comfortably at the flat. Now that D. has left and Mary is comfortably installed at flat and cottage, in the perfect privacy I broke, I was infuriated to hear that Mary had had people from her 'sex play' tour to stay and to breakfast and lunch and so on. Prim told me so many things which D. in her oh so blinding lovely loyalty had kept hidden. Mary's rudeness and awkwardness and ingratitude, and above all, her negatives, her eternal 'don'ts'. How I remember feeling if D. met Mary now she'd be everything D. disliked! Now her friendship with Martita fits in, and all the rest.

D. has not very far to go to see all this, I'm sure. I can see so many reasons why she can't yet see it. She's believed in Mary, and won't let herself be mean enough to stop. She awards her the excuse of a further dimension of suffering. She affirms that Mary is a better bigger person than she. What I must one day ask is, if she is a big person, why can she not take any big decisions? Why must she whine when she's out of work, and now that she's got an understudy in a West End show, whine only how awful it will be if it goes on tour and she has to be in cold digs? Why can she not abandon the theatre if she's unhappy in or out of it? She has had less to bear than Prim or D., and has shrunk under the strain.

Later.

Canterbury proves practically for me the uselessness of the Arts Council. They appoint someone who can't run a company, and give him no power against the amateurish house management. They give their 'support' with the magic of their name and a grant of £5 per week.

The rehearsals hang on such a weak thread that they might fall apart at any moment into a lot of people standing about saying lines. Every day produces another remark of classically slipshod carelessness. Yesterday Clifford Williams, the producer, said, 'Oh yes, well, there

should be a laugh there at the beginning of the scene, can't think of anything just now, so let's get on.'

Later still.

Saw the performance tonight - unexpectedly good - 'Springtime for Henry' by Benn Levy. John Ringham v. good.

Saturday November 24 1956

Letter from Income Tax 'saying' Mr. W. hasn't answered, and it's my responsibility. He really is the limit.

Funny line for today; I arrived at five past ten, ready for my entry on pg. five, to find the iron (safety curtain) still down, and one of the company sitting on the deserted stage, smoking and reading a paper in a quiet remote silence. 'Good morning', I said, 'Hullo', he said. At a quarter past ten the producer came on stage. At twenty past ten, he went off again, saying, mildly, 'Look, how does one work this iron?' The rehearsal began at about twenty-five past ten, with a coffee break at 11.30, tho' everyone muttered, rather, that we didn't have it at eleven. So little did he say that I was away by 12.15, with his permission. 'No notes, only technical things.'

Tuesday November 27 1956

Slightly depressed to catch sight of my name in a letter here, read it, (of course) and find it was from Judith Harte. It included the sentence 'Angus is all right really - a bit of a chatterer and it would be nice not to be patronised.' A jolly good smack for having read someone else's letter. Quite true. Any my goodness, I'm lucky in getting a little shock like that to pull me out of the unawareness which grows on me like a fungus. Particularly here, where I had let myself comfortably relax into silent superiority.

I had been down before that, at not having progressed in correcting everyday or acting faults. It sounds Samuel Smiles put like that. I must work, all the same, S.S. or no S.S.

Thursday November 29 1956

Letter from Reggie S. offering me job as his personal assistant, and parts in 50% plays too. Have accepted.

Tuesday December 4 1956

Perhaps it's one of the penalties she has to suffer for defection from Mary, is my sense of exclusion, of falling short of her highest standards. Of therefore a certain feeling of having been cheated, since she accepts me on every level except the one she minds most about. She sometimes dislikes me for being so much less than Mary. That's my fault for being less than a man.

Thursday December 6 1956

Saw 'The Heiress' here tonight, Marigold Sharman excellent. Such control, and pathos and clarity. John R. not good. Didn't get in her way, but not good.

Tuesday December 18 1956

Salisbury.

Here again and glad to be. Panto rather chaos. Work in office vague as yet. Leg bad again. Must remember not to talk too much, and never to say again that I've been in 4 musicals, particularly 'S.D.'

Thursday December 20 1956

I must sit down, and have a good think. My leg is bad again, and that seems to take my attention off things.

Wednesday December 26 1936

I must take stock of myself.

Returning to Salisbury with confidence has made me take many steps backwards. I must think more of what I have been engaged for, and less of myself.

Tuesday January 1 1956

3.30 a.m.

D. wants to marry me. She has asked me if I have really thought of the problems. She wants to. Have I thought of the difficulties? Perhaps not, but it was deeply deeply thrilling to find that she wants to marry me.

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 33

Angus Mackay

Being the twenty-ninth

From

To

Sunday January 6 1957

I will marry her.

Sunday January 13 1957

It has been a full and pleasant week. We had a very good talk last Sunday. I must wait a little longer, and be strong. Julian came down to see the show, admired Len very much, and would have him at once. If D. and Denis agree. I worked in the office a few mornings, just at clerical work, and am amazed and overawed at the degree of responsibility he seems to be offering. But he is so open that I can't feel any deep misgivings. I only want not to be lazy or fearful.

Sunday February 10 1957

Just back from London after a weekend with D. in time for an early DR tomorrow of 'Meet Me by Moonlight' in which I have a very big and responsible part. I'm not bad but so stiff and miss so much.

Monday February 11 1957

'Meet Me by M', went excellently.

I think I was passibly rather good. Certainly I felt better than I ever have. I only hope D. likes it, even a little.

Tuesday February 12 1957

As when I played for Michael A., she thought I was very good but unpleasant.

Monday February 18 1957

All wrong about her comments as usual.

A beautiful satisfying w/e. While we were sitting quietly by the fire, she said, apropos of affaires generally, that I was the great love of her life. Not at all what she'd suspected.

Friday February 22 1957

Too much of the day goes past in forced chattering. It feels beautiful and free and warm for a time, and then suddenly comes the realisation that you have been lazing about capitalizing on work your mind has already done, your whole self slack. I hear myself saying what I deeply believe, and know to be true, too many times, for light reasons, thus bit by bit diminishing my original thought.

I must retire into quiet more. I was better when I wasn't so popular. I must find time to choose more carefully. I must. My letters to her are gossip; they have very rarely been more than that to her. Now they are only that even to me.

Tuesday March 5 1957

It is interesting that since my last entry, on which I haven't acted, I have had the first check of criticism. Maggie D. said the other day that I was mean. I didn't pursue it, which is interesting in itself, but have thought of it a lot, of course.

She is not an accurate person, and her comment means nothing new. My vanity has started sticking out, or, better, has grown with my relaxing into popularity. She would naturally be the one to notice it first, being at once older wiser, and more observant than anyone else here. This shows me how true it is that, if you don't go forward, you go backwards, and that you can go a long way forward and back on different planes at the same time.

I have worried far more about being lazy than about Maggie's comment. As always with me, I find I worry more about being found out than about the work not getting done. Most of the work I love doing. It is the thinking of jobs to do and doing them, that I wake up in cold sweats about, or rather sit having cold sweats about. It doesn't actually keep me awake.

Wednesday March 6 1957

There are going to be hard feelings about Doreen Andrew coming back for the revue.

I must work hard against my prejudice against her. I despise her for accepting the invitation to come back at all, that's my trouble.

Friday March 9 1957

Deep deep happiness, after a rather dull party, for Jo's leaving. Letting myself into the close, tiptoeing between the houses, the wide sky, and soft air, and my darling at the end of it all.

And not very drunk.

Monday March 11 1957

Beautiful weekend at Lyme R. and walk to Charmouth.

Bit of trouble back here over opening chorus. As she said of herself, 'I must be brave and calm or I won't get my way.'

Friday March 15 1957

6.15. In the box-office.

A very full week. Rehearsing all day for the revue, playing 'Mrs Dane's Defence' in the evening. The revue goes well though the mock panto needs pulling together a lot. Doreen Andrew, who Reggie said would be perfect for Julian and D. is v. loud, competent and peppy but not much more. When an actress is described as having bags of vitality, first, it always makes me think she hasn't got much else. As far as I can see, she has a rather ordinary personality – as an actress. As a person, she seems perfectly all right – bit silly.

Sunday April 7 1957

The revue did not go well. Terry Dudley was weak, weak, and Reggie's taste was bad.

She wrote yesterday that I must be firm about John Trevor, who plays Albert in 'Free as Air', as 'Terhan' is now called. She says she's in the first stages. She was partly joking, but it is a fact. When she presents it to me more strongly than this, I shall mind very much. At the moment I can't imagine her leaving me. I can just picture her sleeping with someone else, but I can't imagine her leaving me.

At the moment I am only vaguely disturbed. I find that I don't mind her wanting someone else physically. What I don't like to touch in my mind is that we might not go on together always.

Monday April 8 1957

Another letter to say she must just have been feeling lustful than night. Oh relief.

'Morning Departure' a success, loathsomely enough. Such glutinous war-glamourising rubbish. My part is entirely on the telephone. I was ungenerous to two people who mucked up their talks with me. It was partly my fault, too.

Oh dear, I am mean!

Sunday April 14 1957

Bristol Station.
Waiting for Dorothy.

The new show now called 'Free As Air', opened in Leeds last Monday, and judging by her letters and the notices, was a great success. It is difficult to imagine it not being successful now, but I did have misgivings that it might be too real, and too discomforting for an audience ready for a musical. I am looking forward to seeing it on Saturday.

At the moment I'm studying Teddie Deakin in 'The Ghost Train'. It's a typical '20s silly-ass-part, turning out to be the hawk-eyed detective at the end. Although it's not a long part (nor a good play) it's a part I can make a big mark in with the public. I notice that it's down in the programme-notes as 'his biggest chance yet with the company'. Dear Reggie giving me a build-up. 'Meet Me By Moonlight' definitely opens in July or June at the Globe. Sonia and Helen J. once away, we shall settle down, I expect, once the Repertory Festival (ugh!) is over.

This is the first week out (next week) for some time, and it has given me time to feel that I am making real progress, even a little as a person.

Tuesday May 7 1957

Up to date I have read the following new plays as far as I can inaccurately remember them.

? by Dorothy Rycroft.

'Fagin and Knife on the Table' by John Maxwell.

*'Four in Hand' by Michael Brett.

*'Akin to Love' by Peggy Simmons.

*'The Widower' by Cyril Campion.

'Gwendoline' by Geoffrey Lumsden.

*'Run for Your Money' by Alex Atkinson.

* Recommended for production.

'Miss Ducky' by Andrew Ganly.

*'Running Riot' by Derek Benfield.

'Samson on Sunday' by Ralph de Pomerai.

'The Unwary' by Douglas Ives?

'Apron Strings' by ?

'Plan for a Hostess' by Thomas Browne (produced but never published)

'No Joy in Heaven' by

'Rogue Prince' by Lyndon Brook.

'Angel in my Eye' by David Shelley Nicoll.

Thursday June 6 1957

Hull.

The tour of 'Free As Air' has gone very well, and the show opens at the Savoy tonight.

I saw it at Bristol Hippodrome, with three casualties, and thought it excellent then. Now it has been further tightened, and it is difficult to see how it can fail, given a normally receptive audience. Gill Lewis is exquisite, without giving such a very good performance. Michael A. gives a most inventive and loveable performance. D. is v. good indeed.

A few interesting business facts. As far as we can tell, records were broken at Leeds, Bristol, Oxford and Manchester. At M'chester, Val Parnell, the manager of the London Palladium, said 'You can't take more than £450 a night here' and was confronted with a return of £600. They can't have broken attendance records though. All seats were sold before we opened with 'The Sleeping Prince'. At Blackpool the business was terrible. D's royalty cheque was half the usual. At Edinburgh, business was excellent and audiences were the nicest of the tour. At Glasgow business was above average – theatre $\frac{3}{4}$ full – and reception terrible. For the first night tonight, there have been 3000 applications.

And here I am in Hull.

Friday June 7 1957

A telephone talk with D. Reception poorish for laughs, but lots of cheers. Notices rotten.

Before reading them, let me on the evidence of two extremely defective performances, table my own list of weaknesses. I thought the creation of the island a thought self-conscious. I didn't think the knitting-scene particularly funny. I thought Gill rather a special taste. I thought the islanders weren't individual enough.

Now, all these things I attributed to the defective elements that particular day. The show is supposed to have improved a great deal in polish, and will of course gain enormously by not being defective when I see it again. So now, let the critics come on.

Sunday June 9 1957

'Self-conscious' was, if possible, the one adjective most commonly used by the critics. Nearly every notice was unfavourable, those of the better papers being written in a tone of contemptuous pity. But they protest too much. They don't dismiss it briefly enough. And it's amusing to see them attempt to interpret a rousing reception adversely.

Tuesday June 11 1957

Still Hull.

'Is Your Honeymoon Really Necessary?' opened to a very full and ready-to-laugh Whit Monday house. The play itself was very rough.

I pitted myself against Graham Armitage, who has been here two years, and on the stage at least seven, being especially admired for his comedy and farce. In view of those advantages, I came off far the better. Even without those advantages, I almost came off the better. He is a slight and indefinite comedian, tending to get small muzzy laughs from only a small section

of the audience. He seems to me to have sacrificed a great deal to the sort of quick light patter that goes down so well with queers' conversation. I should know. Not to mention that he had the Ralph Lynn part by far the stronger of the two. He is, as a person, as he is an actor. Very much what I should be, if I hadn't been luckier than he. But I am childishly glad to find myself potentially so much better than he. He will not trust the situation.

Friday July 19 1957

I was rebuked today quite mildly, for talking too much about 'Free As Air'. Quite rightly. I'm glad it was no worse. I wish I felt the betrayal of D. more than the boringness of me.

All the same, I must make a resolution never to mention D. or the show or Julian, except WHEN ASKED. My God, I've been indulging myself.

Friday August 16 1957

I never write except to D., and nearly began My darling!

I've asked her to marry me again. She has written strange letters all this fortnight – just one line at a time. Do I really want her to accept? I ache for it.

I do want her to marry me more than anything. How strange.

Wednesday November 20 1957

There is a situation to be disentangled. I have already talked it over with D., and have been brought and come to the right decision. But I want to lay out the strands of the issues involved more clearly for myself.

Sunday January 12 1958

Hull again.

Last Wednesday I wrote to Mummy and Daddy to tell them that D. and I were to be married. So it's only taken me a year to persuade her!

The 'situation' I started to write about in November, is responsible for me being in Hull, and for the letter of resignation I shall find myself writing to Reggie before I leave here. I was left out of the panto and new play immediately after, and sent up here for a month. I was made to take my holiday over Christmas. Now all this is bad, but I would have only felt ill-used, had it not been a betrayal of promises and indeed of our whole relationship. My love for most of the company, and the turn the organisation was taking, was already on the wane. I shall in almost every way, be glad to leave.

Sunday January 19 1958

I have decided not to give in my notice yet.

I have been brought to this decision mainly because I have not been able to find in myself a better reason for giving notice than personal pique. For the first time at Salisbury, things did not go exactly as I wanted them to, and I have simply been sulking ever since. I am sure this is so, because I have not been able to come to a deep firm conclusion about it. It would have been good, up to a point, to shock Reggie, but I have not yet felt I was going in anything but anger. Added to this, it is running away just at the moment when my influence may be most needed. I shall stay now, if I can bear it, until we go on holiday in June.

Our wedding plans aren't progressing because we sort of aren't bothering. But there aren't any obstacles so far. M. and D. have behaved fairly well, though there are mysterious hysterical undertones in both their letters.

Playing up here is a relief, after Salisbury. The company seem so much more alive, and less miserable. I am worried slightly by a tendency in me to fluff. I'm not sure how noticeable it is to anyone else, but I am sure that, even if the fluff itself isn't noticeable, the resulting passing uncertainly must slightly disturb the audience. But I may exaggerate it. I enjoyed playing Finch M'Comas, principally because I knew I was almost the only one speaking it properly! No, I enjoyed it because it was rather difficult for me, and was in agony because of the speaking of the majority of the play. Almost no one spoke script, and what's worse, nobody made any attempt to improve after the first night.

Thursday February 20 1958

We were married on Monday at Kensington Register office at 9.45.

Sunday April 6 1958

A fortnight ago D. showed me a letter to Geoffrey Russell, in which she set out all the preliminary questions to an investigation of the destruction of the Adelphi Theatre. I do hope something comes of it.

Tuesday April 22 1958

I leave here a week on Saturday

Here am I after half an hour in the pub, eating stew, with Act III – most of it – still to learn, and it's very warm.

I've very happy with most of our life still to come.

Friday April 25 1958

Met Katie Helme in the pub tonight. Waspish, bitter, mean. Said she hated 'Free As Air'.

Nobody – almost nobody – besides us, would understand, or believe, that I despise her because she hates the basis from which the show springs, not because she hates the show.

Wednesday May 28 1958

I've been at home nearly a month now. We go to Sark on June 12. D. is very rundown, though she won't admit it. Julian's b'day party tonight and more or less non stop social round now until we go.

Must write more often here. Always gives me pleasure to read later, if it's literal. I don't care if it's silly, but I do think it's interesting to note down social changes, let alone personalities.

Monday June 9 1958

J. and D. talking about start of 'S.D.'

Emerges that decision to put it on as it was, was Jack Hylton's and Jack Gatti's alone. The courage was theirs.

Saturday June 14 1958

SARK.

Friday June 20 1958

SARK.

It's been terribly hot and poured with rain. The fields and heaths and hedges and banks are as if planted with hothouse wild flowers, huge white daisies, blue scabious, pinks, enormous clover, campion, foxgloves, all twice the usual size. More birds and louder songs. Blue blue green green sea. Black cliffs.

Although we are holiday-making, the island still has its own secret off hand life.

D. is constipated, her leg hurts, and she has a huge festering sun-sore on her right cheek. But I am hopeful that this is the usual prelude to relaxation.

The other guests would fill several over-written novels.

Wednesday July 16 1957

I heard today that I am to go to Sheffield, first play, 'The Banbury Nose' by Peter Ustinov. Just where I wanted to go.

She took my measurements for the wardrobe.

Height. 6'	Forearm. 11 ¾"
Chest. 39"	Thigh. 22"
Waist. 29"	Head.
Hips. 38"	Nape to foreh. 14"
Inside leg. 31"	Temple to temple. 12 ½"
Outside leg	Circum. 23"
Back. (sh. to sh.) 16"	Shoes. 8
Outside arm. 24"	Gloves. 8
Inside arm. 21"	Shoulders. 43"
Calf 15"	Wrist. 6 ½"
Biceps 12"	Ankle. 8"

Friday July 25 1958

At the cottage,
Larches Cottage,
Dallington,
Nr. Heathfield,
Sussex.

Arrived here as with her, in pouring rain. Oh how miserable I was without her. Then she rang up, and now I can enjoy myself again.

Tuesday August 5 1958

In Chez Michele, before going to see the fourth anniversary performance of 'Salad Days'.

Whatever else I don't do, I must remain calm and think first of the actors.

Monday August 18 1958

Sheffield 11.30 p.m.

I must lie down and go calmly to sleep. Tomorrow I must be quiet and speak as little as possible. I must be quiet and look on.

Oh I love her so I love her, I love her.

Tuesday August 19 1958

I must be careful to be humble.

First impression is that it will be easy to conquer, although I wasn't good this morning and probably won't be in this part.

Geoffrey Ost, negative bank manager in looks. But strength of personality somewhere. Don't think will madden me.

David Paul and his wife niceish, goodish, artish. Jeanne Davies small, dresses too well, tiresome. George Waring jolly. Philip Stone, bit wet, over-dressed, careful. Victor Lucas - ?! Geraldine Gwyther, all dark-brown voice and pretty, might be maddening to work with. Ella Atkinson a little waspish, perhaps. Keith Barron, dark horse, quiet, queer? Robin Gammell, beard, accent, A.S.M. seems nice. Mary? Gregg, S.M. brisk seems efficient and nice. Valerie T? C? oombs, jolly, willing girl, with a big strawberry mark, poor child. Ian Clark, busy.

Wednesday August 20 1958

The truth is that I cannot get interested in any of them at the moment. It may be because we are all strangers together. Or I may be stale. They're so dull, humourless, or terribly terribly simple. No, it must be me.

Did better today. A surer grip on III and IV made me better in I. But II is the real hurdle.

Thursday August 21 1958

Philip Stone told me for the second time, what a marvellous job he gave up to come back to the stage, after being away with T.B. since '48. How dare people blurt out things like that? He said, too, 'I don't suppose you have any idea what T.B. patients go through' etc. etc. etc. How dare they? He is a humourless ass. Not as bad an actor as one might expect.

I am depressed by the low standard, and the lack of personality in the company. I should be its lode-star. As far as I can see, I've got the most brain and talent, if we're not going to mince matters. But I don't know how to do it, without being arrogant. The ASMs call me Angus. Had I been in the theatre since I was 20, I might stop them. But I think I shall have to wait for my next company for that.

Friday August 22 1958

Bemused by the lack of pressure in the theatre. No rehearsal this afternoon, spent four hours in library, watched television tonight, and in consequence feel very ADMASS citizen tonight.

Could not write her letter properly. Lots of pompous stuff about J. I do fancy myself in comparison with him, submerged jealousy, I suppose. I must just stop it.

Wednesday August 27 1958

At a performance of 'They Walk Alone' at the twice-nightly rep. A play with a certain absurd crude power. I was interested in the contempt expressed by the rest of our company, for this company. Member for member they are scarcely, if at all, as competent. In addition, nobody, as far as I can see, joyfully takes advantage of the far more productive conditions under which we work.

Monday September 1 1958

12.10 p.m.

First performance over. They enjoyed it; it 'gave them something to think about', but I don't think they were wild about it.

As for myself, all went without a hitch, except Act IV, where I had felt surest. I left out a line and the edge was gone from at least a page. I thought I acted fairly well, but I am very dissatisfied with my treatment of this part. Afterwards a party in the circle bar; local dignitaries included the Lord and Lady Mayoress, and the Master Cutler and his wife! Imagine. In addition Sir Steward and Lady Goodwin, who presented presents to every member of the theatre and staff, oh dear, I did get tired clapping. A string of pearls for the girls, a little leather case with a pair of scissors, nail-file and a penknife for the 'boys', all good quality. They mean very well.

I am not pleased with myself but I'm glad it's over.

Tuesday September 2 1958

D. arrives today. I can't believe it. The first night over, and to be with her again.

As much as anything last night, I was interested that the directors to whom I spoke seemed satisfied, and the general air of the party and the way in which the people responsible for the theatre comported themselves towards those to whom they are responsible, there having been a falling off.

Monday September 15 1958

She left on Saturday. She saw the show twice, and her notes have given me a great push forward. I look eagerly, instead of timidly, to the next straight part.

Last night to an evening with two crashing pretentious bores. Dr. Gilbert Kennedy and wife. Like 'Lucky Jim' come to life.

Wednesday September 17 1958

My step forward has left me open to the return of ambitions I had thought I'd got rid of. For instance, I am now starting to wonder whether I'll be cast for the Gielgud part in 'The Potting Shed'. This is all complicated further by the fact that I am nearer a straight lead than anyone else in the company, and therefore would be relatively the most suitable. I must ask D.

Thursday September 18 1958

Went to see 'Reward in Heaven', the new play by Roger Milner. See what D. means by theatre. A little bit lacking in glamour, unlike shabby Salisbury.

Play fairly good for first effort. Third act wants a lot of tidying-up. And some of the playing doesn't help it. Maggie J. splendid. If she loses a few pounds, there will be nothing she can't attempt. Nothing. I almost decided tonight to be her first man, and start her on the road to self-respect! Must see about that. I cannot bear her to be wasted. I cannot bear it. Next best, Victor. Sweet in a very short and certainly very easy part, for which he was dead right and v. funny. Philip Stone too intense, looks at the floor too much. I expect he's still very nervous, so must suspend judgement. But I also expect that he will remain, finally, too withdrawn and humourless. He also was right for the part, more right than I, though I wondered when I heard the description of the part! Little Jeanne Davies unexpectedly better than I thought as a cockney maid. Much better common. Still not really very good. Geraldine Gwyther and Ella A. in their different ways hopeless. G.G. no timing, bad make-up and stupid. Ella A. really timid and quiet, not acting it.

Saturday September 27 1958

12.40 a.m.

In a state of some irritation all day. Flared out to Maggie J. about Ella A. and have now sat up drinking the whisky D. left a fortnight ago. Had strong feeling of communication with D. just before 12.30. Just like a telephone call.

But even the drink hasn't allayed the irritation.

Sunday October 5 1958

It is strange how my diary is only the repository for trouble. Stupid! Not strange at all.

Still in a state, doubled now, of irritation at Ella A. 'Blew up' again, and Ella nearly heard – during the show. Quite disgraceful, and I must keep calm, calm, or I shall hamstring any chance of improving matters here.

Oh God, I wish she was here all the time.

Wednesday October 8 1958

I have been as depressed and 'down' as I've ever been today. The standard of the company and the uncongenial personalities of so many of them, make me long to get away. It seems hard to find a single decent reason to stay.

Thank God D.'s here on Friday.

Monday October 20 1958

Yesterday heard the score of 'Inside Out'. My favourites – in order –

'We Three'

'Moving In'

'Here for a Long Long Time'

'Red or White'

'I Can't Stop Smiling'

'When You're Not There'.

Thursday December 4 1958

Today gave my notice in. I'm leaving this limp dreary theatre.

(Friday December 5 1958)

Sunday December 7 1958

Friday was the day I had chosen to give in my notice, to take effect from the middle of February, when the Shakespeare, 'Love's Labours', closes. I had chosen it as the day before the cast of the Christmas play went up, so as to give Geoffrey Ost no loophole to escape the conclusion that I was leaving because of him. Alas the cast-list for the first time this season went up a day early, in addition to which he told me on Thursday night that I was not to be in it anyway. I countered with my notice, suggesting that it would be only sensible to leave at the end of 'Dodo's', December 20. He asked if he could think it over, and arrange a meeting for Friday morning.

Now naturally my exclusion from the Christmas show (the second year running had he but known) on the disingenuous grounds that I must be tired, increased my irritation, and my contempt for him. I know Nicholas Stuart Gray's plays, and I'm more right for them by a long chalk than anyone in this company. Keith B. comes nearest to them (and, of course, Maggie Jones, but I exclude her from the Co.) But I don't think it altered by a word what I would in any case have said to him. He offered me more money, and the faintest hint of putting any casting wrongs right. But I couldn't in the end, resist saying the things I had said in so many conversations, with other people, and myself. I told him I felt the theatre to be limp and dreary, the audience to be unawakened and complacent, only because of lack of exciting guidance. That I had never before worked for a producer who went to sleep during a rehearsal, and told him how I had deliberately watched him all through one whole scene of an 'Original Hermione' rehearsal, saying all my lines in an 'are you listening?' voice, and he

never looked up from the set he was designing for the Xmas show, nor remarked afterwards on my mangling of the lines. He gives next to no notes, never watches curtain calls, 'hasn't seen one for at least two years', I'm reliably informed, so has no idea of audience reaction. Chooses as near to the same sort of play as possible every time, tow-toned N.C. Hunterish stuff, and then lowers it still further. All he enjoys is set-designing, and the routine-work. In other words, he has no sense of theatre. He ought to be a bank-manager, and his present work is exactly as fraudulent as a bank-manager's would be, if he took home the deposits with him every evening and didn't spend them.

He has made me more impotently FURIOUS by his nothingness, his tiny complacency, than Reggie, dear Reggie! could by his ruthlessness. He at least is alive.

At the end of my statement (which did not include the last two pages, by the way) I also said I had never worked with an actress so purely incompetent, not so much bad, as one who simply did not know her job, as Ella Atkinson.

When I had finished, he said, 'I accept your criticisms like a wet sponge.

~~Friday January 9 1959~~

~~I don't care, but I enjoyed my superficial talk with Maggie D.~~

~~I enjoyed it because I didn't have to think.~~

Tuesday February 3 1959

Must begin to write.

Saturday February 21 1959

One of her main failures, from her own point of view, is that she has made her own feelings so plain that it inhibits her men.

But not me.

Sunday May 3 1959

Tomorrow I go off to Cardiff to rehearse for my first television appearance, on Tuesday in a programme of Julian's music.

Monday May 4 1959

Cardiff.

Dreary Royal Hotel.

Rehearsal in room in hotel; depressing because the producer and producer's assistant never reacted once to our programme.

Depressing because we heard a tape-recording, and it sounded like Julian, - as usual, but I thought I sounded less so, now. From the front, as it were, and plus personality, I must be different, or I could never have got away so centrally with the parts I have.

Wednesday May 6 1959

The programme went smoothly. Television is loathsome. Degrading to an actor not to be alone with his audience. Even films are spared the indignity of unrehearsed cutting. I am grateful to Julian that my first 'T.V.' should be with friends.

He and I came back to London together for rehearsals, and read the notices of the John Osborne musical, which I saw at Bournemouth. The most disastrous notices I've ever read, all echoing, for a wonder, exactly what I said, that it's boring, and you can't follow it, and it doesn't work, so the question of bad taste never comes up. Poor man, he'd allowed himself to be interviewed today, before his hurt had been soothed. Fatal. Oh, I do hope he does manage to face this fruitfully.

Monday August 10 1959

Dorothy and I played our first joint engagement together in Salisbury on July 6th and week, in 'Hay Fever'. While we were there, I heard I was engaged for the season at the Bristol Old Vic.

Today I went to the first rehearsal of the first play of the season, Garrick and Coleman's 'Clandestine Marriage', which opens on August 31.

Mary part is a bit limp, though I daresay, like Faulkland, the more popular part of the play in the 18th century.

The company, Newton Blick and James Cairncross. No comment. Len R. The same. Peter Jeffrey the same. Michael Griffiths, tall 'saturnine', withdrawn, disapproving?, smug?, lovely voice, felt he was the only centre of real dissympathy in the lot, elastic-sided boots. Peter Bowles - said 'Hello, Angus' when we were introduced for the first time. Tall slopping red cardigan, aquiline nose, plump cheeks, black curly hair, elastic-sided boots. Ewan Hooper, small, squashy-faced, good, so far, Scots. John Harwood, ASM, regular features, quiet and self-effacing. Edward Argent, DSM more appealing than at first appears from over-casual suppressed, intense-manner. Margaret Courtenay, luscious, bosomy, common, Sharp, very ordinary actress, some force. Annette Crosbie, small, blonde, slightly protruding teeth, seems tentative, but is determined and definite beneath. Copes well with confessedly unfamiliar period.

Barbara Barnett, red suit, white shoes too tight and heels too high, lots of beads. Juliette Grecco hair, straight from RADA reads badly, doesn't know her place, not surprising.

June Watts ASM. Renoir hair. Susan Engel, big, dark, sexy, breasts, v. good, subtle accent, businesslike. Robin Phillips ASM, sensitive(!) good face, humble, quiet. John Floyd, company and S.M. young (22?) good-looking, composed in his job, of extreme thoroughness and force of personality. In all other departments of his life, a quivering mass of giggling jelly.

John Hale, producer.

Vital, vital, vital. Kind, enthusiastic, and painstaking. Right.

Wednesday January 27 1960

Bristol.

We are in the middle of 'Hooray for Daisy!', D. And Julian's new Christmas show here.

I have had a horrid half-season. None of the parts suited me. Although I have not been bad in any of them, none of them until now, gave me an opportunity. I have been very unhappy indeed. But my part in this show is marvellous, and has almost made up for not being asked back for the second half of the season. D. although promised a part, has not been asked back either. We are both such a success in 'H. For D.' that John H. must feel guilty.

Monday February 15 1960

I must keep notes of opinions of 'Follow that Girl', their new show which follows 'Salad Days' into the Vaudeville on March 17.

I have not yet read the show, nor will I, I think, till I've seen it. D. and I like all the numbers, except the 'Transport' number which isn't funny enough, and has no tune either. 'Follow that Girl' may be too banal. I hope the two boys can do 'Life Must Go On'.

Denis C., Geoffrey Russell, and J., all are mad about Susan Hampshire, who plays the girl. So are Peter Gilmore and James Cairncross, who play her lover and father. D. hasn't seen her act yet. I have misgivings about Peter G. D. likes Ann Grayson so far, and isn't sure about Grazina Frame or Bridget ? being 'us'.

Tuesday February 23 1960

D. likes Betty Wood, brisk, cheerful, professional. David Rider, character. John Morley, out of it all. Marion G. Hypochondriac?, certainly oddity somewhere.

I've met Grazina Frame, and thought her sulky, cheeky, silly and attractive.

D. saw Susan H. Great quality. Direct, radiant. So that's that, for the time being. Hates the lyrics of 'Follow that Girl' and 'Lovely Meeting You at Last'.

Thursday February 25 1960

D. says:-

Sheila Chester quiet, frightened.

Jennifer Schooling brash, not sympathetic.

Stella Brett, nice, pro., chummed up with Maggie D.

Peter Gilmore bit tiresome, but improved when Denis shouted.

Susan H. still nice and very good, better than Valerie.

Denis rejected new duet for opening. Said tune was feeble. He's not got parlour scene funny enough.

Sunday March 6 1960

6.0 p.m. Mitre Hotel, Oxford.

Down here for the opening of the 'Salad Days' tour. Very noisy indeed here in the residents' lounge on the first floor, overlooking the High.

Travelled from Didcot here, with Miles Malleson; quiet, gentle, acute, detached. Told us of his play 'The Fanatics', first done in 1927, giving Ursula Jeans and Alison Leggatt their first parts. D. mentioned two earlier one-acters of his, written in 1916, just after he'd been invalided out of the Army. He said 'Oh yes, I nearly went to prison for ten years for those. I'd come out of the Army, and decided that war was a mistake, and wrote a play about it. Everyone got very stirred up, and a question was asked in the House of Commons. The Secretary of State for War, Arnold Foster, I think it was at the time, made a speech about it, saying it was hitting at the recruiting-drive and was almost treasonable. When he'd finished, someone from the Labour side, Ramsay Macdonald, I think it was, got up and said, 'Has the Secretary of State read this play?' After a pause, Arnold Foster said, 'No', there was a general laugh, and the matter was never mentioned again. I was in the public gallery and heard it, and that's how I escaped going to prison. But there was about a month when every knock at the door might have been the police.'

His appearance is hardly worth describing, since his deformed but appealing chin, sharp nose, loose cheek-wattles, and incredible toupee are the same off and on the stage or film.

Oxford seems to be dominated completely by Teddy-boys and girls.

Friday March 11 1960

'S.D.' tour very good. The show has its spirit back. Anyone seeing it now would not be surprised that it had run six years. These last two and a half years, I mean. The theatre was booked out for the week before it opened except for a few seats at the Thursday matinee.

D. has been more irritable about 'Follow that Girl' since she has been able to concentrate on it. She finds the young people's lack of technique more and more nigglingly irritating, while still seeing their special qualities. Susan Hampshire is no longer the pearl she has so far been.

She cannot move without picking up her dress, and seems to be withdrawing more at any complaint. But a first dress-rehearsal, in period, is always testing, and she may recover. The orchestrations were elaborated and had to be cut down. Long arguments with Phil Martell, Dorothy's and Denis' doing 'Evening in London' sounds awful, D. says, and she loathes the Mermaids as she has always done, but, as before, it will probably be a big success.

I must record my premonition that it will be a tepid success, and run about eight months.

D. is out all the time, - it is now 2 a.m. and she's still out – and I find that I have to make a slight effort not to be good about it. I don't feel anything at all about it, but my silly self-dramatising self makes me see it like that!

Went for the last fitting for my new dinner-jacket for next week. Black, not midnight blue as my tailor suggested, narrower double-breasted lapels than before, trousers 16" at the ankle, 20" at the knee. Braid, and silk lapels.

Saturday March 12 1960

After I'd finished writing, D. came in at about 3, a bit tight after a session with Jack Gatti, Prim, and J. Jack had seen the dress-rehearsal, and his complaints were the end, Victoria not singing 'Song and Dance' alone at first, 'Why aren't I playing the boys' parts because I'd be so much better' (meaning me, but not such a serious complaint perhaps) and he couldn't hear anyone at all. More seriously, he took back all his strictures against Peter G. who he thinks will be very good, teddy-boy hairstyle or no. This is an advance. And tho' he thinks Susan H. not as good as Valerie Gearon, she is good, and he does like her. This is a relief.

D. was confirming my view of Pat Routledge that she is very nearly first-class, but like Lally Bowers mars it by touches of too-conscious, too artificial vocal fooling. James is, of course, James. J. Has apparently already forgotten that James is inferior.

*Unfair to J. Who 'was so worried by Newt's uncertainty that I found myself being grateful for James!'

When D. said, 'Oh, isn't it wonderful to think of – Newton?', J. thought she was going to say James! When she taxed him with it, he said 'Yes, but you see Newton may be muddly on the first night'. Even muddly he's in a different class from James. Marion Grimaldi, except for her singing, is pretty disastrous, cannot point, cannot lift.

Oh, Jack G. thinks 'Follow that Girl' best no. so title perhaps alright.

Tuesday March 15 1960

Last public dress-rehearsal tonight. Charity preview tomorrow. Ugh! With Princess M. And Tony A-J there. At this stage of the engagement, that will probably brighten things up a bit.

D. now feels Peter G. will be star of night, and Susan H. a good second. She's only worried about the parlour scene, where Susan H. isn't quite right, too serious or not serious enough,

I'm not too clear about that. And 'I'm Away'. She has now decided that it isn't just Newton's uncertainty or Marion G.'s limpness. It's the words not being right for the number.

She thinks 'Tra-la-la' is marvellous, and 'Song and Dance', and 'Follow that Girl', also good 'Lovely Meeting You At Last', and 'Solitary Stranger'. I predict 'Doh Reh Mi', 'The Mermaids' and 'Evening in London' will be hits again, so things look hopeful!

D. only one to suggest curtain up in blackout for opening of Tralala.

Saturday March 19 1960

Well, they booed on the first night, a little, and clapped quite a lot, and the curtain was brought down quickly without giving the last reprise, or Dorothy and Julian a chance to appear to face it, which may be the wisest decision. I was not carried away once, and found the show lacking in grip, too quiet and under-projected, so that each scene had to begin afresh as if it were the opening of the show. The construction of the show may have contributed to this, of course. A second visit will be interesting. But the first night was definitely flat from every point of view. What hellish occasions they are only tolerable if the evening is a riotous success from start to finish, whereas they ought to be arranged to dignify a failure.

The bookings are extremely good, at the moment.

Thursday April 7 1960

The Royal Hotel,
Portree,
Skye.

6.0 p.m.

Here for a week, to give D. a rest. I feel guilty coming here really.

Second visit to 'Follow that Girl' was with Susan Gerig. It had certainly picked up a lot, and was almost passing muster with a more well-disposed house. The applause at the end was good, though the rounds and laughs during the show had been poor. The cast were still terribly under-projecting and under-pointing. Since then (Monday March 21) they have had some very very good responsive houses to which they have responded themselves. They are now playing up better, but still not enough. There have been certain rewritings and rearrangements, and I shall see it again in a few weeks, if it's still there. But I must record that, whatever they do, it will never now be a good show. First, too much of its material is too old, and too poor, second, they have found another poor leading lady. I didn't like Susan; she can't get over, and that's the end of it. It doesn't matter what she's like – she doesn't get over.

By the time we arrived on Skye itself, I was surfeited with Highland scenery so that a two-hour 'bus journey from the quay to our hotel through more of it did not made much impression on me. But it's quiet and our hotel is plain and comfortable, we've both had hot

baths, are very sleepy, will have a drink and dinner, and look at it all with different eyes – and muscles – tomorrow.

Monday May 16 1960

First rehearsal for 'Not in the Book' by Arthus Watkyn, which we do as the first of two, at Cheltenham. Producer, Nicholas Garland very dark, earnest, very young, slow, inward, not uninteresting but not yet at all a good producer. Naive.

Anthea Linex, ASM, comely, jolly, shy. Ralph Nosseck, leading man, lost, slightly bitter and defeated and will become more so. Bewildered by pressure of opinions he can't understand. Rich Rydon, caricature of American, wildly defensive and unconfident. Geoffrey Dennis, old twenties actor, double-breasted grey flannel and all.

Edward Hardwicks, son of Sir Cedric, shy in a composed way, rather awkward but charming. Small, long upper lip. Anthony Carrick, tall, thin, conventional stage hanger-on, boring. John Karlson, pathetic gentility.

Play very good little light comedy.

Sunday September 14 1960

Heard the score of 'Wildest Dreams' the show D. and J. have written for Cheltenham. Anna Sawson, D., Denis Quilley and I play the leads.

Favourites in order:-

Red or White
On the Tip of my Tongue
We Three
Please Aunt Harriet
A Man's Room
This Man Loves You.

Big hits will be:-

You Can't Take Any Luggage
We Three
Quite Something
Red or White
This Man Loves You

Saturday October 22 1960

Warwick Arms Hotel, Warwick.

We've been playing for four weeks now, and have been a great success everywhere. In Cheltenham the House Full boards were out every night, indeed the boards had to be specially painted for us. The audiences laughed a great deal, and we were cheered every night. None of this was thanks to the management. They had refused us a second week, 'because in our present circumstances, we cannot afford the risk', and now came crawling to D. and J. to do a return week. Enormities during the week of playing had included inviting two London critics – 'Times' and 'Telegraph' – without asking D. and J.; finding we had to play the matinee with 4 instead of 10 on the stage-staff, which meant we had to play without the front-cloth, because there was no one to pull it up and down, and the actors had to help move the furniture. Peter Powell, the director, and Bill Bland Wood, the manager, passing the buck. P.P. indeed went to London on the Tuesday and never came back, until the Friday for a fleeting moment to say 'Oh if only I'd been here!'

Exeter was a darling week. The papers carried a news item saying we were beginning the last five weeks of live entertainment in the South-West. The Royal Exeter is the last theatre in Devon and Cornwall.

Our receipts speak for themselves:-

Monday Oct 3	£84.12.0
Tuesday Oct 4	£137.16.6
Wednesday Oct 5	£189.4.0
Thursday Oct 6	£232.11.0
Friday (mat.) Oct 7	£73.2.6
Friday (Ev.)	£232.8.0
Saturday (mat.) Oct 8	£224.4.6
Saturday (Ev.)	<u>£278.1.6</u>
	<u>£1452 - - - -</u>

This last Sat. Night was capacity. They hadn't had a play since the spring. 'Salad Days' hasn't been here. It was the merits of the show passed round by word of mouth alone that sold it. Mr Gwilliam, the manager, coarse, money-minded, but theatre-loving could have sold the theatre many times over for offices. On the last night he said that the Mayor couldn't park his car because of the crowds and repeated many many times 'It's a lovely show – we haven't done as well with anything for ten years.' That's poetry from such a man. The stage-carpenter said to Dorothy on the last night, when we had been cheered to the echo, 'Well, you've made the old place live again.'

Coventry, beastliest of nothing places, was a great let-down at first, very slow, but gradually warming and filling up. Nasty modern straight-circled theatre, very difficult to gather the house with a glance. Geoffrey Russell of Linnit and Dunfee, came down and was very rude about our leading lady – 'deformed' was one word he used – brought with him a despicable person called Ian Keith, and talked of 'Hooray for Daisy' till the end of the interview, when he said 'You'd like me to say something definite about this, I suppose. Well, I wouldn't risk this in the West End, would you?' D. and J. said casually, 'Yes'. Thursday night they sold it to David Hall, who put on 'The Caretaker', a tall, dark, nice-looking young man, whom I don't quite take to.

The show is a genuine success. We're all four good. Of my list of favourites,

Red or White
Please Aunt Harriet
A Man's Room
This Man Loves You

Are all hits, and in addition, so are

Zoom Zoom (mine)
Nelderham
As the Days Go By
Girl on the Hill

Numbers not getting the rounds they deserve because they're quiet, probably, are

When You're Not There
On the Tip of my Tongue

Of my 'Big hits' list, (on the whole, cynically compiled) only Red or White and This Man Loves You have turned into hits. Of the other three, We Three isn't done quite well enough, and the other two aren't good enough in themselves. The Luggage number I've never liked. Retelling Shakespeare in Cockney is the most boring of unfunny jokes.

The Company is most delightful, its good will streams over the footlights, and is one of the main elements in our success.

Visitors during the fortnight have included a party from Stratford, Derek Godfrey, dark, distinguished, inward, pleasant, not very intelligent. Eric Porter, tall, ravaged face, big in every sense, except mind, 'camp', funny, trivial, pleasant, a living proof that an actor with sparks of greatness can be a person of little or no account.

Dorothy Tutin knocked and came in, saying 'Oh you were so funny, you did make me laugh so.' I said, 'Well, I think you're wonderful in everything.' She laughed and said, 'We sound like people think actors talk in dressing-rooms'. Small, eager, husky, with a long slightly forward upper lip, she is warm and thrusting and can't sit still for wanting to say the next bit so much. "Some people in the seat in front said 'Are they amateurs?' 'Oh nooo,' I said". In that 'nooo' was huge horror and pleasure all at once.

Sunday October 23 1960

Grand Spa Hotel,
Bristol.

Last Wednesday Ted Harwicke drove me over to Stratford to see Michael Langham's production of 'The Merchant of Venice'. It is the most admired production in one of Stratford's best seasons for some time, the first of Peter Hall's direction. It is a comparative failure, being based on the usual false premise that the play must be helped. The scenery and costumes are Watteauesque or Fragonardian, or Boucheronian or something, and very pretty they are. The permanent set has a lot of little steps and pillars and balconies, up, down, across, and through which the cast never stops skipping. The ring scene could scarcely be

left unaided, and every single line is represented in movement. The four are never still for a moment. That sufficiently represents the spirit of the production.

Other general notes. Except for Paul Hardwick as Morocco, Tony Church as the Duke, Susan Marryott as Nerissa and Pat Whymark as Gratiano the cast was more or less inaudible. Dorothy Tutin I could see might be marvellous, but I couldn't hear. Ian Holm as Lorenzo was utterly inaudible from start to finish and seemed frightful, tho' difficult to tell. I couldn't see either, because it was all underlit. Peter O'Toole was an ordinary Shylock, with a few bravura moments.

To sum up, a production that didn't start from the words and the characters, so that nothing had happened at the end of a line or a scene or an act, so that the play had no grip or impact.

Thursday November 3 1960

The George,
Cheltenham.

Received very well here, with full houses again. Peter Powell has resigned!

David Hall, who has bought the show for London, came here to a late and rather nasty supper last night. Rather a hangover. I quite like him. He is a great deal nicer than that sort of man generally is. Indeed we agreed about everything theatrical except Olivier and even then he thought 'Rhinoceros' was boring. Yes, I quite like him.

May 6 1961

Interim note. We opened with 'Hooray for Daisy' at the Lyric Hammersmith on Dec. 23, and received damning notices and did no business. The show was not entirely satisfactory artistically, but also the theatre does badly now. It's difficult to tell how much of a failure it was.

Saturday May 6 1961

Blackpool.

We are now on the sixth week of our tour. We opened on Easter Monday, April 3 at the Alexandra, Birmingham. The Alexandra is owned and run by Reggie Salberg's older brother, Derek. He inherited it from the father, Leon, who rebuilt in the thirties to look like a cinema. In spite of this, it still has the feel of a real theatre, mainly due to the Salberg touch. The main feature of the reopening, (for the show went basically much as before) were the electric motors, bought, I'm told, for some £600, with which the various changes of scene were (and are) to be managed. The manufacturers had guaranteed that they would go through a complete revolution in 10 seconds. This in fact took 34 seconds. The installation of the first took from 9 till 5.30 on the Sunday April 2. The dress rehearsal was due to start at 5. It started at 12.0 a.m., by which time the second motor was installed. The sets, I suppose, are better than before, and certainly by now the revolves move at the right speed, but it has taken

us a long time to get the changes quick enough. Our own staff are, I think, averagely good (or bad, put another way). The point is, to me, that this week with a good theatre staff, after five weeks, the show has run perfectly smoothly, a state of affairs which was never obtained with Liz, under whatever conditions. Alfred Farrell, my first stage director, is company manager, narrow, straight, stupid, strong principles, doesn't mind being disliked.

At Birmingham we took £2508-9-6 in the week. On April 10 we opened at the Bournemouth Pavilion. I – and Dorothy – were swamped with old friends and acquaintances. It was all very warm and touching. With the assistance of three houses bought right out by the Rotary Conference, we took £2951-18-0, tho' I think without the Rotary, we wouldn't have done much less. The Alexandra had been very well run, with a good tried staff, and Derek S. having all the lights turned up, after our designer, Brian Currah, - nice but inexperienced and led astray by the fashions of the day – had underlit the show to such an extent that we would have lost every laugh. Derek S. insisted on the limes being used, thank god, and oh! The relief as one began a number, to feel the blistering whiteness of light come up on one, and know you'd be seen! Indeed, we are now travelling with us the boy who did the limes at the Alex, so important is it.

The Pavilion, B'mouth, only reopened the week before we arrived, after being closed for some six months. Halfway through the fortnight of 'Salad Days' strange enough, it was discovered that the iron girders around the pros arch and safety curtain were corroded and unsafe. As the building has only been up for 30 years, this doesn't say much for its architect and builder. But then I remember that three or four years after it was opened, it had to be shut to be rebuilt – as a theatre – to the standard that first-rate touring companies required. This initial uneasiness of the council cost them about half what the whole building had originally cost, to put right. And it was at the very point where the additions had been made that it started to collapse. Meanness twice over. They have taken the opportunity to replace the orange-cream decor with a purple ceiling, magenta walls, canary-yellow capitals, a turquoise edging to the dress-circle. The people we saw called up many exhausting memories, but I wouldn't have been without them.

Brighton Hippodrome used to be circus and still looks like one. Circular, huge, (holds 2000) has very mixed programme, (naked negresses the week after us – we can't both be right) and I've never played anywhere harder to 'get over' in. Considering we were booed with 'Daisy' at the Royal here at Christmas, and got bad notices, we did splendidly – two notices out of three very good, and even the other said it was very amusing, tho' he was afraid the London critics would tear it to pieces. It was another exhausting week, our acting agent, our literary agent, our music publisher, Mummy Daddy and Lalla, Glen, and so on, all came down. We took £1958-16-0, a very respectable total, anyway, and considering everything, excellent.

On April 24, we opened at the Lyceum, Sheffield. It has been getting less and less good tours, and is to some people, a dying theatre. No reason why it should be. The first 'real' theatre of the tour. Not a cinema, all nothing plaster and too wide, like the Alex. Not a concert hall, too wide again and a dress circle too far away to see and nothing else like the B'mouth Pavilion. Not a circus, like the Brighton H'drome. But a theatre. All white and gold, narrow enough to be taken in at a glance by the human eye, which remains the same size whatever architects may decide. Eight or nine seats in a row in the stalls either side of a central gangway – sixteen or eighteen a complete row, that is. Three separate tiers – dress circle and gallery, with of course boxes to join these to the pros. arch so that neither actors' nor audiences' eyes can wander. The houses we had were the quickest and warmest so far,

but the smallest. They 'built' during the week, but only to £990-13-0. Why? Presumably because they – the people of Sheffield have got out of the habit of going to the theatre, as there hasn't been enough good on lately. But then there hasn't been enough good on lately because no one can afford to come. It's a vicious circle caused by the temporary decline of the theatre. The main thing is not to let the buildings be knocked down, which will be so difficult to replace later.

Sheffield is a most depressing place. Everyone was glad to leave, yet one must record that our audiences were very quick, laughed a lot, and cheered nearly every night. Saw the Playhouse Co. and there they most of them still all are. How awful. Delightful evening with George and Geraldine Waring. Surprising. He told us of Billie Whitelaw's awful behaviour at a party given by some local people. But then she may be a sort of Albert F. Success nowadays is worse than the champagne in slipper kind, since fashion decrees boorishness, which can destroy sensitive people.

Blackpool is another real theatre. Three circles, lots of gilt, excellent staff, and boring stupid audience. They cheer every night, notices and interviews ecstatic, but they don't follow the show. A simple little show like this is above their heads, there's no other words for it, one can hear them simply not understanding what one says. Added to which, it doesn't fill up as it should when one judges by how much those who do come, enjoy it. Cheers here, and at Sheffield, nine or ten calls, and then here the Friday is not as good as the Thursday. Of course it's always full here in the summer (whatever's on - one of the staff said to me 'If we had a washing machine on the stage, the theatre would be jammed to watch it.') Still we'll do much better than at Sheffield.

Sunday May 7 1961

Edinburgh
10 Grove St, Fountainbridge.

We did about £1400* odd in the end, and if you compare that with 'Free As Air' that isn't bad.

*£1431.7.- exactly.

In digs this week, and as it turns out, with Pat Farrell, the Co. manager, and Peter Redvers, the stage director. Pat talked a great deal about his past on the stage – he started with Ben Grest in 1922 or 3. My biggest thrill was that he met Ellen Terry. He saw her giving her readings, with Edith Craig prompting her in the Mercy speech, on almost every word. When he was taken round afterwards, she received him, talking nonsense for five minutes, partly mistaking him for someone else. 'Pathetic' he said many times. The truth about any old person is somewhere between the description of a man like him, and the rather more gushing approach of a Christopher St. John. He saw Forbes R. In 'Passing of 3rd Floor Back', 'Not to be blasphemous, he was god-like.' He played with Martin Harvey in 'The Burgo-master of Stilemonde.' He played with Edith Evans, and once having tea with her, he said 'Jo' (she was called Jo apparently – or Joe?) what does it feel like to have made it, and be a star?' This was 1924, he says, but possibly it was later. She said, 'I just worry every day that there may be some new person coming up to displace me, not the ones already there, someone new.' Well, I always heard she was silly.

And we hear from the landlady there are six papers with notices, six including the Express and Mail. Ugh!

Monday May 8 1961

The theatre was, (or looked) absolutely full. The house was rapturous. From the first time, they were receptive to a degree we have not yet experienced on this tour. The 'rounds' for the numbers, and the laughs generally, were very long and solid. We were back at the most successful nights of our very successful previous tour. This is mainly because the theatre tonight was full, when it becomes much easier to carry the house with you. The theatre was full tonight partly because of 'two for the price of one' but only partly. (After all that obtains at B'pool and Sheffield, where we were not at all full on the Monday).

The extra thrill of response was partly due to Edinburgh alone. We got some laughs we have never had before.

What the Scottish D. Express and Scottish D. Mail will say, I tremble to think!! We took eleven calls.

Tuesday May 9 1961

Nick and Basil flew up today, and they had a production conference this evening with D. and J. Nick's notes, all excellent (though not necessarily excellently all that was necessary) were almost exclusively to do with J's material. J. accepted with good grace up to a point, but hated it really. And said about the opening number, from which eight bars(?) have been cut, when really it should be cut by half, 'Oh it's useless cutting numbers to ribbons.'

Sunday May 14 1961

Aberdeen.

The notices were really excellent, absolute 'raves'. The business, though good, did not come up to our expectations. The audiences were splendid in quality. The only competition was the Lyceum, where an A.R. Whatmore company was playing 'Spider's Web'. Both theatres had cut out mid-week matinees all together. The King's is a sizeable very well-got-up place, elaborate gilt caryatids holding up the boxes, very good sight lines, holds about 1500, I should think. Dressing-rooms, for the first four of us anyway, were lavishly equipped, fitted carpets, polished wood fitted wardrobes, solid dressing-tables, free-standing, with chromium backed lights, marble surrounds above the wash-basins. Quite sumptuous.

Aberdeen very cold. Nasty hotel, the Caledonian, with 'canned' music playing in the hall. What are we coming to?

Thursday May 18 1961

Another wonderful press, a quiet reception but they liked it very much obviously. Yet the houses have remained small – average £139, which is hopeless for making money. Why don't they come in, when everyone who comes loves it, judging by the laughter and applause?

David Hall wrote yesterday asking J. and D. to cut their royalties. Fingers crossed. The show couldn't be more of a success artistically.

The theatre is charming, biggish, granite of course, like everything in this freezing noble place. It's run by two very nice men. Mr Donald and his son James. Most polite and proper theatre. They've been round to see us twice.

Friday June 2 1961

Liverpool.

Glasgow was exactly the same as Edinburgh. The first night was even more exciting, and the notices, though not so intelligent, just as ecstatic. Yet business was poor, even Saturday night not being full. The theatre is very similar to the Edinburgh, King's, though not so well run. Very pleasant drink with manager, Mr. Lumsden, fat, greasy black hair, jovially stupid. He had with him niceish people, among them a Mr. Trotter the managing director of the Scottish Daily Express (ugh!) But he seemed intelligent and very well-disposed. None of these managers are worried enough about their theatres being empty. We stayed in digs this week, recommended by Maggie Denyer. Mrs. Mundy, 17 Buccleuch St. Bedroom and sitting-room, four meals served in sitting-room, £5.5 per week. Her album was full of famous names, quite surprising, some of them – Zena Dare, John Mills, Irene Handl, Carol Browne, Bertha Belmore, Will Fytte, Evelyn Laye and Frank Lawton, Vanessa Lee and Peter Graves, Gielgud. We were comfortable, if a bit cold. The only disadvantage of digs is being tired and having to eat whatever she gives you.

Here in Liverpool we're at the Stork Hotel, a slightly raffish place facing the Royal Court across a miniature Covent Garden. The theatre is an ugly thirtyish affair, both outside and in, with flat boxes broken off from the line of the circle, and the decoration flat cubist plaster-work. Our advance here was a little better, £600 odd instead of £300; as they didn't have two for the price of one on Monday, as we have had in most places, we weren't full, but again we had a rapturous reception and press.

However, the business has picked up more than in most of the recent dates, and we were much fuller towards the end of the week.

On Monday Maud Carpenter, who celebrates her 50th year with the Playhouse here this year, came round to see D., who was in the Co. there in 1946-8. (The Playhouse too celebrates its jubilee this year.) She is a comfortable-looking middle-aged woman, small bright eyes, big double chin, drooping rather wet but jolly mouth, neat good clothes with a lot of marcasite about.

Decided Lancs accent. Decided altogether. We agreed to go over the Playhouse with her on Tuesday morning. We were met by her at the stage-door. A charming little theatre, though I dislike the neo-classical boxes, and so much prefer the rounded ones that I'm sure went with the horseshoe circle. She showed the semi-circular coffee-bar under the foyer, made out of an old beer-cellar, all cream and dark green carpet, very right as it's very low and strong colours would crush you. She pointed to two scarlet lacquer standard lamps, standing on the extended bases of the two pillars that hold the roof up. "They wanted me to get rid of these, and put up plastic shelves for cups, and I said 'Oh my god', I said, 'For why? For why? 'Look at these lamps, - they're adorable.'" She has a most distinctive habit of running phrases together, 'oh my god' being delivered in exactly the same tone as 'shelves for cups'. Thus when we were talking of young people today, she said, 'Young people today don't know what they want, and I think they'd like to be shown this is our bar.'

She is an amazing combination of simplicity and shrewdness. The simplicity has been the inspiration of a hundred stories. The shrewdness made the prosperity of the Playhouse a byword, and the combination produced the beginnings of a legend, by which she remains personally quite untouched. Of the stories I'd already heard, the most characteristic was Dorothy's, of meeting Maud in the wings on her way to the office with the takings. This was her usual route, and as usual she stopped for a glance at the stage. Exchanging a word with D. rather on the loud side, Maud, on being shushed, said 'Oh you can't hear out front. I've tested it.' When they did 'Lear' Maud hated it, of course, because it was gloomy, but came round to it in the end in a way she never did with 'The Three Sisters' or 'The Father' ('Why would a woman marry a man like that?') because Shakespeare usually does win. And she remarked one night, 'Yes, I quite like that bit I call his mad scene'. She also has a strain of ruthlessness, as might be expected. An actor named Cyril Luckham left the Playhouse after a long and popular stay of, I think, 12 years, considerable enough anyway for him to be presented, by subscription, with a gold watch on his leaving to try his fortune in London. After some year or a bit more, they met in London, where he had not been doing all that well, and in the course of the conversation, he suggested coming back. 'Oh, you can't' she said, 'You've had your watch'.

Lunch at the Adelphi began with her saying 'No, I won't have a steak, they're so expensive here, I'll have those things, what are they called? I had them with Alfred Francis when they first came out, scampi, that's it, well, to me Alfred Francis and scampi are one.' At the time A.F. was General Manager of the Old Vic. As she hadn't met Julian before, she

ANGUS MACKAY DIARY NO. 34

Sunday September 3 1961
(Entry of June 2 cont.)

Larches Cottage
Dallington.

...commented on the show, saying, 'Oh, it's a lovely little show, and the audience was so appreciative, and you had to take all those reprisals.' She paused, and then, 'Is that the word?', she said. 'Reprises?' I suggested. 'That's it', she said, reprisals.' This led us to talk of our respective companies, and of how actors are spoiled now, in her opinion. She said, 'You know, one of the girls keeps a mouse in her room, and we don't allow animals in the theatre. When we had Ena Burrill here, she was a nuisance, she kept two great white bourgeois in her room.' I led her to talk of herself, and she launched into the story of how she joined the Playhouse in 1911 as if she'd never told it before. Her elder sister, Blanche, was a very attractive girl, in every way, she said, and she, Maud, at 13 or so, always wanted to copy everything Blanche did. So when Blanche went to take a secretarial course, Maud had to go too. When they finished (and Maud didn't comment on what must have been her own brightness in getting through a course meant for much older girls) the theatre happened to want a typist. So off Blanche went. Maud was destined for the Post Office. 'They took one look at my face, and thought it would be better behind bars.' By an extraordinary stroke of luck, she was a month or two too young for the exam for the Post Office, and had to wait for the next year's entry. In the meantime, Blanche got her a job in the box-office. The rest of the story is written in the history of the Playhouse.

The secret of her power is in her simplicity, rather than her shrewdness which is acquired, at least partly. She told us much of her struggles with the board of directors. These must be set within the context of the knowledge that the Playhouse would certainly have closed years ago but for Maud. When any real issue arises, "I close my eyes and I ask myself, 'Do you really mind?' and if I do, I go forward." Dorothy asked who was still at the theatre, who'd been there in her time. 'Well, said Maud, 'Sue's passed away.' (Sue was the dresser who, on being asked by D. and Gladys Boot sharing as leading actresses a room occupied solely by Diana Wynyard in her time at the Playhouse, whose dressing-table was there, on a side of the room at the moment unoccupied, replied 'Oh, that's where the table for the flowers was.') Maud heard that she'd had a heart attack in the theatre, when she (M.) was away, and she said 'I was told she was very ill and mustn't have visitors or talk to anyone, so when I went in, the first thing I did was to say 'Sh! Sue!' Sue died after a short illness, and Maud was asked to read the lesson at her funeral service. 'I can't think why they asked me, when we had a lovely lay-reader, Trevor Baxter, in the company, anyway, I asked to have a look at the bits I had to read, because I wanted to know something about what I was saying with Trevor Baxter in front.' A mention of a curate ('he has got a jerky delivery') revealed that she went to church most Sundays. 'Well, Dorothy', she said, 'I mean, if you're grateful to someone, you thank them, don't you? Well, I believe in saying thank you to God. And you know I don't want to be blasphemous, but the theatre is a kind of church, and you've got to give yourself to it.'

I could not resist a deliberate attempt to get her to talk of the interesting people who'd played at the Playhouse in the past. I was not put off by the story of Gerald Cross attempting the same, and saying, 'Surely Miss Carpenter, you must have had many interesting experiences in

your time at the Playhouse?' 'Well', she said, pleased and flattered, 'There was a woman took ill in the dress circle, "coronary thrombosis." they said, "No", I said. But it was. She was dead the next day.'

My attempt was on a story of Mrs. Patrick Campbell. Bill Armstrong's name came up, and as a result Mrs. P.C.'s. I asked at once what she was like'. I can remember more what she said than what she was like', said Maud. 'You remember Dorothy, in the passage by the stage-door, there's a telephone we had put in specially for use in case of fire. You pick it up and you're straight through to the fire brigade. Well, I came down, and there was Mrs. Campbell on this telephone, using most awful language, shouting at the fireman she'd got, so I took the phone from her, and said to the fireman, "It's all right, there's been a mistake here, we've got a guest artiste here who doesn't know the theatre. She'd mistaken it for the ordinary telephone, they're quite close, you know.' 'But', I said, rather hopelessly, 'what was she like on the stage?' 'Oh', said Maud, humouring me, 'very flamboyant, you know'.

She talked a little of the playhouse, when it has been slipping badly, artistically. She hasn't really noticed that very much. Indeed the coming - and going - of the Shakespeare, Anna Deere Wiman's and Sam Wanamaker's short-lived theatre, only threw into relief the strength of The Playhouse, which is Maud of course. She said, 'Well, when I knew they were coming, I said "Good luck to anyone who can run a rep. in Liverpool" but I knew they'd never last the way they started.' She felt no vindictiveness at all, just pity for inexperience. They asked her to help at the end, but of course it was too late by then. The debt was £80,000. The perfect contrast between the two theatres for the Arts Council idiots who prefer the chic and ephemeral to the dowdy and lasting. 'Dowdy and lasting' has the structure to rise to the chic as the years go by vide Old Vic.

She remembered that they did 'One Way Pendulum' recently. 'They won't take anything new, you know', she said. 'One of my patrons said to me, 'What's the matter with that man [one of the actors]? Is he mad?' 'No he isn't mad", I said 'he's acting.'

Dorothy had reminded me of her attitude to plays as exemplified in her turning to John Fernald every first night as the final curtain fell, and saying 'Is that the end?' and I must record a fuller example of the same attitude. On the first night of 'A Doll's House', she turned to the producer and said, 'I've seen that play before. As soon as I heard that door slam, I knew I'd seen that play before.'

It was a happy lunch. She kept making me laugh, sometimes on purpose, sometimes not, but her simplicity saved her from any lack of respect. Her simple heart can make you cry.

As we were leaving, she said, 'You know, people sometimes say I'm like Lilian Baylis. I met her once, and she said 'You're a child' well, I hope I'm not like her, because she was big and fat.'

Sunday September 10 1961

Larches Cottage,
Dallington.

From Liverpool we went to the Grand, Leeds, a smallish, ornate opera house, delightful to play in. 'Free As Air' opened here to an ecstatic reception, and we expected full houses,

which we more or less got. Among the three best of the tour, financially, the audience were a bit quiet. To judge by the notice, it wasn't as good as 'Free As Air' for them.

The train call was over lunch-time, tho' the buffet on the train remained sealed the entire two hours (12.10-2.24) journey. We arrived exhausted somehow. Fortunately we were staying in the Queen's Hotel, which leads straight off the station. It was wonderful to stagger straight off the noisy dirty platform into polite luxury. We arrived in the dining-room at 2.30, on a Sunday, and were offered the whole of a very large and excellent menu without a flicker even in the depths of the eyes. The service throughout the hotel was perfect, and there is no doubt it was the nicest we stayed in. We had a big room with an anteroom and a private bathroom. Whenever we rang down for anything, it was there almost before we'd put the phone down. As an example of its knowing service, I went down on the Royal Wedding day, to watch a bit of it on a 'television' set put up in an unoccupied room. As it finished, two men, obviously the management, in black coat and striped trousers, came in to see if all had gone as I and the two other 'viewers' (permanent residents, I took them for) had wished. I slipped out, not wishing to talk, and went to the lift. One of the men had followed me, and, after I'd pressed the button for the lift, said jovially but, as it seemed to me, sternly, 'Well, where are you off to now, Mr. Mackay?' 'To my room', I said, defensively. 'No, no', he said, 'I meant where are you off to now on your tour?'

We met, and entertained to lunch, Joan's uncle and aunt, Clifford and Amy Booth. Very pleasant, ordinary, sensible people.

Next stop, Manchester.

Sunday September 17 1961
Cottage.

(cont.)

Manchester was the only place on the tour, besides the Northern D. Express at Sheffield, that had the London attitude to the show. The notices were bad, the attitude of the manager pitying, the audience cold, but not particularly small. Indeed, to judge by the testimony of Alan Webb, an extremely detached witness (and a very good actor) our audiences were distinctly above the present Opera House level. I'm sure we did just as well as a much-lauded American musical 'Bye Bye Birdie', which followed in, because obviously no one really enjoyed it.

The theatre itself is extremely well-kept, yet somehow unwelcoming. Standing on the stage, one sees a very high straight auditorium, with handsome but cold decorations in green and red and gold, but cold dark green seems to predominate. The manager, whose name I have suppressed, is a hopeless time-server. His manner was perfectly adjusted to D. and J.'s waning reputation. 'Bye Bye Birdie' was always on his lips, but one knew that if it didn't prove a big success in London, it would gradually fade from view. He was nice, but patronising. That, for me, was an advance, as of course, during 'The Sleeping Prince' in 1953, he never spoke to me at all. But J. was very cross.

The highlight of the week was an invitation to unveil the new Ford Consul Classic, a car. This offer came through the manager, and it presented itself to all of us as a boring but

possibly useful-to-the-show chore, taking place in a large stadium with floodlighting and a band and evening dress everywhere. We were told that the Ford sales manager for the north, and his wife, would take us out to dinner at the Midland. The Midland was where we were staying, so that part was all right, as we knew that the French restaurant, where they had a table booked was good. We dressed up, D. in her purple velvet coat and me and J in our dinner-jackets, and arrived in the manager's room to find our hosts in a suit and a dress and white coat. He was a medium tall, medium colouring, medium moustached man, with a Ford car neurosis. Instead of a car being an extension of his wife, his wife was the extension of a car. We sat down to dinner, and the poor man, glancing desperately down the wine list, was heard to murmur, 'There aren't any red wines' and we were served with an acid hock without even being asked whether we'd like red or white. I was sorry for him, but why on earth let him in for such a dilemma? During dinner, his wife, a handsome young woman of thirty three or four, jittering with the effort of living with this normal man, asked us, apropos, I think of a conversation about football pools, or legacies or something fabulous, what we would do if we suddenly had £20,000. Dorothy was sitting next to her, and apparently (for I did not hear at first) said, 'Well, I'd send my nearest and dearest £100 each, and back a play or two, and buy a house', and the woman broke in and said, 'And live in the South of France.' 'Oh, no', said D., 'I couldn't do that, you see, because all actors have to be based in London really.' 'Oh', said the woman, you mean you wouldn't give up what you're doing now?' D. stared at her in amazement, and turned and told me at once. I was amazed, too, and our surprise provoked her to say, 'But if you're happy in what you're working at, you don't really want money do you?'

We drove to the unveiling in his car; his wife drove in her own. (I must record that there was something appealing, if it was only her awful frankness, in her personality - this had led her, within a moment of meeting her, to tell me that she'd had to have a Ford when her husband joined the firm, and she didn't like Fords). Besides the hilarious double-talk inevitable between him and D., (since he thought motor-cars were a subject for serious conversation - perhaps the funniest moment, - D. 'How much is the Ford Consul Classic?' He, '£875.' D. 'Oh, yes, very cheap.' He, 'Yes, it is actually.' It is staggering how many people have £800 and think it worth spending on a car. He also told us that after we'd unveiled the car, on the stroke of midnight, twelve buyers of this new car would receive delivery of their new models and drive straight off in them, and one of them, he said triumphantly, is my wife, but she doesn't know it yet.' When we arrived, we found we were at a perfectly ordinary bypass suburban garage. We pushed our way thro' the usual collection (about 50) of juvenile delinquents and madmen you'd expect to find about at that time, 11.50, already clustered round a tarpaulin thrown over a car.

In the office behind the garage were more serge-suited men, all odiously patronising and stupid. (The garage was called Quick's!) One of them, obviously considered the clever one, handed D. a little speech. (The nerve.) Of course she refused, as she hadn't got her glasses and quite genuinely couldn't read it impromptu without, so I agreed to, and very silly it was. Meanwhile, two bottles of champagne had been opened, and conversation(!) was general. Our hostess in the middle of a lot of unintended insults from the others, is what stays with me. She said, 'You know, it's been marvellous meeting people like you, who are really happy in what they're doing. We used to be happy when my husband had just a branch to look after, but now it's too big and too important and the whole policy is decided from America. And I know he's going to give me one of these new cars tonight, and I don't want it. I'm quite happy with the one I've got, and this one will be too big, and I won't be able to park when I wait for the children at school, and I'll be terrified in traffic - darling, how wonderful of you,

you are marvellous.' This last to her husband, as she took the ignition keys. Now she may be an hysteric, there are those in the theatre, too. But I don't think so. I think she's a product of a meaningless and inhuman job.

D. and J. rolled back the tarpaulin, I said my say, and released the sweltering glamour girl, Miss Classic 1961, from the car!

Friday July 13 1962

Manchester (cont.)

Alan Webb took us out to dinner once, and we returned the favour. He is a man of extremely graceful manners, and a personality compounded of detachment and sociability in equal proportions. He enjoys company and conversation in a way so few people seem to now, as a game to be agreeably maintained and skilfully played. He told us he'd first come to the Midland with Noel Coward and Gertie Lawrence while they were all in 'Tonight at 8.30' together, and when they'd come in to dinner (very thrilled he said he was to be asked) everyone stood up and clapped while the orchestra played 'You Were There'. The Midland is not nice, except for the French restaurant.

From Manchester we went on June 18 to Newcastle, Mummy's home town. The Theatre Royal is a beautiful early nineteenth-century place, which I've always liked. Newcastle I liked also. We stayed in the best digs in Newcastle, Mrs. Dye. The usual sort of house, like all our mothers only dirtier. Food marvellous plain cooking, and she loves doing it. She hasn't been spoiled by all the horrors who must have gone there. That is, she leaves you alone, without thinking you're stuffy.

Sunday April 1 1962

Last night saw 'Luther'. Its final performance. A cheap and feeble play. For the most part very poorly acted, though the actors had little help from scenes that went on for some time making no point.

Most of the speaking was bad to the point of inaudibility. Only Carleton Hobbs and James Cairncross could be called really audible. Albert is still what he always was, a very interesting young man, with plenty of presence and power, but no more control than an amateur. All his 'emotional' acting is the result of teeth grinding, lip-chewing and muscular tension. His speech is most of the time, quite dreadful. On to his native Lancashire he grafts Olivierisms galore, coupled with (new to me, this) various pronunciations suggesting the phonetic representations of Irving's speech come to life (Gud for God, oll for all) all this with a delivery, gabbled to the point of not only inaudibility but the suggestion of a foreign language. And we are both very quick to remake a sentence from its gabbled muddle.

Great reception at the end. Play hopeless and boring. Albert made a speech thanking the cast for keeping up the standard for him. Clearly thinks five months a monster run. I would say is so eager to resist the crushing weight of that sort of stardom, that he has become a caricature of his real naïf self. Could be very good.

February 12 1964
Everyman, Cheltenham.

1st rehearsal of 'Macbeth'.

Ewen Solon, short stocky, paunchy, right slope to his face for 'Macbeth', a back-to-the-wall look. Good voice - in a church hall. Dresses like a lumberjack, has Alsatian dog at rehearsal and is too fond of it. Speaks well, knows the lines, seems serious about the part. Eric Lander, seems boring and smug. V. short. Lionel Thomson on Peter Laird's performance in 'Goodnight Mrs. Puffin' last night, 'Yes, you're quite good, but you can't afford to be any worse.'

A letter from David Herman, saying that his father has died, and that he has had to give up his idea of going on the stage for the time being. A most dignified letter. Poor little thing.

Thursday February 13 1964

Even Solon keeps holding up the plotting by discussing interpretation. Ho! ho! Eric Lander seems more business-like.

Friday February 25 1966

During our time at Cheltenham, which was very happy and fruitful (until the last three months or so, when I got terribly over-tired and was quite awful to Dorothy) we became interested in an ASM, David Gilmore. So much interested have we become that he now lives with us, as our son. He has the two rooms we used to let to students. He has become a permanent part of our lives, and is to be one of our executors and our heir.

I now want to record his progress in his first really big part, 'Gunner' in 'Misalliance' at the Belgrade Coventry. He has been taken off stage-management to play it. It suits him perfectly, which may save him as he is, of course, hopelessly over-parted. His imperfect accent fortunately is dead right, and he may get through without really knowing what hazards he has missed if the director doesn't muck him about. Alas! the director is a trainee of 23? We just hope.

We spent about six hours on his part when he was at home last week, and I think laid down a framework. It is exciting to see him catching on to our way of working, trying out different inflections, realising that it isn't all intuition, but a combination of intuition and concentrated hard work, fixing and sustaining the ideas that one works out or come to one.

Now I wait for the first news of the first rehearsal. Prim is in it, too. So we shall get double reports - I hope. I can hardly think of anything else.

Saturday February 26 1966

A long letter from Prim was waiting when I got back. (q.v.) Nothing from David. Bother. I did hope he would need to write a letter to us by this time, because of his part. Still, I really

must not expect so much. I scarcely wrote to anyone at 20, though I often meant to. I expect he'll ring tonight or tomorrow.

Sunday February 27 1966

David didn't ring up today. So perhaps there'll be a letter tomorrow, or Tuesday or even Wednesday.

Monday February 28 1966

A letter from David by second post. All is well. He seems for the moment happy in the part and no stupid ideas suggested to him. I don't know why I worry so much, because in the end, nobody can resist bad advice for him. He can either recognise good from bad or he can't. So far I think he can.

Some ITV people are supposed to be going to see the play because the director, William Bryden, is training under their scheme. I think nothing could upset me more at the moment than that he should be given a part on TV, or anywhere else, that might distract him from a hard acting apprenticeship. I want to see him more in despair over his acting.

Wrote to him to say print some of his new photos, really concentrate on his part to the exclusion of everything else.

Tuesday March 1 1966

Darryl Kavann, a nice actor in my co. offered to speak to Arthur Brough of Folkestone for me, and came in tonight to say he'd done so. So I had to write to David again - a letter 3 days running - giving him full instructions, because he's so apt just not to do it unless you tell him exactly how. And another envelope with the studs and cuff-links I'd promised him in case he couldn't cope with the stiff collar which I hope is provided!

Wednesday March 2 1966

D. was asked to audition for 'The Prime of Miss Brodie' directed by Peter Wood. Tomorrow at 2.

No word from Coventry. Not even Prim.

Thursday March 3 1966

Understudy rehearsal this morning to which Peter Wood came. Very pleasant. Let us get halfway through, and then gave some useful notes.

Lunch with D. She'd had squitters and felt bad. Still it didn't prevent her doing a very good reading - for Peter Wood, for 'The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie'. The part is a Scots headmistress, Miss Mackay!

He rang up tonight to arrange a meeting tomorrow at the Carlton towers Hotel at 12. It can hardly be that he wants to tell her he doesn't want her.

No news from Cov. Pity, as we haven't heard anything of rehearsals since last Thursday, when he had an hour on his part, and director and leading-actor agree with me!

Friday March 4 1966

D. went to the Carlton Towers, and thought Peter W. very comic, fussing over his Daiquiri, and saying finally 'This is the best Daiquiri whatever it was you can get outside New York.' How awful to have to go about impressing people. He queried her interpretation of the big scene, which was of course as per the stage-directions. Would she come and read again, having prepared 'the new interpretation', at 5?

We went to the Odeon, Balham, to see the new James bond film, 'Thunderball'. Bit boring. She left before the end. After her reading came to my dressing-room for a rest. They thought she did a 'marvellous' reading. Peter had 'no idea' she could do that sort of thing. And so versatile! Oh dear, I don't suppose he's ever seen her, except in 'S. Days'. She asked them if she had to remain in suspense the whole weekend. They were very emphatic about that so it looks hopeful.

Saturday March 5 1966

They want her! Peter has just rung and is in the middle of negotiations. He's asking £60, £75 after 8 weeks or production costs paid off, whichever is earlier, and a get out after 9 months. Third billing. He'll get the £60 and the billing, but no more, I should say.

A letter from Prim (Q.V.). David will be all right.

Sunday March 6 1966

Went to the cottage after show last night. Lovely day working in garden. Awful talk late at night. I can't write about it. I hate myself.

Prim and David rang up. As usual I forgot to ask everything I ought to have done. He spoke because he hadn't written. Seems all right. Was depressed about his performance towards the end of the week, but feels better after the run-through and going through the lines with Prim today.

Monday March 7 1966

I was right – the money is £60 and the billing is third, and that's all: a bit mean, as these things go, but of course marvellous money actually. Alec G. has asked us to dinner tomorrow night, so we had to wire David that we would ring him. Bother.

Tuesday March 8 1966

A very full day. Had to meet Daddy at St Paul's Hospital in Endell St. After all he may not have to have the prostate operation that was threatening. The drugs have been cut by half. He seems quite well.

At 4.30 an understudy rehearsal. After the show D. arrived. I went to Alec G.'s room to find him in a d-gown still, interviewing two very smart elderly ladies, who he told us afterwards, were both dowagers, Halifax and Faversham. He sent us on ahead, to a new basement restaurant, very pleasant and spacious and empty. Delicious Spanish food. He is very amusing telling a story, with great powers of mimicry and character-drawing by the way, and rather poor pay-offs. He is not very intelligent, and like most stars I have met, takes care not to draw you out in case you are! Of course he passes as an intellectual among actors.

I rang David during the meal. He was feeling a bit flat, I'd say. The house hadn't been full, for one thing. He said he'd done some bits worse than he'd expected, and some bits he'd never be able to do at all. The very first thing he said was 'Didn't dry!' I said 'Were you nervous?', 'Nervous?' he said, 'I was soaked in sweat and at one point in the hour I had to wait before I went on I thought I was going to wet myself'. Oh yes, he's an actor. He thanked us for his book – the first volume of Shaw's dramatic criticisms, and I said 'It's not very thrilling.' He said, 'It's marvellous, I'll read it tomorrow.' Which is his way of saying thank you for all your help. I'll do anything to please you.

I wish I could interpret so easily his attitude to my asking for an account of rehearsals. Obviously we want to know how he worked, how much, how much outside rehearsal, what criticisms he got during, how he progressed during the fortnight, why he was depressed in the second week, how, in fact, he takes production. Now, of course, I perhaps shouldn't have asked him so explicitly, as all these processes are still and perhaps rightly mysterious to him. Perhaps he senses this self-preservatively, and both times has laughed with embarrassment. To describe may be to destroy at the moment. Umm!

Wednesday March 9 1966

D.'s first day of rehearsal.

Lots of children. Peter W. Woffly lunch at adaptor's house – Oh! And reading afterwards. Vanessa R. very slow.

Sunday March 13 1966

Cottage alone.

D. rang at about 1.15 to tell me what David was like in 'Misalliance', which she saw first house yesterday.

Much what we expected, very touching in the beaten bits (the easiest effect for the young) not too bad in the long speeches, over which I expect he'd slaved. The beginning, mock-heroic bits not bad; over all, just passable. Except for one odd and worrying fault. She couldn't understand for a long time why his performance was less effective than his actual saying of the lines would warrant. His body was quite relaxed throughout. Even in the passionate bits. How odd! And how difficult to do! I'm not desperately worried about it however, as it 'may be an attempt to relax.

My only moment of worry was D. saying at the very end, 'I've not seen such a divorce of body and voice since Mary Llewelin.' An ominous comparison.

I remember I had to tell him often in 'The Critic' to be more on his toes, figuratively and literally. He is rather flabby, vide the tummy which we must get him to hold in.

What can we best do?

Thursday March 17 1966

A lovely letter from David on Tuesday, all about his part. At last he is absorbed in acting.

On Wednesday got 'The Alcove' by Tom Espie from Elspeth Cochrane, to give to David Calderisi, my room-mate, for possible production. He liked it, and goes ahead. Good. Last night D. rang David, and he is coming on Sunday, tho' it'll only be for a few hours, as he has a call at Brighton for 2.30 – the first leg of the 'Lock Up Your Daughters' schedule.

She made all our points about missing a summer season and dragging on at Coventry doing bits. He seems to agree with us, yet doesn't give his notice in. It may be that he really does, as he has said once or twice, just want one or two more parts to show, before going to another job. But I would like him to give in his notice now.

At least he told D. he'd written to Elaine saying he wouldn't ASM anymore. Mind you, he said he'd never go on the tour just doing what he was doing before!

Monday March 21 1966

He got home on Sunday morning about 5.30 a.m., after a very slow drive, and left for Brighton about 12. I don't think he's much looking forward to the tour. Well, I warned him.

We got quite a lot said. He hasn't given his notice in, and still was resisting and suggested trying for Liverpool. He kept saying he was frightened of going somewhere where the director just sat slumped, and had no spark. He said quite genuinely, I think, that he knew he was lazy and might just fall into doing what would get by. And so on and so on. All the things I said to D. years ago.

Most important is that he just do a lot of acting, and learn to work hard on, and by himself. I hope we convinced him. He promised to give his notice in. I'll have another go at him on Thursday, when I go down to Brighton to see Lock-Up.

Wednesday March 23 1966

Fresh developments. D. rang me at theatre to say David had rung to say that Bob Carland had asked him to be in 'Cherry Orchard', to play Yasha. Rehearse during the tour, and open immediately after Hall, to play for a fortnight – the last play of the season. My first reaction was irritation, my second – but he must do it – that wonderful play. I must try and get over this ludicrous feeling that someone's trying to push him. They are just pleased to be able to cast a small part with a cheap young ASM.

It will only mean another fortnight, and will mean 2 real parts to quote for his next job. It is curious I suddenly feel quite cheerful and settled about him.

Thursday March 24 1966

The only morning for weeks that D. didn't have to get up at 8.0, I had to!

Got the 'Brighton Belle', arrived at 12 and picked up David. I think he was v. pleased we agreed to 'Yasha'. I said 'What if I'd been adamant?' 'Well', he said, 'I'd've put the arguments for it, you'd've put them against – and I wouldn't have done it.' I swear he's genuine, or I'm mad! It was just the two shows he wanted, - to say when he applied for a new job. And he's not on stage management for it!

It was a very happy lunch. He really does believe in me. He asked my advice about Inger, and said he'd been waiting to talk to me about it, which was why he hadn't yet answered her letter. I don't know how it will turn out, not really knowing her. But if she really is in love with him, as he at last admitted he thought she was, then it is not the kindest thing to let her come over at all. Let her get over it quickly. It seems to me unlikely that he will still like her as much as he did last year when he sees her again. We thought she was rather a dull girl. But then we hardly saw her – and she is Swedish.

He still felt he must justify being in 'The Cherry Orchard', but I think I stopped that by producing the Constance Garnett version I'd brought down. He'd already bought the Penguin, Elisaveta Fen – not so good, as he found out when he compared during his show. So he asked to keep it. But I was glad he'd bought the Penguin so promptly. He told me all he'd done that week, and how he'd liked Brighton, because there was so much going on, and he'd bought a green ash-tray in the Lanes. He said, ugh! Coventry after this!

It's strange, after all the violent arguments last year, how calm I am now! And how perfectly we get on. He agrees with me about almost everything, and even when he doesn't, I feel it's only because he's afraid of being too slavish. Yet last year I was too strung-up to notice what he was really like.

D. has imagined, and perhaps still does a little, that I have been obsessed with him. Perhaps that has been true. (It certainly is no longer.) But I am sure she underestimates, because I

have myself even in the middle of my obsession, the degree of his emotional need of me. It is something of which I never really thought for a long time because I needed him. He is not a specially demonstrative boy, which makes his real interest and deference all the more striking. He would be appalled to know that he does need me, I think, but he does.

I seem to be saying the same thing again and again. What I really mean is that I have not seen clearly enough, till now, his real need of me as a substitute father, because I have been so busy imagining that need. And I have sometimes been guilty of using him to satisfy my own need.

Now perhaps at last, I can become his father in all but name.

Saturday March 26 1966

Wrote him a huge long letter today, filling three envelopes, with a long lecture on working hard. It is difficult deciding when to be firm and when to be jolly. Still, it generally seems to work.

‘Lock Up’ wasn’t really very good, rather messy. Anna D. has gone off so badly. Oh dear.

Saturday April 2 1966

Marvellous letter beginning ‘I have read your letter several times, and agree with virtually every word!

He then goes on to discuss ‘Lock Up’, very well – and never directly mentions my stern bits. But the whole letter is a reaching-out for my approval and in earnest that he will try for everything I ask. Most encouraging.

Jeremy K. was off yesterday, and is today, because he went to Scotland for election night and hasn’t come back yet. I believe he went to congratulate an M.P. friend! Peter Wood came to see the understudy and told me ‘Your missus is smashing, absolutely smashing’.

She went off today at 6.30 p.m. having dinner on the train and sliding quietly into bed at the end of it, I hope. After I’d left the house, of course. She said to me, about 9 this morning, no last night, when we were sitting up reading, ‘Yes, but I am the most important person in your life, aren’t I?’

Has a doubt ever really crossed her mind? Surely not.

Tuesday April 5 1966

I took David Calderisi to the cottage with me for the weekend. He shares my room at the theatre, and we have become very close. He is a Canadian Italian, and superficially he might be thought the last sort of person I would get on with. On the contrary, as he is intelligent, funny, mild, kind, surprisingly considerate and tolerant, we have struck up a real friendship. He really loved the cottage, I think.

Saturday April 9 1966

On Wed. David rang up to say that he'd forgotten D's first night! He was upset. So that's all right. He also said Bill Bryden and Bob Cartland are to do some fill-in prods before Warren Jenkins takes over, and Bill B. 'hinted' at a part. I was nearly sick with rage and irritation. It's so unsettling all this dribbling on, for him, and of course makes it difficult to get him to apply anywhere else. My instincts are all against him staying there, and I have written to him telling him this time, to give in his notice.

Poor D. has been unhappy as Peter W. has tried to get her to change her performance, when he should really put a bomb behind Vanessa R. Bother. Still her distress was partly usual pre-London troubles, and her spirits seemed improved in her last note by Donald Albery consulting her over Vanessa's lack of drive. We must see.

Really David trusted me to get him to Cov. He might trust me in reverse.

Sunday April 10 1966

She's all right – so far. But I hope Peter doesn't do much more interfering, or she won't be. We had a good old talk about it all. But it always came back to the same thing, that Brighton would reveal a great deal more than Torquay.

Tuesday April 12 1966

I rang her tonight. It went very well indeed. But she seems a little down. I expect she got little praise. She wasn't mentioned in the notice. I shall wait till I see it now. David rang tonight at about a quarter to six – no cheap times for him! – to say he thought he ought to set my mind at rest, he'd given in his notice and written to six people I'd mentioned, and would start on the Contacts book tomorrow. It was a wonderful feeling, to have so completely carried him with me. And such a responsibility!

He went home over the weekend. Hitchhiked. Got as far as Evesham, by 1.15. Walked, hoping for another lift, till 4.30, by which time they'd got to Tewkesbury – 10 miles. Then when they did get a lift, it was from 'two maniacs, who I'm sure had stolen the car, and kept driving on the wrong side of the road at 70'. So I suppose he got no sleep at all. His mother apparently suggested that he might think of buying a cheap second-hand car 'that couldn't go very fast', to save hitch-hiking. I was rather surprised, as I thought she was very much against him having one at all, as he was rather a wild driver. It would hardly be worth it, I'd have thought.

His sister, Maureen, is now not going to marry her rather shiftless fiancé. He said Brendan Barry was going to be awful. As if I didn't know. Altogether a most encouraging talk. It's so pleasant to find that he knows our minds need setting to rest.

Wednesday April 13

Mummy, Daddy and Lalla arrive today for five nights! Help. Three letters from D. No, she's not depressed – it was just her usual telephone depression. All went well, and a friend of Malki came round, and said she was marvellous. The notice is excellent, so I don't know what to think!

Also letter from Reggie saying David in 'Mis' 'seemed to have a fair command of the stage, but failed to realise the possibilities of the part.' Just as I thought. That will fit well with what I have just told him. (David)

Thursday April 14 1966

In the train, on the way to Brighton. Letter this morning more hopeful. But now she's worried about money. Oh I wish I were better at it all! I can push more for David than for myself!

Saturday April 16 1966

Last night of 'Vichy'. Not really sorry. Alec G. gave me a large 'Art' book as compensation for not going on for him.

D. was superb in Brodie. As I frequently told her, I had never seen her better. Accent, appearance, performance, perfect. She a bit weepy at Peter's strictures, which are very slight ones really, and I am not sure that he is not right. If her work has any flaw, it is sometimes lacking the big bold statement for the b.b public.

As I described it to Peter, who called to see me on Thursday night, her first entrance should really be 'Oh, here's someone who looks just like a headmistress, behaves just like one and off. Any short entrance can blur for the ordinary audience. I think that is the only barrier between her and real stardom that she shuns the final simplicity as vulgarity.

Friday April 22 1966

Margaret B. gone. All alone for the first time for a week. Exhausted.

D. is now perfectly all right in her part. The Oliviers came round on Sat. night and told her she was superb. And all the Brighton set seemed to think so. So I'm not going to worry any more. She's home on Sunday. Eek!

Rang David tonight as Wolverhampton may want him. Very excited. He's coming along marvellously. He said tonight he's realised this last week all his inadequacies. 'There's no rep. with too low a standard for me', he said. Aaah! But true. And he's found out the difficulties for himself and realises now how right we were. He said he'd read 'Hamlet', 'Richard III' and 'Madame Bovary'.

He said he went to a Turkish Bath today (he's in Hall) and stayed too long (2 mins) under the sun-ray lamp and is now burning. He went there to get rid of his influenza.

Funny little thing!

Sunday April 24 1966

D. home at last, lovely day. Did not lose my temper for once. She seems to be happy about her performance, but a little distressed about dinner with Donald Alberty last night, when he said, apropos of putting 'Brodie' into 3 acts instead of 2, although Vanessa had been promised no more changes, 'What's she like? Is she an hysterical woman or can we break that promise?

!!

Tuesday April 26 1966

To cottage alone. As neither job has come up, I must take this opportunity while I'm free, to have a go at the garden, even though it means leaving D. again.

Lovely day, almost makes up for leaving her.

Wednesday April 27

David rang at 11 a.m. reversing charges as usual, to say Bill Bryden had said he could come back and play Policeman in 'Period of Adjustment'. How odd after Bill B. saying all those things to me at Brighton about David going somewhere small to make mistakes. However he's quite with me about saying no. So that's all right. Full of an idea to buy a car to drive back in on the last night and perhaps sell it in London. He's heard of one from his landlord – a bookmaker! – for £20. It can't go_! Have I got to trust myself to that? He's also written me a long letter here enclosing a sealed estimate of the 'C.O.' cast.

Friday April 29 1966

D. rang at 4.0, just as I was passing the door, so I heard, happily. To say that Peter W. had just rung to say would she play the nun in the prologue and epilogue.

My first instinct was to say no despite the honour paid to her talent and versatility. And my instinct is still against it though she herself is buoyantly for it. The urge to be versatile is not a star urge. Still if she's confident about it that's what matters. And it'll mean a good bit more money – I hope.

Friday May 6 1966

'Jean Brodie' a great success. Surprising to me! D. perfect in both parts, and hardly a mention in the notices. And when she is mentioned, she is lumped with the two men, who are ordinary to make the best of them.

She got her extra money – so she's getting £100 a week.

But oh, the lack of appreciation (in the press) of her fine skill, is hard.

Vanessa is lovely and a star, but one headline just says

'Vanessa..Perfection'. She is not perfect, she's too inexperienced. D. is perfect.

Monday May 9 1966

On Saturday afternoon, I went up to Coventry to see 'The Cherry Orchard' with David as Yasha. The whole thing pretty poor, with the play hardly working. That most awful of things kept happening, 'does this bit really come so soon?' It all went by without point and a lot of inaudibility.

Marian Forster, as Verya, was the best. Of course it's one of the easier parts.

David wasn't as bad as I expected. Except for a little sloppiness instance, he looked and moved well. A very good stage face. His accent and diction generally suited the part, and he was perfectly audible. He had one bad cross turning twice awkwardly to look over his shoulder talking as he went. His face he used too little. What effects he'll get with those eyes when he learns how to use them. At present his only experiment in expression is a series of small spasmodic frowns and puttings of the lips together.

At this stage I was just so relieved to find that he can act at all. That I have not been encouraging him without warrant.

David was late meeting me at the station, so I went on and we missed each other. I met Roy Parkes at the stage door and went to have tea with him. Before David arrived, R.P. told me he'd been late a good deal at rehearsal to the point of Robert Cartland, the director, saying furiously, 'You're the least experienced member of the cast, and the youngest, and you're the one who's late. If there were time I would sack you.' Now I haven't much time for Ray P. or Robert C. for rather different reasons, and I'm sure the David wasn't more than careless. But first I was cross at being exposed to R.P.'s pomposity, (I think you should speak to him') and second, he must realise the great importance of punctuality.

So, after a long and rather tedious session in the bar, (as we had to wait for the 1 a.m. train) tedious for me, but of course for David filled with goodbyes and last drinks and all the other sadnesses and gaieties of last nights, we finally got off. We were on the train with Mary Preston and a ballet-dancer friend – a man – whom I'm afraid in my drunkenness I virtually ignored. In self-defence I must say he had the most naturally unassertive personality I've ever come across. Mary, a nice sensible girl, a bit on the defensive because of the way her life is going, confirmed David's lateness. He sat there grinning as he does sometimes when I'm telling him off. I was really furious, and cuffed him hard on the head till he stopped grinning and sat staring at the floor in what I hope was guilty humble confusion. A long taxi-

ride with two other men in the taxi quite silent while we discussed 'Hamlet', which David had seen at Stratford for the first time last Thursday matinee. When we got home, he showed me a notice he'd written of it. Astonishingly good in places.

This afternoon he went for an interview at 6.0, for a summer season at Frinton. He seemed to think all had gone well. The man said he was the first one he'd seen who looked better than his photo. It sounds pretty promising. He has to see the man's wife, who's the actual director, on Wed.

We had a very good talk in the evening about acting and his future. The grown-up part of him is getting bigger every minute (um!) almost visibly. He has realised, for himself, that acting is a serious business, and that only he can make himself better.

Wednesday May 11 1966

He said two good things today. He thinks he's talked to too many people about himself, inviting criticism just for self-centredness, apart from anything else. People call him 'big-headed', 'arrogant', (Raymond P. did!) and he says ruefully from time to time that it's true. Never with us! Certainly he's independent, always trys (sic) to think for himself. Is too afraid indeed that he's being influenced. But arrogant – no! I see it quite clearly he's 20, very bright, how can he assert himself against the tide of mediocrity except by saying and doing things that seem (by virtue of this youth and his intelligence) arrogant to mediocrities? Poor boy, he can't accept yet that he is exceptional. It's a nasty acceptance to make. As he said, 'To accept that you're intelligent is a responsibility – like a conscience.'

Later on, I said to him 'Big headed? (This just before we went out to see D's play) Then why do you live with us? You tell me things you don't tell anyone else, don't you?' 'God, yes', he said, 'Why?' 'I suppose because you're my closest friend'. 'No', I said, 'It isn't just that. Well, it is, but you know that having chosen me to tell your confidences they will be tested and analysed and criticized and discussed by someone older and more experienced. I don't think that choice is the act of an arrogant person!'

(Oh, what joy it was to hear him call me his 'closest friend'!)

Thursday May 12 1966

David got the Frinton job!!! First play may be 'Pleasure of this Company', then 'Jane Eyre', 'Busybody', 'No Time for Love'. 'Present Laughter', a new thriller, and 'George and Margaret'. How perfect!

The director may be Joan Hoar from Camb. How odd. She calls herself Joane Shore.

Friday May 13 1966

He got his contract this morning. First play, 'Jane Steps Out' by Kenneth Horne! No part specified. But I hope he plays the young man, rather than the old butler or the peppery Major-General!! Already he's frantic. 'He's never off, he's got curtain lines; but in a week!

I can see myself in that restaurant they all go to after the first rehearsal, with all the adult (sic) actors so confident, and me!

The funny little thing!

I really love that boy.

Tuesday June 12 1966

David went off this morning to the Dinely Studios to the first rehearsal of 'Jane Steps Out' in which he plays Basil.

He went to the loo twice, 'It fell out of me' he said, and said going up the road, 'This man goes from embarrassment to talking about ethnology to chatting her up, to kissing her and falling in love, to falling out of love and that bedroom scene, and the quarrel and making it up at the end. I can't do it.' Aah!

He came in at about 6.10. Very calm and matter-of-fact (sic). Worried slightly by the low standard, quite rightly, but still least said. Thinks Joan S. all right, but a bit fussy. Sam H. Schoolmaster. Juvenile sexy figure, eyes too close together – Miranda Kerr-type, - but will almost certainly sleep with her, and then go right off her in every way, I would say. ASM on vac from London Univ. much more promising, I would say. Juv. girl mispronounced two or three words repeatedly in text. A bad sign. ASM not unattractive, but nothing special. But intelligent and will probably grow on him in the course of the season. Other girl colourless at moment. Only other young man tall thin and 23. Could be juv. too, and is playing old Colonel. More experienced. May be competition on every front from here, tho' of course David is not at all trustworthy on men's looks. Sybil E. sounds maddening. The whole season should do him all the good in the world.

M. rang up to say that Daddy had temp. and had been sick. Both she and L in tears. So dramatic I simply can't tell how bad he might be. Except that his temperature is only 100 and the doctor isn't coming tomorrow.

He said tonight over dinner, 'Do you know the others get all the lavatorial laughs, obvious ones, but don't even seem to see the humour of observation in the lines and often emphasise the wrong word, which would make them miss the laugh anyway!

It many me cry to think he'd found that for himself. How we've suffered from bad actors!

Wednesday July 13 1966

Very cock a hoop he was this evening, as the director had said, 'You must pick up the pace and your cues. David's got it right. Follow him! And he got no notes at all. Gosh. However, good to be a whale among minnows. If he works.

That girl, Wendy, is going to drive him mad. She sounds so stupid.

I talked a long time after dinner about being success-minded – perhaps being too much so. And wanting money. I must remember on these occasions that he is talking not to challenge me, but to air his own anxieties and ambitions.

He reckons to get rid of all his faults in these plays! Looking down for instance. Noticing that the other novices do it, too, has made more impression on him in a day than D. and I in two years! Quite as it should be.

Saturday July 16 1966

A lovely talk tonight. We are lucky to have found such a true straight forward boy. I believe he is really incapable of deceit.

He goes tomorrow. When he came back from his last visit to his home, he was even more convinced that it could be his home in a physical sense no longer. ‘I can’t stand the way they’re content to live’, he said. I think it was very unpleasant to him with his strong family feeling to have to say it.

I told him he would always have a home here – that this was his home now – as long as we were alive! Though he might have to keep us!

I would like to adopt him legally.