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MORIEL COLE

ACTT HISTORY PROJECT.

3 April.1988

Childhood.

Born just before the outbreak of the First World War. June 1914....which means in two months time I shall be 74. I was born in a small suburban terrace house in Willesden Green, which backed onto a quiet park. I had a happy childhood, although it was somewhat blighted by the fact that my Mother was a mild hypochondriac. My Father was an architect....dearly loved my Mother and was a marvellous Father.

After attending the little local primary school, I went to a secondary school.....The Brondesbury and Kilburn High. A depressing place, where because of several bad illnesses, such as an appendix operation, and all the childish complaints I insisted on proceeding to Pitman's College in Kilburn instead of taking my Father's offer to send me University. A bad mistake. However, I loved business study and to my astonishment, walked off with plenty of Firsts in Typewriting, Shorthand, Commerce etc.

In June 1931 I got my first job, left to take up a post in the West End then, as my parents had moved to Wembley Park and on my way each day to the station on the Metropolitan Line I passed a film Studio - Fox British, I thought it would be nice to work locally, so wrote off for a secretarial post, which I got and became secretary to the Publicity Manager.....Geoff Davien; that period was short, as the Quota Act was revised, but thanks to Fox British I went to Pinewood as secretary and assistant to 20th Century Fox's Publicity Manager, Hugh.....another happy time, as Hugh was often busy in London and I was left to deal with matters at the Studio end. Then after two films, 20th Century ceased production, but again thanks to 'Jonsey' the Studio Manager at Fox British, I was introduced to the Studio Manager at Ealing and started work there in the Spring of 1939 as secretary to him, Colin Lesslie and Freddie James the Production Manager on COME ON GEORGE. In addition to working for these three, I had to stay late to type the Call Sheet for the next day....and as COME ON GEORGE starring George Formby was out each day on Location, I often didn't get away until 8.30 p.m. There was no overtime in those days.

I remember on one occasion I was hauled up before the Secretary of the Company, whose office overlooked the Main Gate and reprimanded for being 10 minutes late, having been at the Studio for 10 hours the previous day. I was distressed. Colin Lesslie quietly spoke to Mr. Leslie and I was never checked for morning lateness again.

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