

BECTU History Project - Interview No. 10

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Interviewer: Wyn Ryder, Alan Lawson

Interviewee: Reginald (Reggie) Beck, film editor

SIDE 1, TAPE 1

Wyn Ryder: We ought to start off with where you were born and what sort of schooling you had.

Reggie Beck: I was born in what was known as St Petersburg, Russia, in 1902, February. My parents lived there till 1915, during the First World War, when my father gave up his business in St Petersburg and came to England and he put all of us, there were five of us, to school in England.

Wyn Ryder: Presumably you had already been to school in Russia.

Reggie Beck: No I had private tuition.

Wyn Ryder: In English?

Reggie Beck: Yes English. Resident English parson in St Petersburg.

Wyn Ryder: But you spoke Russian as well?

Reggie Beck: I spoke only Russian to begin with.

Wyn Ryder: Really.

Reggie Beck: Yes, of which I remember very little now.

Wyn Ryder: Then you went to school over here. It must have been quite a struggle?

Reggie Beck: Strangely enough it wasn't. I surprised myself, I fitted in quite well. I went to Malden College from 1915 to 1919 I think it was.

Wyn Ryder: What did you start as?

Reggie Beck: I had gotten what to do in life. I couldn't start for a long long time. In desperation I turned to somebody, I was very interested in the sound films as they were then, and after a long time trying to get an introduction to those people in the business, I went to the Islington Studios one morning where it so happened they were starting a new film and the assistant camera hadn't turned up on that day so they took me on, just like that.

Wyn Ryder: When was that, what date about?

Reggie Beck: I don't remember the exact date but I can tell you it was about the time that a horse called *Call Boy* won the Derby. I think it must be about 1927.

Wyn Ryder: So you had quite a long time before you were able to get in the industry? That must have been quite frustrating. Because I'm always terribly sorry for someone who desperately wants to get into the film industry because I know how much trouble it is to get in unless you have influence. How long did you stay in the camera department?

Reggie Beck: There again it's difficult to remember. I worked on quite a number of films. The first film was being directed by Adrian Brunel, I remember that, Ivor Novello was the lead and then. I fell into the hands of an American director called T. Hayes Hunter. He turned out to be a very nice man but he was very severe on me to begin with. Eventually Balcon and Gainsborough Pictures, let me think, he thought I had some sort of promise but he didn't know what so he put me through various departments, the editing department, the script department, I was a still camera man for a time. Eventually he put me in charge of a unit making a small picture with Adrian Brunel directing the picture which took me to with a crowd of monks and that was alright till the end of the day when the work had finished on location I managed to put everybody in two coaches going back to London from in Kent but I forgot to tell the driver where to go. Balcon who was eventually waiting in London to see us all back, and they did turn up eventually but it was a long while, and I was sacked, and that was the end of my sojourn at Gainsborough.

Wyn Ryder: Did you from your going through all the departments that the cutting room was for you.

Reggie Beck: I think I must have done because from then on I didn't do anything else. Adrian Brunel took pity on me and employed me. He had a company taking films from all over the place and subtitling them for distribution and I worked in Wardour St quite a time after leaving the studios. Work was hard to get and I left the business for a time.

Wyn Ryder: What were you earning?

Reggie Beck: I was paid £2 10s a week.

Wyn Ryder: That was quite high for those days.

Reggie Beck: I don't know.

Wyn Ryder: This was what the twenties?

Reggie Beck: End of the twenties, beginning of the 30s.

Wyn Ryder: I started with £1 in 1928 so you were doing very well. I started with £1 10s, £2 10s would have been a fortune to me. Going back to the film you worked with Adrian Brunel at Gainsborough, was it the *Lodger* or *The Rat*?

Reggie Beck: It was called *The Vortex*. I did a stint as a continuity girl.

Wyn Ryder: That must have been tough.

Reggie Beck: It was. I'd never do that again.

Wyn Ryder: I suppose you had very long hours, like we all did in those days, no time at all.

Reggie Beck: No time at all. We just went to the studio. You were supposed to be there at 8.30 and you never knew when you were going home.

Wyn Ryder: I found that one of the most galling things, you never got any warning. They'd suddenly say at 6.30, 7 o'clock break for supper, no matter what.

Reggie Beck: Yes and then you'd go on till the small hours.

Wyn Ryder: When you started in the cutting rooms you obviously started as an assistant, or with your background did you walk straight in and edit?

Reggie Beck: At Gainsborough. At Gainsborough I was an assistant to an American, at first, called Alvares. A very nice man. But when I started with Adrian Brunel I was on my own, I wasn't an assistant. He put me too reassembling these films and writing the subtitles.

Wyn Ryder: You wrote the subtitles?

Reggie Beck: I did that too.

Wyn Ryder: That's quite a specialist job, I always thought it was a specialist job to condense it down.

Reggie Beck: It may have been.

Wyn Ryder: Today is it not.

Reggie Beck: Everything today is a specialist job.

Wyn Ryder: When you started editing, did you work very closely with the directors in those days?

Reggie Beck: No.

Wyn Ryder: Really?

Reggie Beck: No. My mentor in the early days was John Seabourne. Do you remember John Seabourne?

Wyn Ryder: Very well.

Reggie Beck: A lovely man. An enthusiast. I always remember the way he used to handle film with reverence.

Wyn Ryder: He used to cart his own cutting table around.

Reggie Beck: I stayed with him. I worked with him.

Wyn Ryder: He used to go on all night long. And his stories improved with the telling. If you heard it again three months later it was that much better.

Reggie Beck: Did you work with him.

Wyn Ryder: No, when I worked at Pinewood he was there and in those days we used to break for coffee, all troop over to the thing, and you always tried to get John Seabourne to your table and start him because gradually nobody else spoke and John would be telling one of his often outlandish stories about stealing horses during the 1914-18 war and all that. Were you all at one studio in those days?

Reggie Beck: Walton.

Wyn Ryder: John was permanently employed there as an editor. Do you think that system was better than the freelance, the resident staff. There was more or less a resident staff and they did whatever came up.

Reggie Beck: I've never been a resident.

Wyn Ryder: You were then presumably.

Reggie Beck: No, I was a freelance. I've always freelanced it. The same as paying income tax I always preferred to be on Schedule D.

Wyn Ryder: You worked on the old black Movieola which gave us all bad eyesight I think.

Reggie Beck: Yes I worked on that.

Wyn Ryder: And optical tracks, did you find it difficult to change from optical to magnetic, most of us resisted it?

Reggie Beck: No, I didn't. My first attempt at magnetic was in Paris.

Wyn Ryder: They were way ahead of us weren't they.

Reggie Beck: I didn't find it a problem.

Wyn Ryder: Did you find there was much post synching in those days?

Reggie Beck: No.

Wyn Ryder: They just didn't do it?

Reggie Beck: Not in my experience,

Wyn Ryder: They had these very heavy mikes to. Also there wasn't very much location work done with dialogue so they tended to do the dialogue inside. They didn't tend to have dialogue out of doors, it was all on sets.

Reggie Beck: I think rather than post sync, they used to fit tracks.

Wyn Ryder: Wild tracks?

Reggie Beck: In the old days. You could see and you could read the modulations and after a time you became an expert at being able to see the mouth movement. I remember on *Henry V*, Henry V's big speech was shot wild.

Wyn Ryder: Out of doors wasn't it.

Reggie Beck: No it was shot inside. I had to fit it to mouth movements which took a long time, a hell of a long time but it worked quite well.

Wyn Ryder: In those days one had to dub the whole reel in one run because of the optical track. I feel there was an advantage in that rather than this rock and roll, all this stop and start they do today. Do you feel you got sometimes a better feel for the whole reel doing it that way?

Reggie Beck: Oh yes.

Wyn Ryder: Rather than doing it backwards and forwards, 10 ft at a time almost.

Reggie Beck: Oh definitely.

Wyn Ryder: Optical was difficult. I prefer, do you prefer, magnetic, the actual handling of it, our work is much easier with magnetic?

Reggie Beck: I never gave it a thought.

Wyn Ryder: I had to give it a thought as a sound editor.

Reggie Beck: Instead of what?

Wyn Ryder: Optical.

Reggie Beck: It's cleaner.

Wyn Ryder: You can handle it more easily. You can get reprints much more quickly.

Reggie Beck: You can do more with it really, and the background is much better.

Wyn Ryder: And the tape joiner has helped us tremendously.

Reggie Beck: The tape joiner was a godsend.

Wyn Ryder: I often wonder what will happen if they get a tape joiner which will go through the neg bar. Then you'll never finish cutting. If you get a tape joiner which will recut the negative as well as the positive. Again, in your experience, there is a greater change in never finishing editing. Once upon a time because of optical, it had to be finished, it had to go and be neg cut and that was almost it, now today they don't, they recut in the middle of dubbing. I suppose you didn't but I've known it so often.

Reggie Beck: Nightmare. Whenever it was possible I discouraged this. I know an American chap I worked for he didn't mess about, once a sequence had been cut that was that.

Wyn Ryder: That is a professional. We have a great many amateurs at it now I'm afraid. Ten angles on every piece of dialogue and give it to some poor wretched editor to sort out. What did you think of stereo sound, did that have any effect on your editing, on the construction of your film?

Reggie Beck: No.

Wyn Ryder: Because some films are made for stereo and others it's just a waste of time ..

Reggie Beck: There are times when it works.

Wyn Ryder: Did you use both Movieola and Steenbeck? In France you would have a different one.

Reggie Beck: In France we had a Moritone

Wyn Ryder: Did you stick to the Movieola?

Reggie Beck: No, I didn't. I worked in France quite a long time and decided I'd better get used to the Moritone. I never got used to the Steenbeck.

Wyn Ryder: The Moritone comes down. I've done that once, on *Kwai*. Was there a great deal of difference in methods between England and France?

Reggie Beck: No, none, nothing, except post sync.

Wyn Ryder: Describe that.

Reggie Beck: Post sync. They used to write the words and split them up.

Wyn Ryder: It runs along the bottom of the screen and there is a line central on the screen and when the line hits that word is when you say it, it's not very popular in this country because they say it makes the actor automatic, whether that's true or not I don't know, I disliked post synch altogether. I'd rather use a lousy soundtrack, so long as the performance is right, than get the actor in.

Reggie Beck: I agree.

Wyn Ryder: Because they hate it, they hate it to start with. I just wondered about the numbering systems. The filing systems, that's slightly different in France.

Reggie Beck: No.

Wyn Ryder: Because the American one is, it drives me mad.

Reggie Beck: What is the American one?

Wyn Ryder: They number it by the script number. They don't start at one and go right the way through. If it's script 5, scene 5 in the script, it's 5a, 5b, 5c. Then you get a camera, b camera, c camera, and my goodness you get a muddle because you get 5a take 1, 2, 3, 4, a camera and b camera, I have used the system in America and I always get the wrong thing out. They start on 0 and go right the way through so you have to have a huge log book to check what take you want. I've got a whole list here of the directors you've worked with, we'll leave Joe Losey till the end, do you know how many films you worked with him, I counted the credits, you did 13 which is quite a lot.

Reggie Beck: More.

Wyn Ryder: Perhaps there are some left out of this credit list. The last one is the *Assassination of Trotsky. Monsieur Klein.*

Reggie Beck: There's another 7.

Wyn Ryder: So that's touching 20, it must be almost a record, for one editor and one director. I feel you must be in the Guinness book of Records. And he was prolific. Let's talk about the other directors. Alec Bryce. I remember him as a cameraman.

Reggie Beck: He was no good as a director.

Wyn Ryder: You did *Black Tulip* and *The Big Noise*

Reggie Beck: He went to South Africa.

Wyn Ryder: David Macdonald

Reggie Beck: A very nice man. I've forgotten what I did with him.

Wyn Ryder: *This Man is News* and *The Lost Hours.*

Reggie Beck: *This Man is News*, that was very well, Alastair Sim.

Wyn Ryder: Then there was Carol Reed, *The Stars Look Down.*

Reggie Beck: I didn't see much of him. He was one of those directors who could never make up their minds.

Wyn Ryder: He was a very pleasant director to work with.

Reggie Beck: Oh yes. I had no patience with people who couldn't make up their minds.

Wyn Ryder: This is what I was saying about the amateurs who come in. *On Passage to India*, I didn't go to India, but David doesn't cut anything until he's finished and then it comes out so fast it's murder for a sound editor, so I became second assistant and I did the rushes down at Rotherhithe and the number of times David printed Take 1, they say he's slow, he rehearses but when he got it

right. Why go on and on? You were a very lucky man, you did 2 with Tony Asquith, I always wanted to work with him and never did. He must have been a marvellous man to work with.

Reggie Beck: He was.

Wyn Ryder: He was so kind. So gentle.

Reggie Beck: He was a very nice man. What did I do?

Wyn Ryder: You did *Freedom Radio* and *Quiet Wedding*.

Reggie Beck: Yes. Living at... during the war in the old house.

Wyn Ryder: With some of these directors you would have had, as the Italians say *simpatico*, with others it was just a job. I would have thought with Asquith it would have been a real ...

Reggie Beck: I never got close to Asquith.

Wyn Ryder: I was working next to you in Denham Labs when you were working on *Henry V*, you must have lots of stories about that with Gordon Hales helping you.

Reggie Beck: I thought it was Harry Miller.

Wyn Ryder: Harry did the sound but Gordon was assisting you. Do you remember Gordon, a strange man?

Reggie Beck: I do indeed.

Wyn Ryder: You must have had not a lot of supervision from Olivier because he must have been so busy all the time.

Reggie Beck: He and I wrote the shooting script, prepared the story and we went through it making a shooting script. It was scripted so tight, so exact (bit difficult to hear) in the script and nothing more, cutting it.

Wyn Ryder: I'm sure there was a bit more to it than that. Then with a film in between you did *Hamlet*.

Reggie Beck: Which I didn't enjoy it so much.

Wyn Ryder: I didn't either. I don't know whose idea it was but the camera moved so much I got dizzy.

Reggie Beck: Correct.

Wyn Ryder: And for no reason often. That must have made editing very difficult, keeping the camera moving about all the time.

Reggie Beck: No again we did the same thing on *Hamlet* as we did on *Henry*. I didn't agree with all that. But I was there on the floor.

Wyn Ryder: And on *Henry*?

Reggie Beck: Mostly.

Wyn Ryder: On angle and so on. I don't profess to know anything about editing but I would have thought if you want to change your mind about the construction, and the cameras whizz around all the time it's that much more difficult.

Reggie Beck: There wasn't anything to change to.

Wyn Ryder: No?

Reggie Beck: He didn't cover. He was so certain in his own mind he got what he wanted he didn't think it was necessary.

Wyn Ryder: That's good.

Reggie Beck: Oh yes.

Wyn Ryder: Was he easy to work with, you must have had a very close relationship?

Reggie Beck: Very, a very nice man.

Wyn Ryder: Then you did one in between those two with Cavalcanti.

Reggie Beck: Oh dear, oh dear, made at Twickenham.

Wyn Ryder: Why do you say Oh dear?

Reggie Beck: Because I didn't enjoy it.

Wyn Ryder: Why was that?

Reggie Beck: I don't know. I didn't like him probably.

Wyn Ryder: He's just a name to me. He left the country after that, to Brazil or somewhere.

Reggie Beck: That's right.

Wyn Ryder: And then you did with Anthony Bushell *The Angel with a Trumpet*.

Reggie Beck: That was by an Austrian gentleman called Carl Hartl. Tony Bushell was just the script editor. He did the same thing on Lawrence Olivier's pictures.

Wyn Ryder: Was he the man that got the money, is that how he got his name on it?

Reggie Beck: He was a friend of Lawrence Olivier and he was also a guards officer, and I suppose he must have had rich friends.

Wyn Ryder: Directly after that you did *The Wonder Kid* which was directed by Carl Hartl.

Reggie Beck: In Austria on location for that.

Wyn Ryder: But you finished it in this country.

Reggie Beck: Yes, it was for Alex Korda.

Wyn Ryder: Then Peter Brook, *The Beggar's Opera*, was that fun.

Reggie Beck: He was exasperating in that picture and Laurence Olivier took the main part. And Peter Brook, his first film, had big ideas and a superb faith in himself without a script for it. He took the script, looked at it, threw it away and said I don't need that and rather to tend to make a mess of things from time to time. It wasn't as it should have been, it should have been a good picture but it wasn't.

Wyn Ryder: Were you on the floor for most of the time?

Reggie Beck: No, I never went on the floor.

Wyn Ryder: So the camera angles were up to him and the camera man.

Reggie Beck: I remember Olivier directed him from time to time.

Wyn Ryder: Was he a very powerful character, Peter Brook?

Reggie Beck: I think so. Complete faith in himself.

Wyn Ryder: Then you worked with Emeric Pressburger, *Twice Upon a Time*.

Reggie Beck: Is that what it's called?

Wyn Ryder: He was a nice man, perhaps too nice.

Reggie Beck: The thing I remember about him is that he was very keen on music and he plastered *Twice Upon a Time* with the music of Brahms.

Wyn Ryder: Did Michael Powell have anything to do with it?

Reggie Beck: Nothing at all.

Wyn Ryder: Then you did two for Herbert Wilcox.

Reggie Beck: I did many for Herbert.

Wyn Ryder: There are 3 listed here.

Reggie Beck: Perhaps there was only 3 but I was with him at least 3 years so it must have been more than 3. Not that it matters in the least.

Wyn Ryder: Did you consider Herbert Wilcox a good director?

Reggie Beck: More an impresario. He knew the basics but that was all. I don't think he had any taste whatsoever but he knew how to impress people like, the famous man who died recently, Orson Welles.

Wyn Ryder: They were all done at Denham?

Reggie Beck: No Elstree, EMI

Wyn Ryder: Did you have a favourite studio?

Reggie Beck: Denham.

Wyn Ryder: Elstree worst of all?

Reggie Beck: No Walton on Thames

Wyn Ryder: Which is now a supermarket

Wyn Ryder: Then you worked with Robert Rossen on *Islands in the Sun*.

Reggie Beck: Robert Rossen I remember sitting in the viewing theatre waiting for him to turn up and the first thing I noticed nearer and nearer and it was Robert Rossen back to Hollywood by Zanuck and never saw him again

Wyn Ryder: I had a similar experience out in Madrid, I was obviously only the boy and he was drunk all the time, no script, the script had gone, I don't know what had happened to it, it was *Alexander the Great*. We moved from location to location and nobody knew where we were going I get cross, I feel it's our industry as well as theirs and shouldn't mess about with it. Then we come to this long list of Losey credits.

Wyn Ryder: Have we missed any of them out.

Reggie Beck: We must have. There was a film called *Harry Black* for instance.

Wyn Ryder: Very early you did *The Gipsy and the Gentleman*.

Reggie Beck: With Joe

Wyn Ryder: Yes and then you did a whole lot of others and started with Joe later and did a whole lot in between. You did *Harry Black* with Huge Fregonesi.

Reggie Beck: That was another director who didn't know what to do with the camera.

Wyn Ryder: Was he Italian?

Reggie Beck: Argentine, based in Hollywood.

SIDE TWO

Wyn Ryder: And then in 1959 you worked with Basil Dearden on *Desert Mice*.

Reggie Beck: I didn't enjoy that.

Wyn Ryder: He's done a lot of work at Ealing, was that at Ealing,

Reggie Beck: I've never worked at Ealing, never. It was Elstree, one of the studios.

Wyn Ryder: Then Terence Young.

Reggie Beck: That was MGM.

Wyn Ryder: *Serious Charge*. Was that for MGM.

Reggie Beck: I don't know who it was for. He was a man who didn't like to stop the camera and shoot a close up or something and go right through the reel of film retaking it immediately without breaking the film, without breaking the film, just carrying on.

Wyn Ryder: Without a clapper board of anything.

Reggie Beck: Without a clapper board. It was terrible in the cutting room trying to unravel that.

Wyn Ryder: Yes I'm sure, did you feel a bit of an outsider. Whenever I worked there I didn't work for MGM and if you didn't work for MGM you were just a damned nuisance, what are you disturbing our peace for.

Reggie Beck: No.

Wyn Ryder: You didn't feel that. Then Michael Forlong, *Over the Odds*.

Reggie Beck: Yes Shepperton. A New Zealander.

Wyn Ryder: Was he?

Reggie Beck: Michael Forlong. A very nice man.

Wyn Ryder: With all these people did any of them come into the cutting room which is the modern way.

Reggie Beck: No. They stand over the editor and watch him work. No, I don't know whether I was lucky or there was something in my manner which kept people away but they never interfered with me.

Wyn Ryder: You were probably respected, don't you think.

Reggie Beck: No, No, no, I don't think so. I think I was lucky.

Wyn Ryder: I wonder, Reggie whether the editor's days are numbered. When we get into video and we have this banks of stuff and they can sit and press buttons and the director's going to play a bigger and bigger part. Then Donovan Winter, you did *The Trunk*.

Reggie Beck: Oh yes.

Wyn Ryder: You'd forgotten that one.

Reggie Beck: One of Lorenzo's, a complete nonentity. There was nothing in that

Wyn Ryder: Did you find it depressing. You were still able to give of your best even if you found it a load of rubbish. We're still professionals, it didn't affect you work did it.

Reggie Beck: Editing is really putting scenes one after the other till you get to the end. There's nothing very technical about it so whatever the subject that's what you did.

Wyn Ryder: While we were having coffee you said Jack did a cut better than you'd ever seen, so it's not just joining together, even I know there's a hell of a difference between putting it together this way and that way.

Reggie Beck: But basically.

Wyn Ryder: Yes but you can reduce anything, you just point the camera at it, but it isn't.

Reggie Beck: There's a timing, that's what so important, and the rhythm.

Wyn Ryder: I remember on *Brief Encounter* Coward had been away entertaining the troops and he came back and I can't remember which one it was but a very large conversation Celia. Johnson had with Trevor Howard, she either says goodbye, holds the telephone to her ear, thinks and puts it down. Or puts it down and thinks. When he came back in a voice I can't imitate he said why did you do that, we reshot it and the difference whichever way round it was was incredible. And Coward put his finger straight on it. I'm going to miss out Losey for a moment and then you did Sidney Furie's *Leather Boy*. He's Canadian is he?

Reggie Beck: Yes, he's Canadian. And I think he went back to Canada or the States and did very well. I was hoping he'd stay, I admired his work.

Wyn Ryder: Then Peter Yates, *Robbery*. How did you get on with Peter Yates?

Reggie Beck: Very well, very well indeed.

Wyn Ryder: That was early days for him.

Reggie Beck: Very early. He was only just making his way then. But he had the ambitions.

Wyn Ryder: Then Alistair Reed *Something to Hide*.

Reggie Beck: I wondered what happened to him. He made that one picture and he was going to make many more he told me, but he never did as far as I can make out.

Wyn Ryder: He's British.

Reggie Beck: Yes. A Scotsman

Wyn Ryder: Then we come back and I'll just read out the many, many Losey pictures. There's one early one *The Gipsy and the Gentleman*, 1950, that is your very first picture.

Reggie Beck: That's right. His regular editor couldn't do that so then I came in, his regular editor was Reggie Mills. I liked Losey from the very start. I was very impressed with him. I said I hope he didn't mind my saying how much I appreciated working with him, which I'd never done with

anybody else, and that secured my future because when Reggie Mills finally decided he was going to direct rather than edit he came back to me.

Wyn Ryder: The first one you did after Gentleman was *Eva*.

Reggie Beck: In Rome, it was made in Rome entirely. Much better picture than it appeared when it was released because the producers messed about with it after it had been finished by Losey, they recut it, it was a very, very good film, one of the best he made in my time with him.

Wyn Ryder: *Modesty Blaise* was the next one.

Reggie Beck: This was made in Italy again.

Wyn Ryder: And finished there, edited and dubbed.

Reggie Beck: No it was finished in England.

Wyn Ryder: By now did you must have had a very close relationship, did you work on the script?

Reggie Beck: No.

Wyn Ryder: You occasionally disagreed with him, did you?

Reggie Beck: I did.

Wyn Ryder: Did you sometimes win?

Reggie Beck: I did and he did sometimes. I came to know what Joe wanted and did it.

Wyn Ryder: I feel continuity is a tremendous help because you work up a tremendous relationship. Then you did the famous one *Accident*.

Reggie Beck: That was probably the best I did for him.

Wyn Ryder: It helped Dirk a lot because it stopped him doing these dreadful Rank things.

Reggie Beck: There was a girl in that, what was her name? Delphine Seyrig an inarticulate French girl.

Wyn Ryder: She spoke English presumably,

Reggie Beck: Only just!

Wyn Ryder: Joe Losey seems to be prolific. Some directors it's quite a struggle to get a subject or work it out and he's got a quick follow on, had he ideas buzzing in his head as he was working on one.

Reggie Beck: No, he was always short of money.

Wyn Ryder: How did he get rid of it, did he gamble?

Reggie Beck: No he spent a lot, everything of the best, his house in Chelsea cost him a lot of money.

Wyn Ryder: From my tiny brain I can't imagine people in that league ever being short of money. Huston was another one who had to work because he was short of money. After *Accident*, *Boom*. Did you like working in Rome?

Reggie Beck: Not all that much, I didn't care much for Rome, it's a very small town. It's very good weather.

Wyn Ryder: Says he looking out of the window at perpetual rain! At that period Italy was very fashionable. There were a lot of films being made in Italy, did the Italian government help?

Reggie Beck: Because of big producers and a splendid studio.

Wyn Ryder: Then the same year Secret Ceremony. Was that Paris or Italy?

Reggie Beck: No that was one of the London Studios, EMI.

Wyn Ryder: As well as you did Losey have roughly the same crew every time if he could.

Reggie Beck: If he could get it. Gerry Fisher normally.

Wyn Ryder: Whenever he could he had the same crew. Then in 1970 *Figures in a Landscape*.

Reggie Beck: That was shot in Spain

Wyn Ryder: You worked in Spain?

Reggie Beck: I always went wherever Joe went.

Wyn Ryder: I think that's terribly important. You went along?

Reggie Beck: I was in Granada and Malaga.

Wyn Ryder: So you were in hotel rooms or something?

Reggie Beck: Yes.

Wyn Ryder: Taking a Movieola?

Reggie Beck: No, we hired a flat, a ...

Wyn Ryder: So you had a flat bench and a Movieola?

Reggie Beck: Yes, I had all the equipment I needed.

Wyn Ryder: But you did work on both, a Movieola and flat?

Reggie Beck: No I had a movieola in Spain, it was only when I went to France that I used Moritone.

Wyn Ryder: As you know the modern cutting room has to have both.

Reggie Beck: I know that.

Wyn Ryder: The flat bench, I use it as a projector but the speed of the Movieola is so much quicker, you put it on and off you go.

Reggie Beck: The last film I did with Joe at Pinewood it were furnished with a flat one and a Movieola and I worked with the Movieola and used the other one as a projector. It was useful for that alone.

Wyn Ryder: Then *The Go-Between*.

Reggie Beck: That was a great success and I'm not surprised because the story was made for a film. I remember reading the book long before the film was made and hoping that Joe would get the rights to the story which he did,

Wyn Ryder: You'd already suggested it to him?

Reggie Beck: No.

Wyn Ryder: My one criticism as I'm a peasant at heart and know Norfolk awfully well, there were two Norfolk accents in it, that's something actors can't do, they always go "ee by gum", terrible when they do a country man. Did you go down to the house much.

Reggie Beck: Yes. Who had the Norfolk accent.

Wyn Ryder: Were they watching the cricket match. There were two old, they weren't accents, they were people from the village I think.

Wyn Ryder: How long did it take from the end of shooting to finish winding up with Joe, was it very quick?

Reggie Beck: Normally very quick. Joe's feelings was that he paid enormous attention to the amount of time he took to a picture and if he was coming up to the allotted time before the picture he would become disinterested, ha always tried to keep to the date of finishing, which wasn't what a director should be thinking about.

Wyn Ryder: And perhaps runs over the shooting time so he condensed your time.

Reggie Beck: He never overran shooting time, never.

Wyn Ryder: Really?

Reggie Beck: I wish he had because, a lot of the material that he shot at the end of his films was slipshod in the extreme, it hadn't been thought out.

Wyn Ryder: That's unusual in a director, he didn't have penalty clauses in his contract?

Reggie Beck: I don't think so, just a quirk in his makeup.

Wyn Ryder: Then *The Assassination of Trotsky*, was that the last one.

Reggie Beck: No, there were many more.

Wyn Ryder: There's one penciled in red ink called Galileo.

Reggie Beck: That was made in about 5 weeks.

Wyn Ryder: In Rome?

Reggie Beck: No, Elstree, It wasn't bad either. Then there was *The Romantic Englishwoman* which was bad.

Wyn Ryder: He must have found it quite easy to get finance as these came along so-quickly.

Reggie Beck: No he didn't

Wyn Ryder: Because I think at that period he was the most prolific director in the country.

Reggie Beck: He didn't give me that impression.

Wyn Ryder: Well there weren't many who did one a year were there. Did he always worked on the script?

Reggie Beck: He never worked on the script himself but he was very particular about the sort of script he worked from. And he was also very particular who wrote the script for him, that's how he came to have Harold Pinter.

Wyn Ryder: He didn't always have the same writer. He would obviously send it back for alterations.

Reggie Beck: Oh yes. Many meetings together and discuss a script in detail until it was done to his liking.

Wyn Ryder: That was probably one of the reasons he shot fairly quickly and kept to schedule,

Reggie Beck: It was no excuse for what he did towards the end. It left me many problems in finishing the film.

Wyn Ryder: Did you always have the same assistant or try to?

Reggie Beck: One tried to but assistants have a way of growing on and becoming editors themselves.

Wyn Ryder: If you were working in Rome you had an Italian assistant, not a British one.

Reggie Beck: I tried to have British but that wasn't always possible so I had to have an Italian

Wyn Ryder: Who spoke English.

Reggie Beck: Who spoke English up to a point.

Wyn Ryder: Have you any language at all other than your original Russian, you spoke French.

Reggie Beck: No. But French yes, I had a French crew.

Wyn Ryder: During the French period of Losey did you live in France permanently?

Reggie Beck: Yes I did. For the duration of the picture.

Wyn Ryder: And then you came back. Because he did a lot. *Don Giovanni*, then another.

Reggie Beck: Not that many. Mr Klein, without me with my assistant, French assistant, jolly nice girl.

Wyn Ryder: Most of the French editors are female.

Reggie Beck: Most of them, there are males but not all that many. But, other than that I found no difference between England and France other than working in films is concerned, there's the food.

Wyn Ryder: I don't know why but I had the impression that you lived in Paris for a period, I don't know why I got that Impression. I didn't know Losey, I thought most of the films which were done in Rome were done in Paris, I thought he had an affinity with Paris.

Reggie Beck: No, I did other films in Paris I liked it so much.

Wyn Ryder: Was your French good enough to cut a French speaking film?

Reggie Beck: Yes, I made it my business.

Wyn Ryder: You had no difficulty with labour permits or anything like that?

Reggie Beck: No. In fact they treated me very well, the French did.

Wyn Ryder: I always thought the ACTT were a bit rough on this because we used to go to Spain and Italy and nobody ever questioned it and as soon as a foreigner came into London everybody was up in arms and I was so glad when an Italian did come over here and work and got a bit of our system because we'd gone in and taken their jobs so often.

Reggie Beck: In fact I tried to get this girl into England at one time, my assistant and wrote to the ACTT about her and got a very snooty letter back in reply.

Wyn Ryder: No they were not right in that, I felt but there you are. Can you talk a bit about Joe Losey as a person?

Reggie Beck: He was a very mixed up person. I personally liked him very very much indeed but he was at one time a communist and went to Russia and worked there and met Brecht on his way back which is how Galileo came to be, the German theatrical producer and playwright. I think he was kicked out of the States because of his connection with the communist regime. What else is there to say about him?

Wyn Ryder: As a technician?

Reggie Beck: His preoccupation with time said it all. The other thing is he didn't care to suggestions as to what we should shoot and if I came up with a demand for a close up he would view that with disfavour although he would sometimes accede to my request. Then he had a phobia about producers, he hated ever producer, and he was consistently and embarrassingly rude to them, a lot of them did not deserve it, he did not discriminate. To his mind the producer was a hateful producer.

Wyn Ryder: Was he a technicians' director or was he an artist's director was he a bit of both?

Reggie Beck: He was both, he was certainly an artist's director. And he had a great flair for the right angle and how to finish a scene so it went into another properly.

Wyn Ryder: Would he take suggestions from artists, would he give them a fairly free hand?

Reggie Beck: That I don't know, I never worked on the floor, not very often.

Wyn Ryder: Was he a warm person?

Reggie Beck: Warm. He drank too much.

Wyn Ryder: That's a business failing, the industry's failing.

Reggie Beck: I had a reputation for being an inebriate, god knows where it came from.

Wyn Ryder: I never heard that.

Reggie Beck: Didn't you, especially at Pinewood? I don't know where it came from. At least I think I do. One terrible occasion. Did you ever meet a chap called Cecil Ford? We were working together, and I think he was engaged and I was living in Amersham at the time and he was living at Colshill. He offered me a lift on my one night which naturally I accepted otherwise I had to go round by the bus. On the way we came to a little country pub up into the hill above Denham, there was a nice little country pub and we started playing darts, and we were very successful as a pair and beat the locals time and time again all through the evening until closing time. We were so drunk, so drunk in that how we got home from there I don't know. Thanks to Cecil. Anyway he did manage to find my house, he could find my house and I got out and thought nothing more of it and I thought if he could find my house he could find his house in Colshill but he never did that night. And he spent the night in the car. I think he blamed me.

Wyn Ryder: Blamed you?.

Reggie Beck: Yes and I think that is the origin of my reputation as a drunkard.

Wyn Ryder: I think the bar at Pinewood doesn't help. I agree with Alan, I think it's becoming quite bad in the industry and that wretched bar is such a temptation to people who are that way inclined.

Reggie Beck: There was a war at Denham too.

Wyn Ryder: What did you do during the war, were you in the services?

No I cut a film for the Boulting Brothers, *Raid over Berlin*.

Wyn Ryder: How did you get on with the Boultings, they could be a bit difficult at times?

Reggie Beck: They were, John Boulting was the one I like rather than his brother.

Wyn Ryder: It wasn't *Journey Together*.

Reggie Beck: *Journey Together*, it took a year to cut.

Wyn Ryder: Why was that?

Reggie Beck: No idea, I can't remember.

Wyn Ryder: They were in the forces.

Reggie Beck: Richard Attenborough was a corporal in the RAF then and he played a part in the film.

Alan Lawson: John was in the RAF Unit and Roy in the Army Film Unit.

Reggie Beck: Afterwards I did a film with Anatole de Grunwald and Laurence Olivier because he did the lead on that film.

Wyn Ryder: It wasn't this thing where there was a tremendous uproar, the script was stolen and given to the Russian embassy, and we had meetings going on every lunch hour about it and storms going on, the Russian embassy tried to stop the film being made, it was considered not very complimentary to the Russian system. I was at Denham at the time and we had meetings at least two or three times a week in the carpenters shop, people standing on things and carrying on. The right wing at Denham was saying how wrong it was for the script ever to get to the Russian embassy, it wasn't that one was it? Asquith was directing it and he was the president of ACT and he was very hurt about it all. I'm sorry I shouldn't have brought this up. This was at Denham with De Grunwald.

Reggie Beck: This was when Laurence Olivier conceived the idea of *Henry V* and I think he approached De Grunwald and he set it up. Laurence Olivier wanted some experienced character to help him over the scripting and because I was working on this film in which he was appearing in as the lead he approached me, so they took me off that film and gave me to Laurence Olivier which Anatole de Grunwald never forgave me. He never forgave me for leaving the picture.

Alan Lawson: That *Henry V* idea, we did an interview with Dallas Bower, he prepared a script just before the war.

Reggie Beck: It wasn't his script which we used.

Alan Lawson: Did you know of it?

Reggie Beck: No.

Wyn Ryder: After all, you had a quite good script to start with.

SIDE 3. TAPE 2

Reggie Beck: I remember one Christmas being rung up by the director for whom I'd been working, I can't remember his name, but I'd done something and he disliked it and he rang me saying I'd never work again, a very unpleasant exchange.

Wyn Ryder: But having done that did you have to go in the next day and work with him again.

Reggie Beck: No

Wyn Ryder: That was the end of the matter. It would have been even worse if he'd done it in the middle.

Reggie Beck: I was only just beginning my career in the cutting rooms at the time. It was bad for me because it could have affected my future, if he'd been any good as a director, if he'd carried any weight.

Wyn Ryder: Did you ever dub your own films in the early days when you were editing and when the dubbing editor or sound editor came along were you relieved that you could hand that over to somebody?

Reggie Beck: Yes I did do that. It was I did the whole picture. I cut it, then I laid the tracks and then I dubbed it. I'd never cut a picture before on this occasion, nor had I ever laid a sound track. But the chap for whom I was working presumably well enough to leave me alone.. That was the very early days. I think John Seabourne had been working on the film or was supposed to work on the film but he fell ill. They didn't feel like spending any more money and I was John Seabourne's assistant so they told me to go ahead. It didn't seem to matter what kind of picture they turned out so long as they turned out a picture.

Wyn Ryder: Was that a quota quickie then?

Reggie Beck: It wasn't a quota quickie.

Wyn Ryder: In those days it was normal for the editor to lay the tracks and see to the dubbing, was it not. This was the general rule.

Reggie Beck: Was it.

Wyn Ryder: This is what I understood. People like Harry Miller specialised in sound editing and I think some editors resented but I know Jack Harris said thank goodness because by the time he finished editing he was a bit stale and a bit exhausted and for new ideas and a new man to come and take it over he felt quite relieved, but he still supervised it but most of the work was done for him.

Reggie Beck: I think I felt the same. I never enjoyed laying tracks anyway.

Wyn Ryder: Too limiting.

Reggie Beck: No I wouldn't say that. No. Something I didn't enjoy doing that's all.

Wyn Ryder: It's another tricky and quite exhausting thing to do at the end of a long stint on a film, was that one of the reasons.

Reggie Beck: I wouldn't say that either. As far as I'm concerned I just didn't enjoy doing it. I wouldn't describe it as being too finicky, because obviously it isn't. I was interested in pictures, not in sound. I was brought up on silent pictures.

Wyn Ryder: Sound's a man nuisance, I'm a man who probably feels the same. Was Losey very interested in sound.

Reggie Beck: Yes he was. He was insistent on it. He like loud sound which I abominated. If there was an effect he wanted to hear it very distinctly.

Wyn Ryder: Have you any ideas of your own about the use of music

Reggie Beck: It's should be discreet and used in a way that's almost unnoticeable.

Wyn Ryder: If you made a film would you copy people like Kubrick and use already composed music or would you get a composer you thought would fit the mood of a film, have you any ideas about that.

Reggie Beck: It depends very much on the subject matter, on the kind of film you're making. I don't think people who write music for film are very good musicians. Except Willie Walton on *Henry V* picture, but Michel Le Grand on Joe's pictures; I didn't think much of him.

Wyn Ryder: It's an awful risk because it comes along so late you've got to accept it. Did you have much say as to where the music would be?

Reggie Beck: No. Unhappily. Many on Joe's pictures where I wouldn't have had music but he liked it and had it there.

Wyn Ryder: Did you have anything to do with ACTT, any organisational things?

Reggie Beck: I was at one time very keen on ACTT in the early days, in the Denham days. Just after the war I think.

Wyn Ryder: Do you remember who recruited you into the ACTT.

Reggie Beck: No I don't remember. That was the day when we had lots of meetings.

Wyn Ryder: There was Dennison and Percy Dayton and MacCullum who was eventually at Pinewood.

Reggie Beck: I think it was Percy Dayton.

Wyn Ryder: Did you have a position.

Reggie Beck: No I used to go to the meetings and make meetings. Terrible!

Wyn Ryder: It must have come from the heart.

Reggie Beck: It did.

Wyn Ryder: Do you think ACTT played a useful role in those early days.

Reggie Beck: It did in regulating hours of work. Also in the matter of remuneration it helped a lot. But I think it became too political. That's what I objected to.

Wyn Ryder: The ACTT in those days was almost always run by the sound department.

Reggie Beck: They were permanent staff.

Wyn Ryder: A lot of us were more permanent than today. Would you do it again, if you were starting again today would you come into the industry.

Reggie Beck: Oh yes.

Wyn Ryder: Would you chose the cutting rooms.

Reggie Beck: Yes, because I'm inarticulate. I can't express myself very well. And cutting films is a way of doing that, you express yourself in pictures. I think that's way I became so interested.

Wyn Ryder: Going back which technician gave you the most help in your early days or the most encouragement.

Reggie Beck: I think Adrian Brunel.

Wyn Ryder: Can you remember about him at all.

Reggie Beck: What do you mean by that question. I remember him as a person.

Wyn Ryder: Tell us about him as a person.

Reggie Beck: A very gentle man. Very erudite. That's about all I can say about him. I don't think he had the drive to be a very great director. But as a technician I've no fault to find in him.

Wyn Ryder: Looking back which director gave you the most satisfaction to work for, was it Joe Losey or were there others.

Reggie Beck: Olivier. By far the most interesting man, most interesting from every point of view.

Wyn Ryder: Why do you think it was.

Reggie Beck: Is it something that was born in him or was it something he acquired. He's a great man. He's an actor and became acquainted with the technique of directing. Which had never been done before. In imagining the scene, subject like Henry V, amazing I think.

Wyn Ryder: Which director gave you the most headaches and enjoyed the least, is there one

Reggie Beck: Any actor.

Wyn Ryder: No directors.

Reggie Beck: I'll comment on some of them because you've got to have an experience sum him up and criticise him and the only person I can really say I became intimate with was Joe Losey and I've already told you his weaknesses.

Wyn Ryder: Which of all the films would you really like to be remembered by would it be *Henry V*.

Reggie Beck: Not really, it was something apart. I don't think there is one. In everyone there's faults.

Wyn Ryder: You also probably remember nice little ones you managed to achieve.

Reggie Beck: *Accident* is the one.

Wyn Ryder: It's a strange professional work. You're dealing with a shadow on the screen, when that's gone it's gone. There's nothing much to show about. It's not like producing a row of turnips. Often I've thought here we are arguing, worrying and all you've got is a shadow on the screen, and we all think it's so important.

Reggie Beck: It's more that that.

Wyn Ryder: I'm sure you've had, but you might not because you're a nice calm person, whether it should be this way or that way.

Reggie Beck: Not so much this way or that way. I think the biggest arguments I've ever had is timing and the pace of a shot in a scene which has got to do with rhythm. I think rhythm is terribly important in making and in *Accident* I had a lot of arguments on that subject. He was more than normally on a number of things on *Accident*.

Wyn Ryder: Most probably it does show on the screen.

Reggie Beck: What?

Wyn Ryder: The results of your, it's a good film.

Reggie Beck: Your relationship with Joe was good enough that you could have a disagreement and still be friends at the end of it. With some people you can have a disagreement and - it's very valuable that. We had terrible scenes but it all came right in the end. In essence the cricket match where none of the people involved knew anything about the game. Changing ends was something they'd never considered. How they shot it. The impression of a change of ends has to be given somehow.

Wyn Ryder: How did you do that?

Reggie Beck: I can't remember. Some cutting away.

Wyn Ryder: Associate producer, Spike.

Reggie Beck: One strange thing they always get wrong in films. You get a lovely shot of a horseman going along through an oakfield, very rare to see oaks today, always on modern films you see two tracks and there should be three, two for wheels and one for horse. Strange it's minor but it always irks me.

Wyn Ryder: Did you never have any terrible assistants, dropping a centre out of a reel. Because when you start even getting hold of a reel of film becomes tricky, it becomes like a live snake.

Reggie Beck: They had small reels when you started.

Wyn Ryder: I never worked on a 1,000 ft reel if that's what you're referring to. If a reel went up to 900 that was far too much, unmanageable. One got bored with it, sitting it on the table.

Reggie Beck: With 16mm you've got double and treble that.

Wyn Ryder: Did you get used to a cutting room, change a cutting room around a lot or accepted it as it was.

Reggie Beck: Normally I accepted it as it was.

Wyn Ryder: Did you feel slightly nostalgic if you left one cutting room, even if you were going to another job. You get used to that one room.

Reggie Beck: No I did n't do that. I had a wonderful cutting room in Rome. It was one of those places where the boards moved. If you wanted a large room you simply moved the walls out. It was

called Escort International Recording and they had the cutting rooms upstairs. I worked in the old ones which were terrible. They were dreadful. Presumably they needed more money from English people coming to work in Rome and they created these new rooms.

Wyn Ryder: Did you expand at the expense of the bloke next door.

Reggie Beck: No. You went to see the chap in charge. Engineer they called him.

Wyn Ryder: Tell us about the commercial.

Reggie Beck: He spent about three or four days in the studio. It took me about 10 minutes to put together and after that interminable changes and nobody could make up their mind what they wanted and it went on and on and on. Finally it was dubbed but what a waste talent, of time, money.

Wyn Ryder: How long did you work on it.

Reggie Beck: I think it took me a fortnight.

Wyn Ryder: It's like that take Blooper's soap.

Reggie Beck: My impression having worked in a cutting room where commercial's were made there's always a committee vetting it. I don't know where they come from, is it the agency, they'd crowd round the Steenbeck and I'm sure they all had their own ideas.

Wyn Ryder: Did you get frustrated doing it? Did you do any more?

Reggie Beck: No. That was enough.

Wyn Ryder: By choice.

Reggie Beck: By choice.

Wyn Ryder: The other thing is did you use an agent to get work for you.

Reggie Beck: Yes. London Management.

Wyn Ryder: Did you find that worthwhile? Did they get you more money?

Reggie Beck: Not really. But you got to know the people and I felt mean not to go on with them so stayed with them. They saved me the unsavoury, what I think of unsavoury, arguing over money.

Wyn Ryder: Do you think they found you more work than you would have got yourself.

Reggie Beck: They didn't find me any work.

Wyn Ryder: So you paid 10% The one advantage I would have thought, they'd know your price but they'd also know the budget. When an agent comes in, perhaps they've already negotiated for actors and they know how much money's flowing around. Did you feel that ever, did they ever up you?

Reggie Beck: No.

Wyn Ryder: As a race we're not very good at negotiating.

Reggie Beck: I don't think they did that for me but they always took their 10%. Here's a story. Del Guidice left England and went to Italy hoping always to make another film which he never did. He went somewhere towards and having worked for him on *Henry V* he rang me up and asked me to go to Milan because he was in the process of getting a film together, which I did. So arrived in Milan and he's installed in the most expensive hotel in Rome. And he introduces me to the writers of the script and we get on well together. We bugger about. A script never materialises. Del Guidice runs out of money. He has the money to pay the hotel but I'm left out in the cold. I've no money either. I communicate with my agents who are London Management and tell them about this. They do nothing, nothing at all. But for some reason the people who are involved with Del Guidice thought I was worth paying for what I'd done. I had gone to the South of France where the writers of the script were living. I did whatever work on the script and produced something and was worth paying. But in order to get paid I had to go from Rome to Milan and stay there and then agreed the sum which was £1,000 I had to wait there until - what happened - they had by devious means to get

the cash to London and from London I had to collect it. Which I did. I had to go to a restaurant and give my name and make various facts known to them before they handed me a brown paper parcel in which was £1,000 in £5 notes. The first thing that happened after I received the money was to take it to my agents who hadn't done a thing. I only got that money because I went to the trouble of going to Milan and arguing with these people over what was due to me. I took it to the agent and they took the 10% out.

Wyn Ryder: Have you ever been involved in television.

Reggie Beck: No.

Wyn Ryder: Not even films made for television.

Reggie Beck: No. I don't think so.

Wyn Ryder: What is your opinion of films made for television.

Reggie Beck: Some of them are very good. Some of them are exceptionally good.

Wyn Ryder: Some of the Channel 4 ones particularly.

Reggie Beck: Or the spy one *Tinker Tailor*, excellent, riveting. The Price being re-shown is very good. Some very imaginative cutting. I always think who's responsible for that the director or the editor, that's something you never know.

Wyn Ryder: I know with David Lean who is responsible in his case, is the director. What do you feel about awards?

Reggie Beck: They don't mean anything to me.

Wyn Ryder: Have you views about the hype that goes on about the Oscars and around the corner there's a some editor who's made a jolly good job out of nothing with no money and no time.

Reggie Beck: He's very lucky to be able to do exactly what he wanted.

Wyn Ryder: But no praise.

Reggie Beck: So many people are rewarded who have no right to be rewarded.

Wyn Ryder: I think the incredible thing was on that musical where they used a classical score and the composer got an Oscar. He adapted it.

Reggie Beck: *Bridge over the River Kwai*, who cut that, it got an Oscar.

Wyn Ryder: So did *Lawrence*, it got an Oscar for editing.

Reggie Beck: And what did they do.

Wyn Ryder: They put it together.

Reggie Beck: David is unique because he shoots it exactly.

Wyn Ryder: Have you ever had an experience where the director really doesn't know and he overcovers beyond reason and hence four takes on every set up and leaves you to sort it out. Have you had that experience?

Reggie Beck: Yes.

Wyn Ryder: That must be tough.

Reggie Beck: I may be lucky, I always know which I like out of any collection of takes. If it's left to me there's no problem. It's when the director makes up his mind which one he wants and...

Wyn Ryder: And you've got four or five angles to shoot from.

Reggie Beck: Carol Reed. This is what I have against Carol Reed. He was always like that. Fortunately, at the beginning of the war he had to go off on something else and I was left to my own devices and that was the picture I had to work on the soundtrack too. Without sound. There was a mine disaster and I had to make up the noise dear John helped me on that. The people making the picture ran out of money and my then agent, Al Parker, had to threaten the company with legal action before they paid me.

Wyn Ryder: That's one use of an agent.

Reggie Beck: Al Parker was different. He always tried to do something for you.