

Interviewee: **Sissy S and Mary Thorley**

Interviews conducted by Nicky Leap and Billie Hunter during research for the publication '*The Midwife's Tale: an Oral History from Handywoman to Professional Midwife*' (1993; 2nd edition 2013)

Date recorded: 19 May 1986

Duration of audio: 0:30:48

Collection: Special collections of the archives of the Royal College of Midwives

Archive Reference: RCMS/251/15

Description:

Transcript of an interview given by Mary Thorley and Sissy S of their memories of the midwife, Elsie Walkerdine, including Mary's role as unofficial helper to Elsie, breastfeeding, nutrition, midwifery equipment, and Sissy's experiences of childbirth during the 1930s, with Elsie as midwife.

Topics include: Midwifery; Maternity services; Childbirth; Antenatal care; Homebirth

Copyright of the authors, Billie Hunter and Nicky Leap.

For enquiries and access to audio contact the archives of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists [email: archives@rcog.org.uk]

[START OF INTERVIEW]

Sissy ... in the house where you'd no fire, no food, and they thought they'd show off, and I showed off my ((inaudible)) ((laughter)). And even now, my children don't argue with me, Mary, do they?

Mary No!

Sissy Anyway, we went, 'Oh, she knows where to come when she wants something.' I said, 'I've been running about **all** the morning.' He said, 'Mum, you shouldn't have done.' I said, 'You're going to get married one day, Frank. I hope you never call on me, Frank.' ((laughter)) 'Oh, all right.' I went straightaway to Dorothy to say, 'Come straight up from Glenys's and we'll find the baby clothes when you come up.' Dorothy went in to the Glenneath & District on the 2nd of February and had that baby, which was a boy, after two girls, and she reckoned she'd never had a better time. Now that was in the Wilmond ((?)) District. Now, and then that Easter they got a new house down at Bretton, and she came and stayed with me. Well, she would have been two weeks ((?))

Interviewer 1 Was she really?

Sissy Mm, yeah, I mean in them days you shared, even if you didn't like the person you shared with, but I mean she got used to us.

Interviewer 2 Yeah. Were there people Elsie got cross with? How did she deal with them?

Sissy Well, as sis was saying, you'll have to be, irrespective of your nature, there was times when you had to put your foot down and you had to talk to 'em and mean what you said, well, because otherwise it, they, most probably something would, could have gone wrong with the confinement if they hadn't done exactly what they was asked.

Mary On the whole she was a very...

Sissy She was a vampire.

Mary ... On the, on the whole, she was a very placid girl.



Sissy Oh she was, yeah. That's what I'd say, 'Do as Elsie told you and you'll have the best of attention.' You'd have all her stories, but if you didn't do what you was told, you got a very harsh note from Elsie.

Mary Yeah.

Sissy The books was right.

Interviewer 1 So she was very respected then?

Sissy Oh good grief, yes. Yes, she was known all over the country really.

Mary Yeah, she was an angel, as they used to say.

Sissy Yes, she was, Mary, yeah, oh yes.

Interviewer 1 Did she used to meet up with other midwives quite often?

Mary Oh yes, yes, yes, because um there was one midwife at um, er she's gone here now, at Wickham Road, High Wickham Road, and we used to go up there and play whist, and there used to be, well nearly all the midwives, you know, and I was the only one out of the, out of the bunch, but there used to be about 12 from various um districts, you know.

Interviewer 1 And did they all talk midwifery a lot?

Mary Um, not too much, not too much, no, no.

Interviewer 1 You must have picked up a lot of midwifery from them.

Mary Well, as a matter of fact, a matter of fact, I'll be truthful about this, um, have you ever heard of a, a Miss ... eh, she's married, she's retired now, um, Darwin, Miss Darwin? Now you wouldn't, but she's, I think she married after she got um retired, and eh she said to me, 'Mary,' 'cos they never used to, I mean I wasn't a nurse, but then nearly all, all the eh supervisors that come through Elsie, nearly all called me Mary, 'Mary, do you think that you'd like to pick up and take on where Elsie's leaving off?' The nurse... well the... the retired what's his names, um, transport, with the transport buses and they'd taken up midwifery! ((laughter)) But I think even now, in an emergency, I could manage that sort of thing; I've seen so much of it.



Sissy Yeah, I think you're gifted with it, Mary. I think whatever comes along you, you just do it...

Mary Yeah.

Sissy And then you'd think afterwards, 'Oh my gawd!'

Mary I think in an emergency, you know, that I could um sort of do it. As I say, I've seen so much of it with Elsie, you know.

Sissy No, she was, she was really, she was really um a miracle with her work, you know, in every way. And when you see some of the people that ... yeah, er I mean it was never said to us before... unless it was a very bad, a very bad case. I mean if she called, I mean Doctor Jones or Doctor Russell, she used to call 'em, yeah.

Mary Yeah, do you remember Doctor Johnson, the one at ((inaudible)) Street?

Sissy That's right.

Mary And he, he finished up with Polio.

Sissy Oh, did he?

Mary He did, yeah, yeah, Doctor Johnson, and he came in one day and I was, I was there, in, in this, and he took action. He came in, Elsie had called him out, so he said, 'Er, Nurse,' he said, 'Would you take me for a doctor?' So she said, 'Well, not at the moment, you've just got out of bed, you've still got your pyjamas on, and you haven't shaved!' ((laughs)) He said, 'No wonder the bloody policeman stopped me and said, 'Where you going?' That was Doctor Johnson! ((laughter)) And, and another thing, another thing, um, but, you see years ago, Elsie then, she kept the maternity box at home, and um, er, she gave a, one man came for, for Elsie, and so she said, 'All right, father,' because as I said to the ladies, Elsie always called the patients Mother and Father.

Sissy That's right.

Mary Never their Christian names.

Sissy No, no.



Mary So eh she said, 'All right Father, take this and I'll be along in a minute,' and I went with Elsie, and it was snowing, and I'll tell you where it was, the, um, up Via Street, down um Comet Street, the turning before there I think. And we hadn't got to Comet Street and there was two people on the pavement, you know, approaching we were, and it was a policeman and it was this young man. So, 'Ah,' he said, 'I'm glad you've come along, nurse,' he said. 'Tell this copper where I'm going, what I've got in this,' he said, 'I don't bloody well know!' ((laughter)) So the policeman turned round and said, 'Why didn't you tell me that you'd been to get a midwife?' He said, 'You didn't ask; you asked me what I'd had in the box.' ((laughter)) And that's the truth, that is, Sis, yeah.

Sissy She was four foot nothing, wasn't she?

Mary 4'10"

Sissy But she coped with the biggest!

Mary A man come down, one man come round one night, during the war, so she, he said, 'Nurse,' he said, 'as soon as the siren goes,' the all clear he meant, he said, 'come and see the wife,' he said, 'she's bad.' So she said, 'I'll come along, father.' So he said, 'Um, ease it up a bit.' So she said, 'You come along for me, I'll come along for you,' and he had a saucepan ((inaudible))

Interviewer 1 Really?

Mary The truth, yeah. She went down Dall Street one day, in the night, during a raid, and um she said it seemed as though a plane was almost following her down there.

Interviewer 1 It must have been terrifying.

Sissy No, nothing kept Nurse away.

Mary No, she wouldn't. See, the other lady, unfortunately she's not here, but it's true, she wouldn't come out during the ((inaudible)).

Sissy Oh no.

Interviewer 1 Did they work opposite shifts eventually?

Sissy No, no, no. No.

Interviewer 1 You just did your patch.

Sissy She never had a shift, did she? She was on call night and day almost.

Mary Yeah, but when the, when the eh council took over, then she had Saturday afternoon and Sunday off, but prior to that, she never had no time off, except once a year she had August and she didn't book no cases for August.

Interviewer 1 The National Health Service came into being in '48.

Sissy '48, yeah.

Interviewer 1 And I expect after that she had to do shifts, didn't she?

Mary No, no, because she was still, she was still on her own in '48. There was, um, when the ... oh I beg your pardon, no, I do apologise, it was 1938, '38, eh '37/'38, that the council took over. It was then that she, she had a register and she had alternate eh, eh time off then, you know.

Interviewer 1 Yes, yeah.

Mary You know, Monday after-, Saturday afternoon and Sunday I think mostly was her time off, you know, unless of course somebody else was on holiday and she was going to relieve them, you know.

Interviewer 1 People must have been very disappointed if they didn't get her?

Sissy You can say that ((laughter))

Interviewer 1 Did they ever pester her on her day off to come to them?

Mary Well, of course I, I mean, I think it was according to the situation then whether she went. I mean....

Interviewer 1 Did she sometimes go out on her day off?

Mary You see the thing is that she had a nurse relieving her, from Greenwich, and that nurse would turn around and say, 'There's no bloody good,' and she didn't mince her words, 'There's no bloody good me being your relief if you're going to take on other patients while I'm, while you're supposed to be off duty.' So therefore she very seldom went. But as far



as, prior to that, I don't think Elsie turned a case down, no. No, she was, her work was her life, yeah.

Interviewer 2 What would happen if she thought that you were getting a bit anaemic or a bit thin, did she ever suggest things for you to eat or did she have remedies?

Sissy She would suggest you went to the doctor's to get yourself a tonic. 'Pull yourself together, you've got nothing to moan about.'

Interviewer 1 Did she give you lots of advice about what foods were good for you, what to eat, things like that?

Sissy No, she just had food.

Mary I don't, I don't think really and truly, years ago, love, we had different food to what they have now. I mean it was, it was, you only had what's good.

Sissy Yeah.

Mary And it was good years ago. I mean you could get two-penneth of bacon bones and just chew them up and the goodness was there.

Interviewer 1 Yes, and people were much more resourceful and making do with cheaper foods, and they were wholesome foods.

Sissy Yeah, but this pre-packed foods, that's all they're living on I think. It's real laziness, isn't it; let's be fair about it.

Mary You want to watch it, you don't know what these young people live on! ((laughs))

Interviewer 1 No, we don't go in for fast foods! ((laughs)) So did everybody breastfeed?

Sissy I breastfed mine, my 12 pounder for three months, night and day.

Interviewer 1 And did Elsie used to give lots of advice about breastfeeding?

Sissy I never had Elsie, I had a French nurse, because I lived way out of her shift. And my husband used to take it in turns. We'd get him to sleep, get him down on the bed, and I used to get my old broom and rake, and as soon as that moved.

Interviewer 1 What did you do with the broom?



Sissy Used to put at his back to feed with my hand. And um I went down to my mother's, and the lady there, then, she was a foster mother, she wouldn't have no carpet, and I don't suppose you will remember the orange boxes, that they used to have a panel in the middle.

Interviewer 1 Yes, I remember them.

Sissy But she used to get orange boxes and take the panel out, fed 'em, and that was the baby's bed, and she, as she says, 'I can wash that floor morning, noon and night, I can't do nothing with a bit of mat there.' And she said to me, 'Sissy, come to the Welfare with me this afternoon, say you're staying at your mother's, and that baby is hungry.' I took him everywhere and they said it was temper, and the welfare then was at the corner of Madder Street ...

Mary ((inaudible))

Sissy No, not that one, Mary, it was just past the Wellington and down a bit, in the little Mission Hall, and I went in and the doctor examined him, and the last thing she – it was a woman doctor – she put her little finger in his mouth. She said, 'Do you know this child's tongue tied?' I said, 'No.' She said, 'Well, it is.' She said, 'Can you hold it while I cut it?' I said, 'I'm sorry.' So she said, 'Very well, mother,' she said. She got an assistant in, she said, 'You go out and get your blouse all open and you can put him to the breast when I've done it.' I put that child to the breast and I don't think he was ever going to stop, and that was the screaming, he never cried no more after that. ((inaudible)) but I'd taken him to the doctor's as well.

Interviewer 1 Isn't that amazing? And he was perfectly all right then?

Sissy Oh yes.

Interviewer 1 Did she just snip the bottom of his tongue?

Sissy Yeah.

Interviewer 1 And it was all right?

Sissy Well, he's 6'3" now! ((laughter)) Not lost for words now is he?



Mary But um I know Elsie was saying that she went over to Greenwich once, to a doctor's wife, and er he didn't know what to do with this child that was screaming and screaming. And of course he called in another doctor to have a look at it. So the doctor examined it, he said, 'You've got a bad tempered little bastard here, 'he said 'that's all you've got,' one doctor to another!

Sissy We used to pay 6-pence for the doctor, but my husband was so fed up he sent me up to Doctor Locus at Lewisham Way, and that was half a crown, more of a specialist.

Interviewer 2 That was for that screaming baby, was it?

Sissy Mm, and he still said it was bad temper.

Interviewer 1 When you say you paid the midwife £2-0-0d, how much would a weekly wage be in those days?

Sissy My weekly wage?

Interviewer 1 Well no, a weekly wage for a worker, just to get it in proportion, because £2-0-0d doesn't mean anything to us, because we can't put it into context.

Sissy No, well, my husband used to earn £2-10-0d a week.

Interviewer 1 So it was a whole week's wage?

Sissy That's right.

Interviewer 1 It was a lot of money, wasn't it?

Sissy Oh yes, so I mean you saved up sixpences.

Mary And that sort of thing, don't forget that that £2-0-0d for that midwife was her ten days pay.

Sissy Yeah, oh yes, yeah.

Interviewer 1 Did she ever come by after the ten days, if there were problems?

Sissy Oh yes, if there were problems, she always called in, if she was round that way, on that problem child, yeah.



Interviewer 1 Do you remember what they used to do with the cords in those days? Did they tie them with string?

Sissy No, they were cut.

Mary Because Else, Elsie went, Elsie used to go and get all that when she was, because before the, eh, council took over, they had to buy all their drugs as well, and she used to go to St Olive's Hospital for them. It was more like a thread that she used to use.

Sissy That's right.

Mary It was more like a thread she used to use.

Interviewer 1 And did she buy a whole reel of them and just cut bits off?

Mary Yeah, she...

Sissy You used to see Elsie, if you was to see Elise going out, she'd cut a couple of pieces off and put her in her, you know, the old tin box.

Sissy That's right.

Mary You've got one of them tin boxes, have you?

Interviewer 1 Yeah.

Mary Where did you get yours, or did you have to buy it?

Interviewer 1 Somebody gave it to me, yes.

Sissy Oh blimey ((laughter))

Interviewer 1 But we do have to buy all our equipment.

Mary Yeah, do you have the drugs as well?

Interviewer 1 Yeah, we have to buy it all. So, what else? Did you used to burn the placenta in the fire, the afterbirth?

((whistling))

Sissy I can't remember.

Interviewer 2 But you didn't have to worry about it?



Sissy No, oh no.

Mary It's that tin.

Interviewer 1 That's right, yes. Oh let's have a look? Isn't that amazing? Was that her box?

Mary That was what she bought when she retired, she wanted to carry on working.

Interviewer 1 Has it got anything in it?

Mary No, I took it all out.

Interviewer 1 It's lovely, isn't it?

Mary Yeah.

Interviewer 1 Isn't that amazing, look at that!

Mary That's what they used to use.

Interviewer 1 Did she used to boil all her instruments when she went to a birth?

Sissy She had to do all that sort of thing.

Interviewer 1 Did she bake in the oven, do you know?

Sissy I don't know, but that's what they used to weigh the baby.

Interviewer 1 Isn't it amazing! Oh, isn't that lovely?

Sissy ((inaudible))

Interviewer 1 Is that a little scale in there?

Mary There you are, that's what they used to use.

Interviewer 1 Ah, isn't that nice? That's amazing, isn't it?

Sissy There you are.

Interviewer 2 Did that do a 12-pounder?

Interviewer 1 Yeah, it goes up to 15!

Interviewer 2 Good heavens! Well, I hope I never use one like that! ((laughs))

Mary There you are, 15 lbs.



Interviewer 1 I can remember these from seeing my brother and sister weighed, back in the '50s.

Isn't that incredible? I haven't seen one of those since. It's lovely, isn't it?

Sissy So now you know they're still in circulation!

Interviewer 1 Yes! That's lovely, thanks for showing us that!

Mary They're a good substance, you know, aren't they, these scales?

Sissy Yeah.

Interviewer 1 Yes.

Mary Some of the linings used to go.

Interviewer 1 Yeah, that's right. What else do you remember?

Interviewer 2 Did you ever take iron pills or anything like that? There's quite a fad for them now, and I'm just wondering if...

Sissy No, if you were under the weather you advised to take some stout or Guinness. Did Christine tell you about the books that Elsie bought when she was eh in the nursing home?

Mary No, they're not nursing books, they're, what's the name, but she bought them when she was ... what's the name of them? They're not midwifery books, you can get the midwifery one, but it's, it's very interesting. Actually, I'm going to take these to the Greenwich District Hospital when um Christine Williams gets around to it. I mean really, I always think that it would be um nice in the library for nurses, irrespective of um what they're training for, to look back and see what, how they treated a case today, and how they treated it yesterday, that sort of thing. I mean you've got the, in the what's a name you've got all the figures where you lift up the, the um machines you know?

Interviewer 1 They're lovely, aren't they? Isn't that fascinating? Lovely. Female diseases. What have they got in here? Look at those coloured lights. ((laughter)) When you were in labour, did you walk around a lot to help the pains?

Sissy Oh yes, yes.

Mary Do you ladies smoke?



Interviewer 1 No thanks!

Mary I'm not offering you any, don't worry, I don't myself!

Sissy Yeah, but you were told to keep at it.

Interviewer 1 Were you?

Sissy Yes.

Interviewer 2 That's interesting. So you sort of kept active, and then when you actually delivered the baby, you laid down on the left side?

Mary That's right.

Interviewer 2 But up until then, you were expected to keep active?

Sissy Until your pains started, then you sent for the midwife and then you done what you were told.

Interviewer 2 And once your pains started, were you usually told then that you should lie down?

Sissy Yes.

Interviewer 2 Or you were to wait until you wanted to push?

Sissy Oh no, you were told by the midwife. I mean you may have called her in half an hour before, but you, and as soon as she comes she'll say, 'Oh, we've got another half an hour yet.' And then she'd say, 'Well, come on now, get on the bed and we'll see what's to be done.' She would time you to the minute, yeah.

Interviewer 2 Isn't that interesting.

Sissy Yeah, oh yes, yeah. I mean if it was half an hour, she'd say, 'Right, I think we'll have a cup of tea,' and she'd put the kettle on. See, all that sort of thing they could tell. Every three minutes of contraction, and when it got to that then you laid on the bed.

Interviewer 2 Was it very reassuring to have her there?

Sissy Oh good grief, yes, you had no worry at all. Yeah, I could be screaming and she'd say, 'They'll stop when they've had enough.' I mean there was never no panic.



Interviewer 2 There was no feeling of worry about it?

Sissy Never.

Interviewer 2 That's important, isn't it?

Sissy Yeah, oh there was never no panic, that's right, yeah.

Interviewer 2 That's good, good to hear.

Interviewer 1 They're lovely, aren't they?

Mary I never look at them books. I wouldn't look if I had any aches and pains, I'd never look at a book, oh no!

Sissy Oh it's one of those medical books. Yes, Mary, I had one but I give it away.

Mary They're all volumes.

Sissy Because I've got a sister, a sister-in-law that looked at one of those, she's got every complaint, except the one you die of!

Mary I can truthfully say I have never ... the only time I ever looked at those was the first time I saw Elsie have a very bad turn, and I ran out for the doctor who was in Sycamore House, and I can't think now what it said. I said, 'Has she had a stroke or something?' 'No,' he said, 'it's something like a stroke.' Um, I got out the, I can't think of the name, but um I looked it up then, and it was to do with it, obviously it was to do with the brain, the way she went, but um...

Interviewer 1 There are some pictures in here of babies, lovely little babies. Did you use any kind of herbal remedies or anything? Were there any kind of potions or anything that you made up yourselves, any plants that you brewed up?

Mary No, pills weren't they? ((laughs))

Sissy I'll tell you what, on one occasion – and I don't know if it was a nurse – a nurse that told Mrs Porter to buy a lemon and squeeze it, and I've got to drink it. 'Oh,' I said, 'Nurse, ((inaudible)) a stomach ache.' And she said, 'Well, it won't be killing you, will it? So you take it.' So there was something wrong that wanted clearing out, that's my opinion on it,

but it never done me no harm. No, I never had herbals like that, no. I've got four healthy children and I've got eleven very healthy children, grandchildren. Yeah, the youngest one is 20, and I've got three great grandchildren, and there's the picture.

Interviewer 1 Lovely, wonderful! So your first baby was born what year?

Sissy 1930, he'll be 56 this year.

Interviewer 1 That's amazing. So when were you born?

Sissy 1906.

Interviewer 1 Were you really? My goodness, that's wonderful!

Mary We're right old fogies round here now, aren't we? ((laughter))

Sissy Yeah, we must be antiques! I'd have brought me birthday card over if I'd have known you were here. When I had a birthday, er I went to me daughter's, they were all going to be there, and my youngest granddaughter, she's given me a parcel like that. 'Oh thank you ever so much, Cath, I'll open that when I go home.' 'No, Nan, you've got to open it now.' 'I'll open it.' So she's taken the paper off and I thought it was a white silk pillow case. So she said, 'Open it, Nan.' Well, now I'm all fingers and thumbs. 'Catherine, where?' She opened it, and there's every one of the family in that, as you open it.

Interviewer 1 Isn't that beautiful.

Sissy Snaps of them and ... And she said, 'That place, Nan, I'll get you a photo, because tonight I'm going to take a photo of you, Uncle Pete, me dad, Uncle Frank, Auntie Mary and Auntie Audrey, and that will be there.'

Interviewer 1 Ah!

Interviewer 2 Isn't that beautiful.

Sissy In fact, I've had a letter from me granddaughter today ...

Mary Oh yes, yes, I picked it up, didn't I?

Mary Yeah, and she says, 'Look after the birthday card you got, Nan, it's worth seeing. We all see them individually but we've never seen them all together.'



Mary And how is she doing herself?

Sissy Very well, Mary, she's saved up £100 in the last three months.

Mary Oh, good for her.

Sissy She's working her way round the world.

Interviewer 2 Oh really?

Sissy Well, I say round the world, she wants to get to India, but she's discovered now that she's got to come back to England, because she can get a visa to England, she can't get one from Crete. She's 30 years of age, she's given up a very, very good job at Leicester.

Interviewer 1 Really?

Sissy Yeah.

Interviewer 1 She wants to travel?

Sissy Working in nurseries and playgroups, and she's given that all up to travel for two years, and she's learning two children to speak English. You can read the letter, Mary.

Mary Oh, I thought you were saying oh it was free English.

Sissy No, she's learning two children to speak English.

Mary I can talk Australian! ((laughter))

Interviewer 1 And you can understand it pretty well too!

Sissy But she said for £3 a day you can live well. I said to her, 'What will you do for a job when you come back?' 'Oh, we'll meet that when we come to it, Nan.'

Mary Well, that's fair enough. I mean after all, if she has to pay for a few months for experience of a year, that's, it will be all worthwhile, won't it?

Sissy Now how are you doing, girls?

Interviewer 2 We need to make a move, I think.

Interviewer 1 Yes, we've got another postnatal to do.

Mary Have you?



Interviewer 1 They'll be wondering where we are!

Mary I'll tell you, I'll tell you what um I did, I did ask Perkins if, when she's well enough, you can go and see her.

Interviewer 1 Oh, that would be nice.

Mary That's the lady that's 90, she was 90 last year.

Interviewer 1 And who is she?

Mary She is the midwife, that she was in Greenwich, er she did originate from Greenwich but she was in, when she come to London she er, she did, but, if you like, if you like, and if it's okay with her, I'll go down there and meet you down there.

Interviewer 2 That would be really lovely. Grace Hill?

Mary Yeah.

Interviewer 1 That would be lovely, because some people are a bit frightened to do it on their own.

Mary I don't think she would be afraid, because she embarrasses me sometimes, because when she starts talking, unfortunately she's had quite a bit of internal um disagreement, you know, er, and she will, I said, 'Perkins, I worked as a bloody midwife, don't talk medical to me!' You know, she uses all these medical terms, she doesn't forget, you know. But um, she er, yes, so most probably you'd hear about her work, also about her general condition. But I did, she's in the hospital, I told you, she's going into, I think it's the 21st or something she's going in. The 21st, um, she's going to have these eh cataracts done, see, so I'll make a ... see how she goes, but I did mention it to her, I did mention it to her. I said that you were coming down to see me, didn't know when, because you should have come last Monday but she couldn't, so eh, anyway, um, I'll keep in touch with her, or I would do in any case, even if it's only just on the phone. Um, but I'll make arrangements, if that's...

Interviewer 1 That would be lovely.

Mary and I'll um sort a date if ...

Interviewer 1 That would be wonderful.

Mary Now I wonder if um Miss Williams is away on holiday or what?

Interviewer 1 She is, she is.

Mary She is, is she?

Interviewer 1 She's away for two weeks.

Mary Oh, well that's fair enough then, because um, um I did write to her, you know, and um she might, she might have given me some information, although if she's away she won't know much information, but what I think I'll do, er, as far as Miss Hodges go, is the fact that I think, um I'll go round one Saturday, when I'm likely to get in to ... not get in, but to, not that the young couple, there was a young couple opposite her

Interviewer 1 Oh, a bit off Way Park ((?))

Mary Yeah, I can't think of the damn name now...

Interviewer 1 I know who you mean, yes, because I went to see her there.

Mary Yeah, I've been to see her several times, you see. I went through ... well, I told you, I met her through going up to the College of Midwives and um, er, Christine picked her up, and then she used to come down and pick me up, you see. And er...

Interviewer 1 She's lovely, isn't she, Christine?

Mary A very nice person, yeah. Have you seen her house yet?

Interviewer 1 No, no I haven't.

Mary No, she, she said that she would like you to go and see it, you know, but um, anyway I'll get round to that, you know. Um, or I'll meet her in um Lewisham precinct, you know, and sort of have a coffee and a chat, but most probably I shall hear from her. Do you know Christine?

Interviewer 2 No, I don't know her.

Mary She's a very nice person.

Interviewer 1 She's lovely, yes.



Archive Reference: Sissy S and Mary Thorley [RCMS/251/15]

Page 19 of 19

Mary Is she senior midwife at the Greenwich District?

Interviewer 1 Yeah. ((audio recording stops suddenly))

[END OF INTERVIEW AND TRANSCRIPT]