

Transcript of Interview taken for *D H Lawrence in Taos*, Peter Davis, Villon Films 1969:

Dorothy Brett

Q: Brett, where did you first meet Lawrence?

BRETT: I met him in Hampstead when he had a little house in Hampstead. In 1914 just when the war had started.

Q: Can you tell us who took you there and how you happened to meet him?

BRETT: Mark Gertler took me there, he was a young painter, who had met him and who was determined I should meet him, but I was scared, I was always scared of those people but anyhow I went. I went there to tea. It was a *tiny* little house. *Tiny*. And it seemed incredible that Frieda could get into it even. She was huge, but we had tea there and that started the whole thing.

Q: What was your opinion of him when you first met him?

BRETT: Oh, we just clicked. Immediately! Immediately! We sat on a little bench in front of the fire and we had a wonderful time. I think he had a great feeling of protection for me I don't quite know how to explain that.

Q: Then you felt that already from the beginning?

BRETT: Yes, from the very beginning. He sort of took me under his wing.

Q: Who else was there that day?

BRETT: Only Mark Gertler and me, Frieda and Lawrence. That was all.

Q: And then when did you see him next?

BRETT: I went... he came down to my... I had a little Queen Anne house in Pond Street, in Hampstead, and he came there, used to come down to see me, and I would go up to their, uh, they rented a house in Hampstead and I went up there too, to see them.

Q: And you saw them fairly often after that year?

BRETT: Oh yes, quite a bit. Then he went to Australia. This was during the war. Then he went to Australia and we didn't see him until he came back in 1924, it must have been.

Q: '23.

BRETT: And then he wanted all of us, four of us, to come over and I was the only one who came over with them.

Q: When he came back in 1923 he had already been to Taos, hadn't he?

BRETT: Oh yes, he'd been here. From Australia he came here and then he went back to England and collected – wanted to collect us. He wanted to collect me and Gertler and Murry and Koteliansky. And they all agreed to come and they all backed out except me.

Q: Tell us what he wanted to do here and why he wanted you all to come.

BRETT: He wanted to form a little colony – you know, one of those idealistic colonies – up at the ranch here. But of course it failed. It would have failed anyhow, you know, those things always do. They never succeed! And then he was here for – let me think now – for the summer, and then that winter we went to old Mexico.

Q: Would you backtrack a little? You came here on what ship and what did you do after?

BRETT: We came here on the Aquitania who's now, you know, she's just an old hen sitting somewhere, and, uh, we came over on her, and then we went to, came to New York and we were there for about a week or so and then came down here and went into Mable's house.

Q: And that was March 1924?

BRETT: That was in 1924. And then in 1924, yes, then in the winter...

Q: Before that. Tell us about that summer. And did you get along with Frieda at the beginning? Did you get along alright on the boat?

BRETT: At intervals there were moments. There were difficult moments, naturally, because she was a very aggressive person and jealous and lazy. Bone lazy. She'd lay on her bed all day long smoking cigarettes.

Q: Well, tell us about that first summer here before you went to Mexico.

BRETT: Well, I, I was there in that little cabin and, uh,

Q: Well, before that. Before that, Mabel gave you a house...

BRETT: Oh...

Q: And how did you go to the ranch, how did you get there?

BRETT: Uh, Mabel, Mabel, what happened was that, uh, everything went smoothly for a little while, but needless to say, as usual with Mabel and anybody like Lawrence and Frieda the thing didn't remain smooth. So then Mabel offered them the ranch and we went up there because Lawrence said he was going, and of course she didn't want him to go completely. So she gave him the, she lent him the ranch.

Q: What did he do about the fact that he wouldn't accept it first as a gift.

BRETT: She didn't give it to - Lawrence wouldn't accept any gift at any time. Never would accept a gift, not even a Christmas gift. He disliked gifts. So she gave it to Frieda. And, then we stayed there that summer. Then that winter we went to Oaxaca, to old Mexico.

Q: Well, what about the manuscript... that Lawrence gave her for the ranch?

BRETT: She gave him *Sons and Lovers* ...

Q: *HE* gave it to Mabel

BRETT: ...because he would never accept a gift, so he gave her *Sons and Lovers* which she finally gave to uh Brill, Dr Brill, for treating a friend of hers. And then what happened...? We went, we went down to Oaxaca and then we came back the next summer up to the ranch again. But that time I was in another ca' – down below on the, the Hawk ranch because Frieda had got, you know ...

Q: What?

BRETT: Well just like women get, you know. She just didn't want me around.

Q: Was she jealous?

BRETT: Oh, frantic. She was lazy, she never would do anything, and then she resented our doing anything, you see. You know the kind of thing it is.

Q: Tell us a little about that life on the ranch, about your building the porches...

BRETT: It was lovely. We rode. We had the horses. I had a very nice horse a red sorel and Lawrence had a rather inferior horse called Aaron, a black one, and Frieda had a great big grey horse that she got from Selená's father, Jose Trujillo. And we rode. We used to ride a great deal. And Frieda was amazing on a horse, I must say. She had no fear at all. Lawrence had absolutely no fear. The first time I saw him ride he got onto Tony's black stallion. Tony had a beautiful black stallion with a curly mane, you know. Lovely.

Q: And how were you?

BRETT: He had No Fear of it at all. And I was dreadful. I hadn't ridden since I was five or six years old, and I was sort of clutching onto a little horse called Chiquita. She was absolutely crazy. Crazy! If she saw anything she just reared and shied and acted up like nobody's business. But she was just like a feather. It was like riding a feather she was so light on her feet. She was perfectly lovely to ride. But crazy.

Q: Was that when you started fishing, going off on horseback to fish?

BRETT: I fished the first time we went up the Hondo, no, on a picnic, and I had, we had some steak and, Lawrence of course was very sceptical and jeering. He always did, you know. And so I went to put a little piece of steak on the hook which you're not supposed to do. It's poaching. And I caught a fish.

Q: How big a one?

BRETT: About this size. Little thing. And then I started fishing. I used to fish in Scotland so I just loved fishing. And, I used to come, I used to ride down. It was five miles from the ranch down to the Hondo river. And I would take my horse and I would go down to the river, tie him up to fish but he bellowed so he couldn't bear it when I was out of sight. So I had to go back and get him, so I had him on one hand and I was fishing along the stream 'cos I had to take him with me.

Q: D'you ever fish on horseback.

BRETT: (chuckles) I would come back with, oh, about 25 fish. Marvellous. Because in those days nobody was fishing. You see then nobody had cars and most of the rivers were too far off for anybody to get to. So I had it all to myself.

Q: How many cars were there when you arrived?

BRETT: Two. (Chuckles) Can you imagine?!?! A town with two cars! It was marvellous. Tony's car and old John Dunn's. Marvellous character here.

Q: What about the Indians going up there to be with you and help you all?

BRETT: Yes, I had Trinidad and his wife and uh, little George and uh, old John Archuleta, who was Trinidad's father, a very wonderful old man. Very great friend of mine.

Q: And they were all from Taos Pueblo?

BRETT: All from the Taos Pueblo. And they would come and look after me.

Q: And they helped Lawrence with irrigation ditches and all those things? Tell us about that.

BRETT: The irrigation ditch?

Q: No, about the Indians helping you all what they did.

BRETT: Oh, oh, they helped. They would uh, they would uh, look after the horses. They'd plant. To see, to see Trinidad plant a potato was almost a religious ceremony. Is it so with your people? D'you know, it was, it's a beautiful thing to see. He would make the hole and he would put this monstrous potato in, you know, just in the most religious way, just like a religious ceremony. Beautiful to see. And he would plant potatoes and, uh they would plant a few other things. But the only trouble with them was, that if there was a ceremony, they all melted away. Yes, they'd just go.

At 11:38

BRETT: Now you sit there with your blue eyes. Yes? Now you sit there and don't be a little girlie. Yes, that's great. Scratch ears?
Anything working? Oh he's getting in it focus, is that the idea? Better get it a little out of focus, we'd look better. Alright? Where were we?

Q: Brett, you were talking about your relationship with Lawrence and how Frieda felt about it and why he married her and so forth, why he stayed with her.

BRETT: She was jealous because I had some, what would you call it... contact with him that she didn't have because she didn't understand the psychic spiritual thing.

Q: Hey, let the cat go, you look like you're choking him.

BRETT: You know, she just didn't understand it, and, and was jealous of it, of course. And also jealous of the fact that we built things together, we played around together in the afternoon while she was lying on her bed smoking. So there you have it. So what can you do?

Q: What about Mabel Luhan? What was the relationship there?

BRETT: Mabel would come up and with a tent and bring enormous steaks and things and stir up a lot of trouble, but at the same time Lawrence always liked her in spite of it. Frieda, of course, was jealous of her too. But she was, she had a contact with him, you see, that Frieda didn't have too. That's, I don't quite know how to describe it it's just the other side of things. Frieda was very domestic. She read a great deal. She read a great deal of those, Greek things, what is it that Greek thing called, oh, do you know what I mean?

Q: Philosophy or plays?

BRETT: The Greek plays. The Greek, or the Greek myths. She read a great deal of those things and she would make paintings of them? Very strange watercolours of them. And, otherwise she would be jealous of some of his stories 'cos she always thought that he favoured the male side of things instead of the female, which I think he did.

Q: Brett, why did Lawrence stay with Frieda?

BRETT: Because he said, as I told *him* just now, that with Frieda he knew what he had, and if he left her and got another woman, he wouldn't know what he was getting (chuckles). How right he was! So he stayed with her. Also a kind of moral thing, that English Midland moral thing. Do you know anything of the Midlands of England?

Q: No.

BRETT: You don't.

Q: Not really, no.

BRETT: They have that rather rigid kind of morality and he had some of - a great deal of that, a great deal of it.

Q: Tell us of your own relationship with Lawrence and why and how you got along with him.

BRETT: Why he's what?

Q: Why you got along with him so well?

BRETT: I got along with him because I - he recognised in me, the fact that I recognised in him the spiritual thing, this uh, this other thing. He said one thing about me that I've always cherished. Somebody asked him why he put up with me and why he bothered with me, and he said, "You know, she lights things up". And I've never forgotten that.

Q: Did Lawrence ever use you as the basis for a character?

BRETT: A what?

Q: In his writing, Brett, where did he use you in his writing?

BRETT: The were two stories. One was called...

Q: *The Last Laugh*

BRETT: *The Last Laugh*, and the other was, I was the other woman in *The Plumbed Serpent*. There were two women in it Frieda and me. Those two.

Q: Why did Frieda come back afterwards, Brett. Tell us about Angie and Frieda coming back here.

BRETT: That was one of the things and, this thing had started you see, and I think she had, you know Frieda flirted too, she was one of those kind, you know. I don't like to say too much because Angie is still alive and he would be hurt, I think. But, they rented Angie's house in Spotorno in Italy. That's where they first met and Frieda would always have the glad eye, you see. Started this kind of business. And Lawrence was quite aware of it. And I think that is partly what made him give up somewhat. And, uh, then when he died she came back with him with Angeleno, because she could not be alone. She couldn't be without a man. And, uh, brought him back and then there was an awful hullabaloo, because they weren't married at the time, and somebody, I won't mention who, put the FBI on him. Dreadful, dreadful business. And, uh, then they got married.

Q: This was because she was not a United States citizen? Because they don't care who's married or not married in Europe.

BRETT: I think no, I don't think she did get it. Did she get her..? Did she get it?

Q: It must have been because either she or both of them were aliens.

BRETT: Then he got it, he got it. I thought she got it too. But I may be wrong. But there was a great deal of trouble. But that was finally adjusted by somebody in a very high place in New York, who miraculously mislaid the papers. So that was fixed.

Q: Well, then what did they do when they came back? Where did they live?

BRETT: They, they, lived down here opposite on the other side of the road here. You couldn't live up on the ranch in the winter time 'cos you couldn't get there. The road was so bad with the snow you just couldn't get up to it. So always, just before snow time, well, say about October September they would come down and she had a house just across the way here and they would live there.

Q: She gave you your land, didn't she?

BRETT: What?

Q: She gave you your land, this piece over here.

BRETT: Yes, she gave me the land here to build on.

Q: Did you and Frieda get along better afterwards?

BRETT: Oh yes. Much better. Because Frieda was a very helpless woman and when Angie would go for a vacation to Italy, I had to look after her. She couldn't do a thing. She couldn't drive. She couldn't get anything. So I looked after her. And we got, we all *three* got along. That's what nobody could understand. Mabel and Frieda and I got along perfectly. Perfectly. Isn't that ridiculous?

Q: Can you tell us a bit more about Mabel, what kind of person she was?

BRETT: Mabel was a very intelligent woman. Very intelligent. Very bossy. Very determined, but *extremely* generous. Very, very attractive woman. Very attractive. And extremely generous. Generous to all kinds of people. And she married Tony and Tony was a very, very tall, dignified Indian. A very remarkable man, and just what she needed. You just couldn't budge him. She couldn't boss him. It's one of those things, you can't boss Indians. She couldn't boss him. Never could boss him.

Q: How did Lawrence get along with the Indians?

BRETT: Lawrence get along with Tony?

Q: With Indians in general?

BRETT: Oh, very well indeed. He liked them very . He was so like them himself. He was so related to the earth like the Indian is.

Q: Brett, tell us the beautiful thing you've said before about his putting things into life instead of taking from.

BRETT: Putting...?

Q: Your feeling that Lawrence added to life instead of taking from it.

BRETT: Oh, yes. Yes. He gave to life. He added to life, instead of always taking from it, like the American does. They grab everything. Isn't that true? They don't give, they grab. Isn't it strange that?

Q: The Indians here gave Lawrence a name, didn't they?

BRETT: Red fox.

Q: Why?

BRETT: Because of the red beard, the red hair, I suppose. 'Cos he wasn't foxy at all really.

Q: It was his colouring.

BRETT: The colouring , the colouring. And you know, in old Mexico, they were frightened of him. If we went to little remote villages, or walked out of Oaxaca, or drove out and then walked into a little village the people were afraid of him. They would run away and hide. They were afraid of the red beard. They would call Christo, Christo, and they would run away and hide.

Q: Was he amused by it?

BRETT: No! Furious, upset by it.

At 23:08

Q: Brett, tell us all about Lawrence's painting with you.

BRETT: Well, I, you're English, aren't you?

Peter: Yup.

BRETT: I don't know whether it's still the same, but the Englishman has a sort of superiority complex Do they still have it?

Peter: I think just because we're superior Brett.

BRETT: In regard to women...

Peter: Oh.

BRETT: ...and (chuckles) Lawrence never thought a woman could really do anything, you know. So, whenever, I painted he had to paint too on the same painting, 'cos he didn't feel somehow that a woman could achieve anything because she was just female. And this thing about Englishmen, I don't know whether it still exists, but it was very strong in those days. And so, he always painted on my paintings, and that he also had done a great deal of copying . He liked copying paintings. And he copied a painting of Charles the first, looking into a mirror, but he put a sunflower instead of a mirror, and I can remember that little painting. I don't know who has it. And so he always painted on my paintings in one corner – or somewhere. And, uh, that started his painting when he was in Italy. And in, no I think it was in Italy I don't think he - he was too sick when he was in Venice. He painted and that's when he painted those big paintings that are down in the hotel now.

Q: What about the one of the view of the ranch with the horses in it?

BRETT: That we all painted on, yes, because again he had to paint on that, and uh, he painted some of the horses...

Q: Describe the painting and what he did in it.

BRETT: Frieda on the horse and himself on the horse. I had done the original painting you see. I had got it all going and then he had to paint over it, you see. He had to make an improvement on himself, and an improvement on Frieda, on the horses and everything. And Frieda painted the white chickens. That was the only thing she was allowed to paint. And he painted the porcupine and so on.

And then he painted in, in old Mexico at Oaxaca. He painted on my err, paintings out there. We would go outside the town a little way. We weren't allowed to go very far because there was a bandit in the mountains. And he painted some of the people in it and a bit on the mountains and the sky. He just couldn't, you know, resist it. He couldn't keep his hands off it. But it was a lot of fun. And then when he was in Italy, as a relaxation he started painting those paintings that Saki's got.

Q: Brett, when you were in Oaxaca you came back before they did.

BRETT: We what?

Q: You came back before Lawrence and Frieda.

BRETT: Yes, because Frieda made a row. Frieda got mad. Frieda got mad because we went out painting in the afternoons and she made the most frightful row! And I had to come back. I

said it's no good, we can't go on like this. So I came back ahead of them. Then he was terribly sick. I think he got something some of these err, Mexican soldiers would come up from the interior with fearful diseases and he caught a very bad form of malaria. He was terribly sick. And then there was an earthquake. And all the vigas went sort of like this, you know, in the room, and, he came back. He was absolutely pale green I've never seen such a colour and when he was in the - to get across the border, you know, they have these doctors. You have to go through not only the customs, but a doctor, to get into this country. And he, and he rouged his face. Got through it like that.

Q: And then he got well again quickly when he got back to Taos?

BRETT: It was month he was riding. If he had stayed here I think he would be alive now. But they can't, they can't stay put, those people. They never can.

Q: What do you mean by "those people"?

BRETT: T.B. people.

Q: Why?

BRETT: They have to have – they're always looking for the perfect spot and they never will stay in a perfect spot when they find it. I don't know what it is. They wander and wander and wander.

Q: Then how long were you together on the ranch before he left again?

BRETT: Two summers. Two summers on the ranch. One, the first summer on the ranch, then in old Mexico. The second summer on the ranch and then in Capri. He came over to Capri he had a terrible row with, with uh Frieda and her two daughters who tormented him.

Q: Well, you had gone to Capri to meet him after he...

BRETT: I had gone to Capri because he had friends there and he wanted me to see Italy. He said everybody should see Italy. He loved Italy.

Q: Then he came to Capri?

BRETT: Then he came to Capri.

Q: Tell us about that.

BRETT: Oh, he was so sick. He, he was just a wisp and pale green again and he stayed with friends called the Brewsters. And he stayed there. And then he and I went to Ravello. He wanted me to see Ravello and, uh, Amalfi. And then I had to go back to England because of my passport. No, my citizenship, my citizenship.

Q: Citizenship in this country?

BRETT: It had come to Naples and I went to Naples and picked up the papers and I had to come back to this country to get it, you see. And he went to Florence.

Q: Well, then you came back to the United states?

BRETT: Then I came back here.

Q: Then what did you do?

BRETT: Then I went, I came down here and I stayed with Mabel and then in the summer I went to look after the ranch.

Q: Were you expecting him to come back?

BRETT: What?

Q: Were you expecting him to return here? You expected him to come back...

BRETT: Always. They were always coming back. Always. Then when he wanted to come back Frieda didn't and when Frieda wanted to come back he didn't and then he left it too late. He went to Vence and he was too sick.

Q: Tell us about the telegram you received in New York. Tell us about being in New York.

BRETT: I went to New York, this was uh, this was, winter and I went to New York and I was in the Shelton Hotel and I got a telegram from Frieda saying, "Come over" oh, "Lawrence very sick. Come over and make him well as you did before." He was dead before I got the telegram. Even so it would have been hopeless. He just went out, you know. And Aldous Huxley was there at the time, and – what's her name?

Q: Maria?

BRETT: Maria Huxley. And he just faded out.
A drink! My God, a drink.

Q: That helps, doesn't it?

BRETT: But I, you've, you've no idea what this climate did for him. It was remarkable his recovery when he got back from old Mexico. And yet he couldn't stay.

Q: How did he feel about the landscape here?

BRETT: About the ranch?

Q: The country. Did he like the country very much?

BRETT: You know, it was a very curious thing. Before they met, they both of them sort of despised each other, you know. There was that antagonism.

Q: Who was "they"?

BRETT: You mean Huxley?

Q: No. He asked what Lawrence thought of this landscape.

BRETT: Oh, he thought it was the most beautiful in the world. He absolutely loved it. He said that the skyline here was one of the most beautiful skylines he'd ever seen in his life. Just loved it.

Q: Brett, tell us why you had so much trouble with Frieda. What kind of jealousy did she have? What was she thinking that was going on?

BRETT: Frieda was antagonistic to human beings. She never liked anybody. Never. And that was the problem with him. He was one of these people who, naturally as a writer, was intensely interested in people. And she wasn't. She always wanted to be isolated, always wanted to be just alone, you see. And also, she was immensely jealous of the fact that he was the flame that attracted people. And she wasn't. She had to play second fiddle. She couldn't get over that.

Q: What did he say to you about coming here and about not going to Australia again.

BRETT: Well, he said he'd never, never, in his life, go to a lonely place, and be alone with Frieda. He was so bored. Utterly bored. 'Cos that's one of the reasons he brought me over - was to break that intense boredom. She was a very boring woman. She was one of these great big motherly people, you know. But boring... and terribly jealous and terribly bossy.

Q: What was your relationship with Lawrence?

BRETT: Well, I think it was simply one of protection. I think he had this also - it was a very subtle thing because I think he knew, I feel something. He knew...

At 34:10

BRETT: ...you tried a friendship dance. Oh ye gods, goes on forever. Your knees begin to creak.

Q: Brett, would you tell us now about Lawrence's ashes being sent over from France and all that happened.

BRETT: Yes.

Q: Now. We're going.

BRETT: Are you ready?

Q: Yes.

BRETT: Have you started?

Q: Yes.

BRETT: Well, after he died he was buried in Italy. And then it was thought he wanted to be brought over to here, to the ranch and have his ashes scattered, you see. So when Frieda came he was cremated and his ashes put in an urn, and Frieda and Angie brought them over, but by some strange error they forgot them in New York, and there they were lost in New York. Where were Lawrence's ashes? Well Stieglitz, that is Georgia O'keeffe's husband, was alive then and he found the ashes. I think they had been left somehow either in the hotel or in his gallery. I'm not quite sure which. So the ashes were recovered

and then they were brought, they brought them down here. And when they got here, they again left them in Tinka's house. And when they got up to the ranch no ashes! They had lost the ashes again, but Tinka had got them in her house, Tinka Fechin, and she had made a little shrine for them. She put a couple of candles in front of it and she kept them until she could get word to them that she had them. Then they were brought up and, uh, to the ranch, and Angie built that little cold stone chapel in which to have them put, instead of scattering them, which of course he would hate if he ever saw it. Loathe it. But don't, I shouldn't say that because Angie would be hurt again if he heard that. Because he built it and he put the this, uh, he made a curious, rather fascinating little dove that was on the top of it, little bird, little phoenix, as a matter of fact, which has been now replaced by a very handsome phoenix with a great big large bosom. Have you seen it? (Chuckles).

Q: What about all of the gossip and stories that the ashes had been taken out?

BRETT: Oh, then there was a plot hatched. I won't mention the people in it, at least not all of them, but Mabel was in it, and a German in it called Von Maltzan who was one of the most - I don't mind if he ever hears - the most evil men you can dream of. He lived in the house Frieda finally bought from him because he was turned out of his country. And, uh, he and a few others were to steal the ashes out of the Chapel and scatter them. Frieda got hold of this story and all the blame was put on *me*. All the rest of the people simply disappeared and pretended they knew nothing about it and left it all on me, and she wouldn't speak to me for a whole year or more. She was furious.

Q: Did anything ever happen? Were any of the ashes taken out and scattered?

BRETT: No, they're still there. They're still there in that miserable little place.

Q: And then what about Frieda when she died?

BRETT: Frieda is there outside. He's in the Chapel and she's just outside which seems to me ironical and somehow rather just. (Chuckles) There she is in that large grave with that ornate stone over her. Uh! Oh, dear.

Q: Can you think of anything else you would like to say about him?

BRETT: I just would like to say that Frieda, in spite of everything, was a very warm, jolly, jovial kind of a person too. She had those qualities. Sort of motherly. She really was. She did have that side.

Q: Well, wouldn't you say you've gotten a bit that way yourself with all the young men you like to have around you?

BRETT: I'm not so motherly as she is? I don't think. I'm not so female as she was. She was essentially female. The most female of females, you know what I mean. So, and I don't think I've ever been quite *that*.

At 39:12

Q: ...Toby

BRETT: Susan the Cow?

Q: and Toby.

BRETT: You see, when I went deaf, I was at the Slade school and I was about 25, 24, 23, 24, 25, I don't know, something like that. And everybody was a little embarrassed and I was a little embarrassed too at that age of being deaf? And in those days they didn't have these kind of machines, you see. You had to have those old-fashioned earphones, have you ever seen one? And we called it Toby in order to, you know, make a little light of it, because it was somehow, I don't know it sort of belonged to old, old things, you know tottering in bath chairs and wheelchairs. So it was called Toby. But when I went to Oaxaca, as I stepped out of the train, somebody stole it, out of my pocket, so of course I couldn't hear a thing. But, I also had a very mod - the first man to invent these machines was Marconi, but it was like a suitcase. It was about that size and about that high. This marvellous machine. You could hear a pin drop with it. Marvellous. I had that, but unfortunately there was hardly anybody in Oaxaca who knew how to repair it if anything went wrong. But I did have, I went to a tinsmith, an Indian in Oaxaca, who, from a drawing of mine, made approximately something like my Toby, you know, that I could hear through. But the bore was that you had to hold it up, you see, all the time.

Q: Brett, what did Lawrence say to you about Toby when you, uh...

BRETT: oh, when I had this machine?

Q: No, when you had Toby and you were having dinner one night...

BRETT: That was it. That was at that dinner at the cafe Royale. No, I had this machine, not Toby, and he would say, "How could you ever make love to somebody through a machine like that?"

Q: Was he generally patient with your deafness, though?

BRETT: Oh, yes! We never had a quarrel. Never. Never. 'cos you see Frieda stirred him up. Frieda liked the quarrels, you know. And I don't like those things and I never stirred him up. If he got, if she stirred him up and he got mad with me, I could always quiet him down in about five minutes.

Q: How about Susan now? Susan the cow.

BRETT: Susan the black cow? She was just terrific because what happened was, you see, she belonged to Rachel Hawk, to Bill Hawk and Rachel Hawk, and she was miserable being separated from the other cows. She was lonely. She was miserable. So her whole endeavour was to get back to Del Monte, down to the other cows. So we were always chasing after her. And you have no idea how a cow can hide. It's amazing! She would go into the bushes you couldn't see her. She would remain absolutely still not even twitching her ears. But we went on horseback and the horses knew. The horse knew *exactly* where she was. That's how we used to find her. They could tell us immediately. Otherwise we never would find her. And I can remember one time, er, Lawrence got a rope around her neck and I can see her now galloping down the road, dragging him down the road. Couldn't hold her.

Q: How did he feel about milking her?

BRETT: Oh, that's a cosy... Have you ever milked a cow?

Q: No.

BRETT: Oh it's so cosy! You know, you sit there, you and you've got your head against their thighs. They're warm, they're cosy. I learned to milk.

Q: Was Lawrence good at milking?

BRETT: Oh, milking. Lawrence was wonderful at it. He loved it. And she was very good with him. I never milked Susan but I milked a tame old cow that Rachel had 'cos I was determined to learn. It's very hard on your hands here and you have not to pinch them, you know, you have to be careful, 'cos they'll kick.

Q: He had a cat too, didn't he?

BRETT: Timsy! Timsy, yes. Then we had two puppies but they weren't so successful. They were kind of tiresome, but Timsy was very sweet.

Q: There's a photograph of him holding Timsy.

BRETT: Yes holding Timsy up. I took that photograph. I took nearly all those photographs, but I wish I'd had a moving camera. I never thought of it. You know, you could get little ones. It mightn't have been very good but it would have been very interesting to see him walk.

Q: How did he walk, Brett?

BRETT: He walked, he always wore very, very thin, thin-soled shoes. He never would wear heavy soles like you have on there, because he liked to feel the earth. And he had a very light, light walk. Very light. But I wish I'd had one of those things. Of course, you never think of those things, you see, at the time. It would have been just wonderful. And curiously enough nobody thought of taking the photographs of him except me. It's a pity because it would have been very very interesting. And to hear him talk too. Never had one of these sound machines.

Are you finished? Good. [Be] thrilled with it.

END