

This is an interview with Lady Helen Broughton at her own home. I have been asked to do the interview - I am David Paget. Called in 1967, a criminal practitioner until 1997, when I became an Old Bailey judge. I retired in 2012 and I'm a Bencher of Inner Temple.

DP: Helen, may I begin by asking you, please, about the start. And there are four aspects that I wanted just to touch on, but please feel free to say anything you wish. You were - your maiden name was Helen Mary Shore.

HB: Yes, that's S-H-O-R-E.

DP: And that's the name, obviously, in which you were called.

HB: Indeed.

DP: And could you tell us about your call, and your admission to Inner Temple?

HB: Yes. Well, when I was at school, at Roedean, I loved this book by Sir Edward Marshall Hall. I absolutely loved that, and I read and read it, and saw that he had been a member of the Inner Temple. So I thought, well, that is what I want to do. So I wrote to the Inner Temple, and they said, "Yes, you can't be a Member until you're 18". So I made arrangements that I could be a Member of the Inner Temple on my 18th birthday.

01:38

So my mother came up from Cheshire, with all the correct paperwork, references, so forth - big cheque [inaudible, laughs]. So then I was made a Member on my 18th birthday at midday. So I don't suppose anybody else has been a Member quite so punctiliously, on their 18th birthday, you know. That's my history, anyway.

DP: How wonderful! And then you were called to the Bar in 1951.

HB: Yes.

DP: And you've just shown me the list of those called with you, and there was only one other woman, called Anne Fox. And do you remember anything about her...?

HB: No, no, I never saw her again, you know.

DP: I'm afraid, being so junior, by comparison, I can't help about that.

HB: Some of the men, I might have known, contemporaries I suppose they were. William Bell - he was an MP. He's at the top of that list. McEwan, he was one of Hailsham's pupils. He died, I won't say how, rather sadly. And I think that's all I knew, really.

DP: Fascinating. And then you became a pupil of Lord Hailsham?

HB: No, I then became a pupil of Sandons' chambers, which were Midland Circuit chambers, in London.

DP: Right, I see.

HB: And Bill Whittingstall - very kindly helped me, friend of friends. And he found this set of chambers where there was someone who *wanted* a girl pupil! Nobody really ever thought of having a girl pupil! But it was very nice, James Milne, who

was in Paul Sandons chambers - Paul Sandons was Recorder of Birmingham, you probably remember. And so it was very nice, you know, and I was his pupil.

DP: Wonderful. And what is the connection with Lord Hailsham?

HB: Ah, well then, he comes afterwards, because then [Kornai] came and then I had my first case in front of Aylesbury Magistrates' Court. And the judge was - it was Singleton and Morris. Who was the other one? I asked you to find out - can't remember. Very famous - and he was sitting as chairman of the Aylesbury Magistrates' Court. And I'd been called the night before. He said, "Oh, good morning, Helen."

04:33

And I said, "Good morning." You can only call them "sir", can't you, when it's a magistrates' thing, but actually he was a Lord Justice, and had been for many years. I had to call him "sir", and he looked at me and I looked at him and - very good case really, because it was a tramp who'd put his hand through the window and took a ham sandwich. So of course I got him off without calling him. I said, because, the prosecution had said that he had stolen it. The window was open, so how could he have stolen it? So I said to this judge who was sitting, "I close the case, I'm not calling my defendant [inaudible]." So he said, "Oh yes." So he said to the jury, "She may have only been called the night before," so he said, "She may be only legal [stripling?], but you've seen with what dexterity and something she's handled the case! No case to answer."

05:37

And all the jury came out and shook hands with me.

DP: What a wonderful start.

HB: That was my first, first case, yes.

DP: And then Lord Hailsham? Well, Lord Hailsham, yes, I met him at a dinner party. Because my boyfriend then, his father was the local MP and his mother was Patrick Hastings' daughter. And they were great friends, you know, with Quintin etc. And so they said oh we're having - come to dinner and you can ask him if you could be his pupil. Because it would be much nicer for me, because, Sandons' chambers, sometimes I had to get up at 6 am and catch a train from St Pancras up to Birmingham, because that was the Midland Circuit, you know, and I had one or two horrible episodes when I was put in bed by the clerk because I had to stay overnight, and had to sleep in my mink coat because it was so cold and all that so, you know - Anyway, Quentin and I got on immediately. Most extraordinary thing. And I said, "Do you think I could be your pupil?"

06:47

And I said, in after life, you nearly fell off your chair. He said, "No I did NOT, don't talk - " What he said was, "Go and see my clerk, Sydney Aylett, and see what Sydney says." And I gave Sydney an opinion, written, and he said, "Oh yes, you *can* join our chambers, just - like you to." No other woman there, in sight, or anything, you know. He said, "There is one caveat". And I said, "Oh dear, what is it?" "That you do not use our lavatories!" So I said, "I wouldn't DREAM of using your lavatories, because," I said, "I *hear* them. I mean, Quentin could be giving a conference and..." [imitates old-fashioned lavatory flushing.]

07:25

The Inner Temple had put in a very nice pink ladies' room, obviously for Benchers' wives, but I - therefore assumed I was fully entitled to use it, which I did. So I said to him, "I mean, I wouldn't dream, thank you all the same, of using yours, I just walk a bit further down and there is the new PINK loo for ladies, in the Inner Temple!"

DP: How wonderful. And you've mentioned his clerk, Sydney Aylett, and can I just ask you - there's a wonderful little mention of you in his book, *Under the Wigs*, published in - let me just look at the front of it. Published in 1978. In which he says this, describing his various "boys", as he called them. Because of course most of them would have been boys. But amongst them he says, having mentioned several boys, he mentions you, by name, and he says, of you, "Helen Shore, who later married Sir Delves Broughton, Baronet, she was as talented lawyer, who was just too beautiful and enchanting to have been left alone to make a career at the bar"! So may I just ask you about that? And can I, before I do that, I know that there are two of our most senior benchers, Michael Morland, and Oliver Popplewell...

09:07

HB: Oh, I know Oliver Popplewell, yes.

DP: Well, Michael Morland told me this only the other day, he said, "When we were bar students, we used always, if we could, to sit with Helen Shore because, not only was she very pretty, but she often bought us an extra bottle of wine.

HB: Oh right, oh well! [inaudible] about that.

DP: But you don't remember Michael Morland?

HB: No.

DP: No. He went on to become a High Court Judge, as did Oliver Popplewell, of course.

HB: Oh, yes, yes, excuse me - Oliver's wife, as you know, is an old Roedean girl, now Treasurer of the Inner - yes, yes. Elizabeth Gloster.

DP: So, Helen, can we just continue with the story - you married, I think in 1955.

HB: Yes, correct.

DP: So you practised until then, did you?

HB: Yes.

DP: And then what happened?

HB: Oh well, then - Evelyn had this lovely estate in Cheshire and North Staffordshire, so it suited me to be, you know, opening bazaars and so forth and then of course I had to produce some children, part of the deal, I suppose. Then we had a lovely time, and everybody knew us, naturally, Westminster and what nots, you know.

10:34

And also we had a London flat. Cadogan Square. So life carried on socially the same, as it were. And he was very nice to any of my friends from the Bar who

happened to get in touch, or anything like that, you know. He wasn't frightened of them!

DP: Wonderful. So you left the bar, but you didn't leave the law, because...

HB: Absolutely. Because, as you know yourself, when you join an Inn, you join all the things - the Golfing Society, the this, the that, the Music Society, [Debating] - so of course I joined them all, actually. In particular the tennis, and they always sent me the AGM particulars, and when it would be, and where and everything. The others failed out, because I didn't follow them up, but I did follow the other ones because I knew Lord Dunboyne, who'd been also a [inaudible]. And he'd been at Eton and the Irish Guards with Evelyn. But they didn't like each other at all!

11:47

But, anyway - so when there was this divorce - and I went to all the things - and Paddy said at the AGM, now he said "We've had an invitation to go and play on Long Island against the Americans, and we need somebody to do this, and arrange it, and pay for it and everything. I think it should be Helen Broughton. All hands up?" And all these [mavericks?] but their hands up. And I said, "But Paddy, what do you think I'm going to do?" and he said, "Well darling, it's over to you, I mean, you know, they said you've got to do it, so you've got to do it." I said, "Well, right."

12:27

So I rang up a godson who was at Eton, but he played cricket. "I said darling do you know anyone who plays tennis?" "Well, there is one person," and he mentioned somebody, so I rang him up, spoke to his mother and said "Look, do you mind if I go to Long Island with your son, with..." So in the end I did get six of them, and we did very well. One of them, Nicholas Hilliard, was one of my team I took.

DP: Really. How very interesting. So that's the Bar Lawn Tennis Association.

HB: Ah, yes, so then when I came back - Fred Lawton, and Paddy sent me things saying "You - must - be - vice - president". So I've always been vice president.

DP: Vice president of that?

HB: How long is it? Fifty years or something.

DP: Goodness. And you still are.

HB: And still am! Look at all these things - you see I present cups the whole time on their behalf.

DP: Goodness, how wonderful. Yes, and the present chairman is Lord Manse.

HB: Yes, yes. He was of course when I first started, he was just secretary of the Bar Lawn Tennis. Then one of them wanted - a Lord Justice, in adjacent chambers - I wrote to Paddy, and I said "It's very unfair!" I said, "I've never had lunch, tea, drink - I've fluttered my EYELASHES at Jonathan Manse, but he's worked for the society, you know - and I think he ought to be chairman. And Paddy rang up a few days later and said "Oh Helen, you're quite right, it must be Jonathan Manse." So we got rid of the Lord Justice in the adjacent chambers.

14:15

And so, and then naturally Jonathan sailed to the top, you know. Very sweet, plays tennis - as it should be.

DP: How wonderful. You've mentioned two names. Paddy - Paddy is Paddy Dunboyne.

HB: Of course, yes.

DP: Who was a great tennis player himself, wasn't he?

HB: Yes! And an Old Bailey judge.

DP: I remember appearing in front of him as a youngster, and you you also mentioned Fred Lawton.

HB: Yes, yes, he was a dear.

DP: Well, he was a remarkable man, wasn't he, and he was Margaret Thatcher's pupil master.

HB: Yes, yes.

DP: And then went on to become a Lord Justice of Appeal.

HB: Yes, well I kept up with him, you might say, he used to come to dinner parties, and people were so thrilled to meet him. Because he was very charming, his wife had died, you know, and he was a very sweet old boy.

DP: How wonderful. And then - you've shown me that in 1959 you were appointed a Justice of the Peace for the County of Chester.

HB: Correct.

DP: And could you tell us about that?

HB: I thought I had just said that - yes, I was delighted, naturally - honoured and thrilled and found it very interesting. But when I was first appointed, there was nobody who was legally qualified, at all.

DP: Including the clerk?

HB: Including the clerk. He was qualified by what they call "experience". But it wasn't legal experience! It was just, you know, interviewing witnesses and doing... Anyway, no, I enjoyed that very much. Very much indeed, yes.

15:54

When I left, as it were, left Cheshire as it turns out, sort of thing - I didn't sit again as a magistrate. I thought I'd done my fair amount, you know. Always on time, and the great thing was, when my little son died, aged two, it was heartbreaking. But that morning I went to the bench, and they all stood up and had two minutes silence for little John Evelyn. I thought it was very touching.

DP: And Cheshire was the county of appointment because where you lived was Doddington Hall, was it?

HB: Yes, yes, in the gardens at Doddington Hall, which is a vast place, you know.

DP: How wonderful. And then I think next - Could I ask you, because it's of topical interest as we speak, Inner Temple have in mind to try to complete Sir Hubert Worthington's plans for the Treasury building and the Hall, by adding a Mansard roof and dormer windows and so on, which couldn't be done in 1952 because the

money ran out. And it may be that that will now be done. Can you tell us a bit about that, because you in fact knew the Worthington family...

[inaudible]

17:19

HB: No - what I don't understand is - when I - for eight years, I ate, as you know, in Hall. At the same table, because the steward said to me, "Third on the left, miss", you know. Because I said to him, "I am a member of the Inn," and he said, "Eoh, I see," you know. I said, "Where shall I sit?" "Third on the left." So I went there and I sat there for the whole of the eight years that I actually practised at the Bar, you know. But that was quite different from - where I think it's where the - it wasn't when I was, went to the call - after I'd been called, I mean, a long time ago. [inaudible]

18:05

I mean, when I was there, it was all quite different. Geographically, and what not, you know?

DP: Were you in what was called the Niblett Hall?

HB: Yes.

DP: Because that's - after the original Hall was bombed -

HB: That's right -

DP: ...during the Blitz.

HB: It was, wasn't it.

DP: Everybody had to move to the Niblett Hall until the new Hall was built.

HB: Yes. I think it was the Niblett Hall, wasn't it, where I would have lunch and [inaudible]

DP: It would have been, yes.

HB: And the library was just there too, wasn't it?

DP: Well, I believe so, but I - I'm only going by repute.

HB: I'm sorry!

DP: I do remember the Niblett Hall. That, too, has gone and is now a set of chambers. Because I did some exams in the Niblett Hall. It's a great pity we lost it, really.

HB: And a lot of eating went on I expect, yes.

DP: A lot of eating - and were called in it.

HB: Yes, must have been called in the Niblett Hall, mustn't I? Yes.

DP: I think so, and King George VI was Treasurer at one point.

HB: Yes, it was John Singleton who called me.

DP: Who called you.

HB: And he very sweetly came along the table afterwards and said, "I'm giving you this." And it was his book, Conduct of the Bar, which he signed for me. It was very sweet, you know.

DP: How wonderful. Just dealing about your - dealing with the question of your call, how did that happen? Because I know - recently you went to a call -

HB: I know, it was lovely, yes.

DP: Was it all very different from your day?

HB: I went to the call the other night, it was absolutely CROWDED with people. No, my call night, Singleton called us. No it was very very - well, yourself, you can see, a very small number of people, 25 people, 24 men, myself and one other lady. Twenty-six. So it was nothing special, I don't think we even had a special dinner to eat or anything. I think I went out to dinner afterwards. It was just a ceremony. You just shook hands with John Singleton...

DP: The Treasurer.

20:24

HB: The Treasurer. Yeah. There was nothing special about it.

DP: Nothing special. Well, I think it's gone through various transformations, but now, as you will have seen, it's rather different.

HB: I know [inaudible] yes.

DP: Well, how fascinating. Helen, I think really, that's all I particularly wanted to ask you about. Is there anything you wish to add?

HB: Well I just wish to add that my heart and soul is still with the Temple, I love it, and I go occasionally, as you know, to the Pegasus Restaurant. I don't actually lunch with the students. It's rather awful of me. Well, I mean, it isn't awful, it's fine. But so many of my friends are Benchers. Some new. But you know they're always very sweet and kind, I love it.

DP: Well I'm sure we're all very pleased to have you.

HB: Oh, thank you very much.

DP: And thank you very much indeed for this interview which has been fascinating.

HB: Thank you for being such a kind interviewer. So delighted to meet you.

DP: Helen, we ended the interview a few minutes ago, but you've just added, there was something you'd like to add. So may we do that.

HB: yes, well I would just like to say - the newspaper that one reads, and all these cases coming up, men alleged they're groping females and all that sort of thing, never in my whole - now, is it 55 years? Even as a young, pretty student or - anything like that has ever, anything happened. All the people, all the men - always been perfect gentlemen. And I think I would like to say that.

DP: Thankyou for adding that.