

APPENDIX 3.

STUDY 2: TRANSCRIPTS OF INTERVIEWS

(Volume 2)

CHESTER CATHEDRAL.

Interview Code: C1

Group Composition: Older married couple (60s) from the United States.

Date: 4th June 1998

Q. Can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Er, we have certainly read in history books, and in newspapers and in current literature about cathedrals, we know that they are threatened because Christianity is somewhat declining, and we love the art of course, my husband is not religious, but he loves the art as much as I do. We love the carving which you have in here, and we love the antiquity too, because we are from the United States and we do not have anything very old back there.

Q. So you would say that something old is important for you?

Well, something historical and with religious significance is important.

Q. I see. Are you religious people?

I am.

Q. And when you come to the Cathedral, do you get a chance to pray at all?

Oh, yes.

Q. So it is quite a mixed visit for you then. You have mentioned the art, history and religion...

Absolutely. And I think that is why it will always be a centre for pilgrims. We are on an archaeological tour, and cathedrals are part of it. So we are seeing many cathedrals.

Q. So it sounds as if you are really into history because you are on an archaeological tour. So are you specialists in archaeology?

No not specialists, its more an avocation. Our tour is being led by a professional, he is a professor in the United States. He is also a catholic priest too.

Q. I see. So you are being guided by an expert in archaeology and religion?

Oh yes.

Q. And what have your experiences been in the Cathedral today? What have you experienced as you have walked around?

That it was a happy centre for the people here, and that today it is still a good place for visitors. And I loved to find out about the old saints, which we are not familiar with at all.

Q. Oh yes, there are so many old Celtic saints, you have can get encyclopaedias of them, there are so many just in this area of England.

I know! All we hear about is Bede!

Q. St. Bede is buried in Durham Cathedral. Are you going there?

Oh we have been there, we saw his tomb. We felt very touched by that. And we saw St. Cuthbert's tomb also, and now we have found a St. Werburgh here! I think the saints are marvellous, they are a guide to me in a way. (Husband: our English tour guide was a specialist on architecture, he tells us a lot about the architecture such as the different arch styles, and how the several churches and cathedrals we have seen have had different styles of architecture.)

(Pause)

Q. Ok, so if somebody said to you "Chester Cathedral", when you went home, what would be the images that would be brought to your mind?

(Husband: Very large, lovely stained glass, a lot of beautiful woodcarvings in the quire there, under the seats.) A buildings of great religious and historic significance.

(Pause, felt both visitors wished to end the interview).

Q. What a great summary! That's it.

Good. Thank you. Where are you doing your Ph.D? etc.

Group Composition: Older married couple (60s) from United States.

Date: 4th June 1998.

Q. Can you tell me why you decided to visit the Cathedral today?

The beautiful outside of the building.

Q. Is that what attracted you to the place?

Yes, we saw it from one of the side streets down the hill there. We just like cathedrals.

Q. Do you? Do you always visit cathedrals, whenever you see one around?

Yes, if we see one we will always go in.

Q. What is it about these places which is so interesting for you?

(Pause).

Q. Is it the religion of the place?

Oh yes, and the beauty of the building, especially with the older cathedrals.

Q. Oh I see, so its being an old buildings that gives it an extra specialness?

Yes.

Q. Ok, what have you experienced when you have been in the Cathedral today?

(Pause – visitors looked stuck).

Q. If somebody said "Chester Cathedral" to you, what images would you bring up?

Oh the age, the carvings. It's so much older than anything we have at home.

Q. Oh I see, where are you from?

Texas.

Q. Oh I have just interviewed a couple from Texas, they are probably on the same tour as you. Ok, so things are so new in your country aren't they?

Yes, particularly in Texas we don't have anything which you could really class as old, especially cathedrals. In some of the Eastern cities they have some old places, such as in Massachusetts they have churches from the 1630's, but that's churches rather than cathedrals.

Q. I see. So what is it about the place being historic which is important for you. How important is history when you decide to visit a place?

I think it is more important for my husband. The religious atmosphere too. Not just the atmosphere, for instance, we are Catholic and we have noticed how close the High Anglican church here is to the Catholic.

Q. So was you visit a religious experience today then?

Yes we felt a sense of spirituality.

(Pause)

Q. So it has been quite a mixed visit for you?

Yes, and the music has added to it. To the sense of holiness or whatever.

Q. Yes?

(Pause – felt that the visitors wanted to end interview).

That was really interesting, and that's it, thank you!

Group Composition: Middle aged lady (50s) from United States.

Date: 4th June 1998.

Q. Ok, so can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well, we are basically here in England for three weeks, and this is one the things that we wanted to see.

Q. Really, how did you hear about the Cathedral?

One of our friends, who was born in Liverpool, is here with us, and this is one of the attractions that she brought us to see.

Q. So you do you like visiting cathedrals anyway?

Yes, oh yes, we are Baptists and these cathedrals give us an experience different from our own religion.

Q. Do you have cathedrals in the Baptist religion?

No, not this huge. We have big beautiful buildings but nothing, nothing like this.

Q. And what has you experience been like here today?

It has been fantastic. We got to talk to a priest in the Cathedral. We talked about religion, politics, the welfare situation, which is the same here as in the states. We all said a prayer.

Q. So there was a religious element to you visit then?

Yes.

Q. So if somebody said to you "Chester Cathedral" what would be the images that would come to mind?

Well I would remember the priest in particular, because he took the time to talk to us. The building is beautiful, the history is wonderful, yes, it is something that we will treasure forever. But no matter about the building I think that the priest talking to us was the most special thing.

Q. So it was nice for you just to be able to talk to a priest in the Cathedral?

Oh yes, the fact that he would take the time, because it is such a busy place. But you know, we just don't take time anymore to talk to people, and I guess I appreciate that the most.

Q. Yes I think that is true. Do you feel that in general people just don't take time to discuss things?

Absolutely. The priest talking to us meant a lot to me. It means more to me than the Cathedral. It was the personal touch and the fact that he would take time, and he is a busy man.

Q. Oh yes this is a very busy cathedral. In fact other people that I have interviewed said that even though there were a lot of visitors, the Cathedral still felt like a holy place.

Oh yes, we were able to say the Lord's Prayer with the priest in quiet, it makes you feel good.

(Pause)

Q. Have you been to England before?

No.

Q. What have your impressions been?

Oh I love it. It is so refreshing, different. Its history, it is all the things that we read in the encyclopaedia in school about history and art. And then you come over here and actually see the things for yourself. One of the most amazing things is the landscape. We live on a small farm, and we have cattle, but here there is just acres and acres of green, and the sheep – it is so different and so beautiful. I have found the people are very friendly. Everybody has been so kind.

Q. That is really good to hear. It was interesting what you have just said about the history. Is history important for you?

Yes.

Q. Why is that? Is it because your home country is so new?

No, I think that in our day now, history is not as important as it was. We are going on to so many new things – the kids today that are growing up take history for granted. A lot of people are taking history for granted. We have some old houses in our community which they are tearing down to put up a shopping mall.

Q. Where are you from in the States?

Tennessee.

Q. And they are actually tearing down old houses?

Yes. In a place called Falmer City there are some beautiful houses, they tore them down and put up a department store.

A. And what were the local people's reactions to that?

We were angry, but the lady who owned the house, said that we must have progress.

(Another lady walks up)

This lady is interviewing me. I am sorry our bus is leaving soon. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle-aged man (50s) from the United States.

Date: 4th June 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Erm, I am visiting some people on a business trip, and I decided to stop over in Chester because it looked like such an interesting city.

Q. What was it that interested you?

The walls. Not the commercialism and not all the shops, I don't like that, but I enjoyed the walls. I was in Gloucester about five years ago, and the cathedral in Gloucester I liked very much. I can't remember its name exactly, it was very large, and I was interested in this Cathedral. Particularly because the organisation I am with – the RSPB had fayre hear last year, with singing and that sort of thing. And I am just interested in old cathedrals.

Q. I see, so old cathedrals... what is it about the age of the Cathedral which is so interesting?

Oh the architecture, what took place here, the sanctity of the Cathedral. I am intrigued by the Benedictine Monks, I have read a lot about them, and I thought this would be an interesting place to visit because of that.

Q. So to see where they actually undertook their Ministry?

Right, and we don't have cathedrals this old in the States.

Q. That is very interesting because a lot of other visitors from America I have interviewed today have mentioned that they just don't have this type of building. So is that important for you?

Oh definitely.

(Pause)

Q. What have you experienced when you have been here in the Cathedral today?

I think I enjoyed the silence and then I enjoyed the organ recital. I am glad that was open to the public, it was just nice to sit quietly and listen to it. It also gave me an opportunity to look at the architecture, it made it feel even more grand and large.

(Pause)

Q. Does it feel like a special place to you?

Oh, it sure does.

Q. Is there any other sort of building which have the same type of feeling as you have described about the Cathedral?

Perhaps some very small chapels.

Q. I see, so is there a religious element to your visit?

Definitely.

Q. Your visit has been a real mixed bag then. You've spoken about history, religion, architecture. So has your visit been a positive experience then?

Oh yes, I only wish I could have spent a lot more time here. But...

Q. I know, it must be frustrating. Erm, if this had been an overtly modern building, would you have visited.

No, no. This is the only one I have visited since I have been here, and that was because it was so old.

Q. That is really interesting. Thank you so much.

Group Composition: Younger woman (30s) from New Zealand.

Date: 4th June 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you came to the Cathedral today?

Because I am a visitor to England, and I am in Chester, and it is a fascinating building, so I just wanted to see it.

Q. What is fascinating about the building in particular?

Oh it's the history, it is so old.

Q. Are you Australian or a New Zealander?

New Zealand.

Q. So is it because New Zealand is so new?

Yes, we just don't have the history. And that is why this is just so wonderful.

(Pause)

Q. What have your experiences been as you have walked around the building today?

I am just so pleased that there is still so much of it here. Mind you when they built these places they were built to last weren't they?

Q. Absolutely.

(Pause)

Q. So if somebody said to you "Chester Cathedral" what images would be brought to your mind.

Well, it would be the beauty, the stained glass, I think it is amazing. The sheer size of the place.

Q. Did you feel anything spiritual?

No, no. I suppose because there are so many people in here today.

Q. Really? So does it feel like a tourist attraction or does it feel like a sacred place?

I would say it feels more like a tourist attraction.

(Pause)

Q. Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: An older Canadian couple (60s) accompanied by a local couple (friends) from Chester.

Date: Saturday 6th June 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Male Chester resident: Well we have brought these two [pointing to tourists] to see it). (Female Chester resident: It is part of Chester's history isn't it?)

Q. I see, so is history an important part of your showing them around Chester?

(Male Chester resident: Yes).

(Canadian female: Well, when your background is British, yes naturally it's a place to come to).

Q. I see, so your roots originate in Britain?

(Canadian female: Yes, yes).

Q. I was speaking to a lady from the States, who said that she was attracted to Britain's history, because there isn't anything as old in America?

(Canadian female: You are exactly right, yes).

Q. So coming to something like this is a novelty?

(Canadian female: Yes, very much so. The meaning is here, our roots are here. Coming to the Cathedral we are getting in touch with our roots).

Q. That is really interesting. Is there anything else about the Cathedral which attracted you today?

(Canadian Female: Well, the fact that it is still standing is amazing. The history of it). (Canadian Male: Well, it's the age of it, and how well it has done). (Canadian Female: How well it is preserved.) (Canadian Male: Trying to figure how they did that, how they built it, that many years ago, because they just didn't have any equipment). (Canadian Female: and we took for granted that there would be the beautiful ceilings and the vaulting, it is just unbelievable). (Chester Male: I've been before, and I thought it would be good place to bring them). (Canadian Male: Oh yes, he is our tour guide [Laughs])

Q. So it sounds as if you feel a sense of admiration for the people that built the Cathedral then?

(Canadian Female: Oh of course).

(Pause)

Q. So what have your experiences been in the Cathedral today? What did you feel?

(Canadian female: Oh God, I felt things from one end to the other).

Q. Really?

(Chester female resident: Oh the choir it was beautiful, I was in tears, particularly when they sang Danny Boy). (Canadian female: And looking at the leaded windows and when the light came through the stained glass. It was beautiful).

Q. So you found that the choir enhanced your visit?

(Canadian and Chester Females: Oh yes).

Q. Do you think your visit would have been different if the choir had not been singing?

(Canadian Female: Oh I don't know).

Q. Do you feel it would not have been as intensive. I know you were saying that you were in tears and I can see you are both quite emotionally charged?

(Chester Female resident: Oh yes, it was a nice finish to our visit). (Canadian Female: They were a wonderful choir). (Canadian Male: We lit a candle for a daughter that we lost). (Canadian Female: Yes, that was special).

Q. Oh dear. So that helped you?

(Canadian Male: Yes).

Q. So that is a really mixed bag isn't it? You've talked about the history, architecture, you feel respect for the people who built it, you feel you have got in touch with your roots, the choir singing.

(Canadian Female: Yes, it's had everything, it has been the perfect day. With old friends as well).

Q. So a perfect day. So if somebody said to you when you went home "Chester Cathedral", what images would come to mind?

(Canadian Female: We could compare it to any cathedral in England – like Canterbury. It's just got this natural beauty to it).

Q. Are there any other buildings, apart from English cathedrals, that have had the same effect on you?

(Canadian Female: We haven't really been to many other types of places, apart from castles). (Canadian Male: We have been to York, Canterbury, Westminster Abbey). (Canadian Female: His cousin is a collector of histories of churches and he took us with him).

Q. So you have had a specialist taking you around these places.

(Canadian Female: Yes, that was a few years ago, and we have never forgotten it).

Q. So have your expectations been fulfilled by your visit.

(Canadian Female: Yes, 100%). (Chester Female: It's been marvellous).

(Pause)

Ok, that's it. Thank you very much.

Group Composition: Middle-aged man (50s) from United States.

Date: Saturday 6th June 1998.

Q. So. can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because basically I am a religious person, and I just like to visit various religious places and cathedrals. So we came to Chester to visit the ancient city, and the Cathedral was one of the points of interest that we wanted to see.

Q. So it is a religious visit for you more than anything else?

Yes.

Q. Where are you from?

I am from the States, originally from Maine, but I currently live in Little Rock, Arkansas, which is in the mid-section of the country.

Q. Ah where President Clinton is from!

Exactly.

(Pause)

Q. Can you tell me what you have experienced when you have been in the Cathedral today?

I was moved by the tomb showing the bishop and the twelve Apostles and the Apostle's creed on each of the heads.

Q. Yes, it is quite an amazing tomb.

Yes, I was quite impressed with that, and also the Last Supper painting behind the altar, that was quite impressive.

Q. So it sounds as if there was an artistic element to your visit as well?

Yes, definitely.

(Pause)

Q. Did you get a chance to pray at all while you were in the Cathedral?

Yes, we did. The priest was there saying the "Our Father" and some other prayers, which we joined in.

Q. You can see there are thousands of people coming in, did their presence bother you at all while you were praying?

No, because they basically stopped while we were praying and prayed with us as well.

Q. Really, that is interesting?

Yes it was good to see.

(Pause)

Q. Ok, if somebody said to you when you went home, "Chester Cathedral", what images would you bring to mind?

Oh, definitely the tomb with the twelve apostles and the altar.

Q. Yes, and would you say that your visit has been a positive or negative experience?

Positive.

Q. Did it meet your expectations?

Oh, more. It was huge. I did not expect it to be so large... and lots of history.

(Pause)

Q. Ok, that is it. Thank you very much for stopping.

Group Composition: Middle-aged lady (50s) from the United States.

Date: Saturday 6th June 1998.

Q. Ok, so can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because I like to see cathedrals.

Q. What is it about them that you like to see?

Erm, because they so old, and they have lasted so long. The memories that are in them from other people.

Q. Really, so it is not just the physical age of the building, there is something in the atmosphere perhaps?

Absolutely.

Q. Why is history important for you?

I like history, I have always liked history.

Q. Are you a specialist in history?

No it is just a hobby?

Q. I have spoken to a number of Americans during this study, and quite a few have said that the reason they come to the cathedrals, is because they are so old, and that in the States you have so few things that are as old as this. Would you say that is true for you?

I suppose that is true, there is definitely a fascination with things that are old.

Q. This is a religious building, would you say that there was a religious element to you visit today?

Erm, not really, I mean I enjoyed the stained glass windows, and I would have loved the music if we could have heard it. I would have loved to have heard the organ.

Q. Really? So you find that music adds something extra to your visit.

Oh yes, to me, music is a very important part of my visit.

Q. Are there any other buildings like cathedrals, were you would get that same experience you have just described?

Erm, no, it's a different kind of thing, I like old buildings, like the castles and everything, but I think cathedrals are different to anything else. I suppose it is probably the religious aspect that makes them different, even though I am a Protestant.

Q. Did you feel a sense of God's presence today?

Oh there were just too many tourists.

Q. What exactly was your experience of the Cathedral today?

(Pause)

Q. Say, if you went home and somebody said to you "Chester Cathedral", what images would you get.

Oh, I was interested in the stained glass windows that they had repaired, but not in the design, they were not in the typical stained glass fashion, but they were interesting.

Q. Do you mean the quite modern windows on the right hand side of the Cathedral?

Yes, I don't like them, but I like what they stand for.

Q. So to sum up it is the stained glass windows and the history of the building which were important for you then?

Right.

(Pause)

Q. That's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Married Couple (60s) from Australia.

Date: 6th June 1998

Q. Can you tell me why you came to Chester Cathedral today?

Well, mainly because of the sheer size of the building, because it was built so long ago, and to make comparisons when we are travelling because we seem to go into every church and cathedral that we see.

Q. Really? Are you on a coach tour?

Yes.

Q. And what is it about cathedrals which attracts you? You have just mentioned the size, is that novel for you?

Its the history, they have been here for so long.

Q. And so they are different to what you have in Australia? Or do you have anything similar?

Oh yes, we have some very nice churches, but not as big as this, as this was obviously an abbey, and although we have those in Australia, they are on a much smaller scale.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

Well, we've had a good look around. Its another beautiful cathedral. We have just been all over Europe, so we are just about 'Cathedraled out'.

Q. Really? How many cathedrals have you been to?

Couldn't count them. (Husband: We've been to all the big ones). Yes, Koln was spectacular, St. Peters, Brussels, Innsbruck, Salzburg. At Innsbruck they had just cleaned it for some bicentennial thing, it was remarkable. Yes we've just about seen them all. We'll have to go home and go through it because it is all going in a blur.

Q. Yes, I can imagine.

(Husband: where do you come from, are you from Chester?)

Q. No, Liverpool.

(Husband: Oh Liverpool, is it a good town, we are staying there tonight?)

Q. Its wonderful, you will like it very much. It has got two cathedrals, I know you were saying you were 'cathedraled out', but Liverpool has got the largest Anglican cathedral in the world, it is definitely worth a visit.

(Husband: What? Is it bigger than Westminster Abbey? Oh yes, we've been in Westminster Abbey, Sacra Coeur, Notre Dame as well.)

Q. Oh, would you say you were cathedral experts because your tour sounds as if it has been based around cathedrals?

Oh no, its just that we are mad on history.

Q. Oh I see.

Yes, well this is were everything happened isn't it? We've never been out of Australia before, so we decided to do a tour so that we could see everything in two months.

Q. Its sound like the world's most intensive tour.

Oh yes.

Q. That's another thing - if this had been an modern building would you have visited it?

Oh no.

Q. What is it that attracted you then?

Well its the history of it that's important.

Q. What is it about the history which is important?

(Husband: Well, if you are mad on history I suppose, I can't explain it. I mean you might take the history for granted because you live here and you are used to it, and it is all around you. Whereas we are on the other side of the world, Europeans have only been there for 200 years, so.

Q. That's right, everything is so new in Australia, so to see something like this is a novelty for you?

Yes, to see it is a novelty. But also because we have been reading about it for so long, we wanted to see it for ourselves. We wanted to see the size of it for ourselves, and the fact that it was built so long ago always amazes me, that they could build anything like this then. (Husband: Buildings that were built thousands of years ago hang together better than buildings that are built now. When you see what the tradesman had to build with, and what they could do in those days, its amazing. Like in St. Peters in Rome, when you see what Michelangelo did, people can't do what he did now).

Q. So do you feel that in the present day we can not produce the same buildings or skills as the cathedral builders?

No, no.

Q. Why do you think that is?

Well they had smaller populations then didn't they? They had so many less people, they built these massive churches as abbeys and they put everything into it. Its a dying race today isn't it? (Husband: we were impressed to with what has gone on in England over the past 2,000 years, its surprising any of these buildings survived with all the fighting and warring since the year dot. Its a wonder that anything survived).

Q. Oh for the cathedrals, particularly after the Reformation, a lot of them were destroyed inside. Durham Cathedral was used as a prison for Scottish prisoners by Oliver Cromwell during the Civil War. It was smashed to pieces inside, but it survives.

(Husband: Oh yes, and the Anglican Cathedral in Dublin was used as stables for the horses.)

Q. Unbelievable isn't it? By the way do you have any ties with England yourselves?

(Husband: Well we all came from here at one time, usually at Her Majesty's pleasure.) Well I am an O'Brien and he's a McDonald so yes we do have our ancestry here, but we are not to keen on looking back in case we find things we do not want to know! Well, we have to catch our bus now, thank you.

Q. Ok, that's fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Young British/Australian lady (early 30s).

Date: 19th June 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you decided to visit the Cathedral today?

Because my husband has taken the children off to see the town, and it has given me the chance to do some photography in peace and quiet.

Q. What is it that you want to photograph?

The stained glass is just beautiful, the gargoyles just fascinate me. Erm the stonework. I don't want to take pictures of the whole Cathedral, I want to get picture with more of an ambience of bits of it.

Q. Really, are you an artist?

No, I do black and white photography, and I do my own printing, and I really wanted to just look at details rather than the whole thing.

(Pause)

Q. And what have your experiences been in the Cathedral, was it purely a photographic visit?

No my father is from this area, years ago. My husband is from the Wirral, so.

Q. Are you from Australia or New Zealand?

I live in Australia, but I am originally from the South of England.

Q. Oh I see, you have picked up a little of the Australian accent.

Oh yes I know its a very easy accent to pick up. Yes, so the Cathedral is a nice thing to come to for me, as well as seeing it, the photographs will be for my children, it is almost a momento, these are pictures which will be for them, and it will show them that this is somewhere where you have got your roots. Because we live in Australia and they were born there, and its almost like we will have something to say 'look this is somewhere were your roots are'.

Q. That's very interesting. I see you didn't bring the children with you today, was that because they wouldn't have enjoyed it?

Oh because they would have run riot.

Q. Really?

Because they are fifteen months and two.

Q. Oh Lord.

Exactly, so they are too wild to bring. Really, I would be scared that they would be howling and scaling the altars! (Laughs)

Q. So if somebody said to you 'Chester Cathedral' when you went home. What images would you bring to mind?

Oh the gargoyles are spectacular. The faces, the medieval faces that are around the outside. The stained glass windows, oh yes. The windows with the saints on where they have got pictures of other cathedrals behind them in black and white. And then you have got the saints coming out in the colour, is just spectacular, its really special.

Q. Really, and did you feel anything emotional as you walked around. Did you feel a sense of God's presence.

I felt peaceful, tranquillity. I don't get much chance to feel quiet with my two right now.

Q. I see its an oasis for you, you poor thing.

Well, any mother with small children would say the same thing. Yes its beautifully peaceful, its cool and very calming.

(Pause)

Q. What a good summary. That's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) from Hertfordshire.

Date: 19th June 1998.

(Interviewed wife).

Q. So can you tell me why you are visiting the Cathedral today?

Well I am on holiday here this week.

Q. Where are you from?

Hertfordshire, Stevenage.

Q. Oh, my Ph.D supervisor is from a place called Ware.

Oh, its not far from us at all (laughs).

Q. So can you tell me what attracted you to the Cathedral today?

Well we came to Chester to visit our daughter. And I like cathedrals, I like the stained glass and the history of them.

Q. So are you regular cathedral visitors?

No I wouldn't say regular, but wherever we go on holiday we will visit a cathedral if it is close by.

Q. And you were saying it is the history and the stained glass, so is it just the physical aspects of the building?

Yes.

Q. Did you feel a sense of God's presence in the building at all today?

Erm yes. We did feel something spiritual didn't we? (Pause) I think it is a very busy cathedral, which is nice, there were a lot of people around, and there was lots going on, lots of clergy talking to us, and telling us about the place. We were not on one of the tours, we just happened to stop near where a tour was taking place and we stood and listened, and we heard about various aspects of the building. Yes, I thought it was quite a busy cathedral, normally when you go to cathedrals, they are very quiet.

Q. Oh really, I was going to ask you, does the presence of other tourists bother you at all?

No.

Q. So it feels like a living building? Were you surprised to find members of the clergy around?

Yes.

Q. Really?

Yes because they are not usually around in the cathedrals we have been to. (Husband: it made it a lot better, because we realised what it was all about).

Q. So, it felt like a religious building because the clergy were around?

Yes.

Q. Getting back to what you were saying about the architecture. Are you experts in architecture at all?

No we just liked looking at it. (Laughs)

Q. I don't know if the organ was playing when you were in the Cathedral, but?

Oh yes, well they weren't playing it, I think they were tuning it, but if they had been playing it, it would have been even better.

Q. So music would have enhanced your visit?

Yes.

Q. What about the history? If this had been a very modern building, do you think you would have visited it?

No, it has to be old.

Q. So if you went home and somebody said to you 'Chester Cathedral', what images would you bring up?

I think I would say it's a lovely cathedral, its very large, and its history is interesting, its been here a long time, well some of it has, which is absolutely amazing, and it contains general history about Chester itself, which I find fascinating.

Q. So what attracted you to Chester?

I saw something on the television about it and I thought well that looks nice, it looks old and I like old historic things.

Q. Oh I see so history is again important. By the way, did you learn anything about history when you were in the Cathedral today?

Not really, it was just nice to walk around. When we went into the refectory, there are some steps at the far end where, when the monks were eating, one of them used to walk up and read the bible from it. I have never seen anything like that, not even on the continent, so we went in to have a look at that.

Q. So you saw and learned about something quite unique?

Yes. (Pause)

Q. Ok, that is it. Thank you, that was very interesting.

Group Composition: Older couple (70s) from Australia.

Date: 19th June 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Wife: Well we are interested in the style of the Cathedral and anything that is inside of it).

Q. The architecture?

(Female: Yes, mainly the architecture mainly).

Q. Are from Australia?

(Wife: Yes).

Q. So you were saying that it is the architectural style?

(Wife: Yes the architecture and the history we find very interesting and what ever it has). (Husband: well it is more the fact that it is here).

Q. Really, the fact that it has survived?

(Husband: Yes, its definitely the historical origins for me.)

Q. So did you learn anything about its history during your visit?

(Wife: Oh yes. Well I think you always learn something. I think we possibly knew, well everybody knows about Henry VIII and his affect on its history). (Husband: The most interesting thing about it I think is the discontinuity of authority that occurred in the sixteenth century).

Q. Oh the Reformation?

(Husband: Oh yes, well Henry and his cohorts just took over all the monasteries, swiped all the possessions, executed quite a few of the abbots and bishops and here we are 400 years later carrying on as if nothing had happened.)

Q. Yes the absolute power that Henry VIII had at the time is staggering isn't it?

(Wife: Yes he changed history didn't he? And nothing has been quite the same since). (Husband: Yes, its amazing that this place is still standing because a lot of the other abbeys were completely destroyed).

Q. Yes if you go to Yorkshire, you will find that a lot of the dissolved monasteries are now just ruins. But I think because this had been made into a cathedral, it was obviously preserved. Erm, if this had been a modern cathedral, would you have visited?

(Wife: Possibly, we usually, when we visit each town, we usually will have a look at the cathedrals which are of interest to us. But the older ones are more interesting, they have more history than the modern ones).

Q. So its a better experience if the cathedral is old?

Yes. (Husband: Are there any modern cathedrals?)

Q. Yes, there is one in Liverpool where I am from. There is one in Coventry (it was a medieval cathedral but it was bombed in the War) so they had to rebuild it. And there is one in Guildford which is just south of London. And there is Liverpool Anglican which looks like a medieval cathedral.

(Husband: yes we saw that, it was interesting)

Q. What has your experience been like in the Cathedral today?

(Wife: Its huge inside, there are so many aspects to it, its different to most cathedrals, there is a lot more to it, and it is great that they are trying to restore it to its old style, it will be lovely. Anyway I don't know whether that has helped you or not).

Q. That was great, thank you.

Group Composition: Two middle aged (50s) ladies from Australia.

Date: 22nd June 1998

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we are visiting the United Kingdom, we come from Australia, and we do not have cathedrals like this in Australia.

Q. So is it a novelty for you to come here?

Well I guess more than that. We are Christian people, and so to come into a house of God which is so old and has as much history is wonderful.

Q. Oh I see so the religion and history is important? How old are the cathedrals in Australia - nineteenth century?

Late, very late.

Q. So history is quite important to your visit, if this had been a very modern building, do think you would have visited?

No.

Q. So it has to be old?

Yes, definitely.

Q. That's interesting. Some parts of this building are quite modern, did you see the stained glass windows on the right of the Cathedral? What did you think of them?

Well we knew straightway that they were not old, but we thought they were quite effective.

Q. Yes what they symbolise is interesting?

Yes.

(Pause)

Q. So what have you experienced while you have been in the Cathedral today?

I felt a sense, a certain awe. Especially around St. Werburgh's shrine. Considering that there were so many tourists in the building, it was very peaceful, yes I did get a sense of the presence of something spiritual, of God.

Q. Yes, some other people have said that they felt that.

And also just looking at the architecture of it and realising how long ago it was built, and asking 'how did they do that?'

Q. So you were intrigued how people managed to build something like this back then with their bare hands?

Yes, exactly. And just to be here and know that it is so old. I mean all of our lives we had a couple of places that were built in I think the 1830's by the white settlers, but there is nothing in Adelaide were I come from, there is not much left from before the 1900's. Most of the really old stuff which was built before then has gone.

Q. Really, has it been pulled down?

Yes, or just fell to pieces. So there is not much left in Adelaide which is before 1900. So to be in building which has so many hundreds of years in it, is quite something.

Q. Are your ancestors from England?

Yes.

Q. Do you feel that you come back to your roots when you visit this country?

Well, I haven't thought about it that much. I mean I went to where my father was born, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and my grandmother was born in Glasgow, but I don't know much about the family history.

(Pause)

Q. That's interesting. So when you go home to Australia, and someone says to you 'Chester Cathedral' what sort of images would you bring to mind?

I guess the height of the building, the red sandstone, the shrine, the shrine area. Its awesome. Like Ann (friend) was saying earlier, they are all different. I mean I have just come from Europe so I've seen a lot of the really big European cathedrals, but these smaller ones, they are magnificent.

Q. Just in a different way? How many cathedrals have you been to so far?

How many cathedrals are there in Europe! Every time we went to a new town we seemed to find one. I think its probably around the ten mark. My friend here has been working in England for 18 months and she's been to a lot of them. (Friend: yes I have been to about 30)

Q. Good Lord! And were they all old?

Yes, mostly.

Q. Did you go to any of the Liverpool Cathedrals.

Yes, I went to both of those.

Q. What did you think of the Catholic Cathedral?

It was different. I was a bit sad that it was only built in 1962, and that they had only spent £6 million to repair it.

Q. Yes it is falling apart already.

And then I compared it to the other, the old one that has been there for hundreds of years.

Q. Oh the other Liverpool one?

Yes.

Q. Well that was actually built this century. A lot of people think it is Medieval but it was built this century.

Oh really. It looks so old. Oh I am surprised. (Pause)

Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from South Wales.

Date: 22nd June 1998.

(Interviewed husband)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we are on a day-trip from London. We are spending 8 days in England. We have visited other Cathedrals at York and Canterbury. We just like the history you know, and the general feeling of being in a sheltered place.

Q. So it is the history of the Cathedral which is the attraction for you?

Yes and we find them quite restful places you know?

Q. Restful in what way?

Well the atmosphere and there is a bit of sanctuary in a cathedral.

Q. So you feel like you are getting away from the outside world?

Absolutely.

Q. If this had been a very modern cathedral, do you think you would have visited?

Probably not.

Q. So it is definitely the history?

The history yes.

Q. Was there a religious element to you visit?

No, I am not a religious person. I have respect for the religion of the place, but I'm not a church goer.

Q. I see, you can see there are hundreds of people coming into the Cathedral, does the presence of the other tourists bother you?

No. Not at all. No you can almost get a sense of almost being alone in a cathedral, even in a crowd.

Q. What have your experiences been like here today?

When the choir was singing it was lovely. It was tranquil. Yes my wife is very interested in choirs you know, she was a chorister myself.

Q. Oh really, they do have lovely choirs singing here. If somebody said to you Chester Cathedral when you went home, what images would you bring to mind?

Well, the ceilings, the roof and just the structure of the place you know. Its just incredible that things could be built like that in those days you know, of course they had a lot of manpower and people were not paid very much.

Q. So do you admire the faith of the people who built it?

No, I don't think that the people built it out of faith. Probably the motivating factor was faith, but the people who actually built these places lived in abject poverty. You know they got paid a few pence a week as and when, and they brought up families in the surroundings of the cathedral you know.

Q. Yes it is amazing how they could build like this.

Yes they only had wooden pulleys and scaffolding. And they travelled as well, went all over Europe. Well in Koln a lot of masons came from this country and took their families with them and lived in terrible poverty. They didn't get paid very often.

Q. So do you feel a sense of admiration for the actual builders of the Cathedral?

Oh absolutely. Its awesome isn't it - like all cathedrals. (Wife: they couldn't build something like this today you know).

Q. Really? Why don't you think we can build anything like this?

Well they can't even build roads straight today can they?

Q. Really?

Sorry, we have to catch our bus now. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) from Scotland.

Date: 22nd June 1998.

(Interviewed wife)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because I am interested in cathedrals.

Q. What is it about them that is so interesting for you?

Oh the history, the architecture, the associations.

Q. Are you an expert in history or architecture at all?

No just an enthusiastic amateur! (Laughs)

Q. If this had been a modern building do you think you would have visited?

Possibly not. Although, I do like the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral a lot, but that's because I am from Liverpool originally.

Q. Oh really, I am from Liverpool as well.

(Husband: Oh I would never have guessed [Laughs])

Q. Can you tell? What have your experiences been in the Cathedral today?

Erm, a sense of history, trying to grapple with the east, west, north, south of it all. Thought about the way history converges with this place, the historical aspects of this church together with other places that we have been to, and history per se. So its the whole business of where it fits into the scheme of things.

Q. So like with the Reformation?

That's right. And I was very interested to read that this one had a continuum, so this was different to the other ones that we have been to. There was also a sense of awe and a sense of emotion, so when you pray in the chapel I think that made me very emotional as well, so it is both the religious context and the historical context.

Q. Actually, I was about to say, did you feel a sense of God's presence in the Cathedral?

Yes.

Q. So even though there are thousands of tourists coming in, as you can see, did that detract from you experience?

Not really, just occasional there was a flash from a camera, and there were some in St. Erasmus' chapel, that was a bit intrusive. But that is it. It is not overwhelming.

Q. Is see. Getting back to the point you made about a sense of awe, what was so awesome?

The fact when they were referring back to things like the vestment cupboard, you know it dates back to 1290, and you think my God, that is seven hundred years old and it is still there. And just the way that the

building was constructed and the architecture, and the quire, and its ornateness, and how much money they must have spent in constructing it.

Q. So you feel a sense of admiration for its builders?

Well I think you must. I mean it was craftsmen, it was dedication, it was to a purpose, and to a desire.

Q. Do you think that we could build anything like this Cathedral today? Do you think we have the skills?

I think there are people who do have the skills, but there aren't in the same quantity, and its the time that's put into building something like this, they would probably use machines now.

Q. So even though we can build skyscrapers now, it is not the same as building a cathedral like this?

Well when we were looking around Chester and you look at some of the modern concrete monstrosities that they built in the 1960's, alongside the old ones, we didn't like it. It makes me particularly angry that they haven't thought about it.

Q. Really? So when you see one of the old buildings and somebody has put a concrete monstrosity next to it, you feel angry.

(Husband: its not sympathetic is it?) Yes it swamps places like this. There has been no thought put into it. (Husband: They have been built out of context to the town. The only place I can compare this to is York, and it doesn't even come close).

Q. What the Cathedral or the town?

(Husband: The town, the planning people in York in years gone by have thought more about the job they had to do than the planning people in Chester).

Q. So what about the modern stained glass windows here in the Cathedral?

(Husband: They're are ok. I think they go very well. The like the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, they are the same idea, there just refraction of light basically).

Q. So you don't mind having modern stained glass windows in this Cathedral?

(Husband: No).

Q. How about the modern fountain in the quadrangle there?

(Husband: Well it was Ok.) Its not as beautiful as listening to the water itself. There is a sense of serenity about it. (Husband: well we were listening to the sound of water all last night, our guest house is next to the weir!) I thought it was very peaceful in the cloister garden. (Husband: yes it stopped her talking anyway).

(Decided to end interview here!) That's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged man (50s) from York.

Date: 22nd June 1998

Q. So can you tell me why you decided to visit the Cathedral today?

I can't really tell you, its difficult to describe.

Q. Well do you normally visit cathedrals when you are on holiday?

Yes, I like visiting churches, and I live in York so I had to come and compare it to Chester.

Q. And does Chester compare to York Minster?

Oh yes, it is better. There has a lot more detail.

Q. Architecturally?

Yes.

(Pause)

Q. You can see there are a lot of visitors? Did that bother you.

Oh no, there was lots of space to spread out.

Q. And did you learn anything?

Oh I didn't come here to learn, I came just to wonder around and take it all in. I will definitely come back when I have more time, and I will bring my wife with me. I deliberately haven't stayed for long today, because my wife hasn't been here, and I don't want to spoil the sense of surprise for us both.

Q. Really, that good? If this has been a really modern building do you think you would have visited?

Probably not, no. Its got to have history.

Q. Was it a religious visit?

No.

(Pause)

Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged man (50s) from United States.

Date: 22nd June 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

I am here on a tour of England, we are from the States and we stopped here, and it was absolutely marvellous. The choir was absolutely marvellous, the resonance of the Cathedral was wonderful.

Q. So you liked the choir?

Yes, and I was just absolutely taken aback by the beauty of this place and it is so old. I feel a buzz and the spirits of the place.

Q. I see so it was a religious experience as well?

Sure.

Q. If this had been a modern cathedral, do you think it would have been the same experience for you.

No way, no way (Laughs)

Q. So it is the history and age of the place?

Absolutely, I loved the history.

Q. Did you learn anything while you were here. Did you go on a guided tour?

I could have gone on a guided tour, but I just decided to walk around.

Q. Yes it is nice just to wander around and take it all in. So if when you go home, somebody says to you 'Chester Cathedral' what images would you bring up?

Well, I would think of old, its been here a long time. Majestic. Oh what words... it is hard to describe, it is just so majestic. It just takes you aback, it just captivates you. Captivates. I am a history buff so its really good for me to come here and experience it.

Q. Yes, I have also interviewed a lot of American visitors who say that they do not have any historic buildings like this in the States?

Well no, this building is older than the States! If there is a building 150 years old in the States they would say it was really old.

Q. Really, so you would class a hundred and fifty years as old?

Sure, especially where I live, because where I live, most of the buildings were destroyed in the Civil War.

Q. Where are you from?

Georgia.

Q. So all of your oldest buildings were lost in the Civil War?

Yes, well there are still some of the old plantation houses still there, but not like here in the old country.

Q. Oh really, are your ascendants from England?

Yes, they say Scots, Irish and English. The main name is Adams.

Q. Oh yes, Adams is a real English name.

The President of the United States, John Quincy Adams was my great, great, great, grandfather.

Q. Really? Are you a direct descendant? Good Lord!

Oh, they were a bunch of fat cats.

Q. No, that is very interesting. Have you been to Europe before?

No, never. We just arrived here on Saturday morning, we went to Warwick, Stratford on Avon yesterday. Here is our tour itinerary.

(I look at the tour itinerary)

Q. Oh that is very intensive, you are going to Ireland as well!

Yes. We don't have a lot of time to breathe, we are going to cover a lot of things. (Pause)

Q. Well I hope you enjoy your stay, thank you for stopping.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) from Coventry.
Date: 30th June 1998.

(Interviewed wife).

Q. Can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Just to have a look round.

Q. Are you tourists or day-trippers?

Tourists.

Q. Oh, are you staying in Chester?

Yes, for a week.

Q. And what was it that attracted you to the Cathedral in particular?

Oh that's a tough one. Nosiness. I think it was just general interest basically.

Q. What interested you? The architecture?

Yes, yes.

Q. Are you religious people?

No.

Q. And what has your experience been like today?

It was freezing cold, dreary, the curtains look like they could do with a press.

Q. So does it not feel like a Cathedral should perhaps?

No, Its just too dreary. (Husband: we have been to a fair few cathedrals) It doesn't make you feel very uplifted. (Husband: No, if you compare this to York Minster for instance, that is bright and cheerful, I mean they are clearly the same age as well aren't they?)

Q. Is it because the stone is so dark perhaps?

No. I think it is just dreary. (Husband: Well at other cathedrals, action is taken.) Yes, to try and tidy it, like in here everything is shoved around like book cases and chairs stacked all over the place.

Q. Really? So you don't want to see that when you come to a cathedral?

No. Well you expect to have that kind of thing, but not stuck in the middle of the church bit.

Q. So you feel that it looks what?

Like they haven't taken any time or care making it look presentable.

Q. So did your visit meet your expectations?

No, I thought it would be nicer, because it is a famous cathedral, I thought it would be better. Because we have been to loads of Cathedrals like Bath, and York and all of those kind of ones. We always visit cathedrals, and this was very, not as nice as they were.

Q. Really? Is visiting cathedrals like a habit for you?

(Husband: No, its just something we take in as part of being tourists in different parts and around the country).

Q. So when you go to a new city you will visit its cathedral?

We might do and we might not.

Q. If this Cathedral was modern, do you think you would have visited it?

No, much less likely.

Q. So its the age that is attractive as well?

Well, we live within spitting distance of Coventry, and we never go to Coventry. (Husband: We definitely prefer the old cathedrals).

Q. So it depends on the cathedral. Its not a case of 'oh here is a cathedral let's go in?'

(Husband: Yes, if its a particular tourist spot we will go in.) It will depend on the weather and what other things we are doing as well.

(Pause, felt tourists wanted to move on)

Q. That's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Married couple (40s) from Milton Keynes.

Date: 30th June 1998.

(Interviewed wife).

Q. Can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we are staying with some family in Wallasey, we are having our car serviced in Connah's Quay and we decided to come to Chester for the day until we can pick it up.

Q. So are you here on holiday?

Yes, we live in Milton Keynes.

Q. So you are up here visiting relatives and you thought Chester would be a good place to visit?

Yes. Of course we do know Chester from when we were young.

Q. Have you been to the Cathedral before?

Yes. A long time ago.

Q. Really, do you think it has changed since you were last here?

Oh it is more commercialised, but then everywhere is these days.

Q. So you expected that?

Yes. It's still retained its beauty. (Husband: Its ok, its fine, I think they have done the commercial thing very nicely).

Q. Yes, is it quite discrete?.

Oh yes.

Q. So what was it about the Cathedral which made you want to make a return visit?

I like looking at cathedrals. (Husband: Yes)

Q. So if you are in a new town will you visit its cathedral?

Yes, church or cathedral. Yes, we like looking in the old churches, if we are abroad we will certainly go to any churches which are around. (Husband: Or just anywhere, yes).

Q. That is interesting. If it was a modern Cathedral would you have visited?

We would have probably come to have a look, just to see what it was like. We have been to the one in Liverpool, you know that one in Liverpool? That was a long time ago as well, there haven't been a awful lot of them built recently you see. (Laughs)

Q. Oh yes, there have only been four really modern one's built.

(Husband: I've been to Coventry, there is one there).

Q. Really, and what did you think of that?

I don't know really. I was taken aback by its starkness a bit.

Q. Yes that is really ultra-modern isn't it?

Yes, oh yes, very much so. (Husband: I would have preferred if it was like this). Oh yes, much more older, the older ones are much more interesting. (Husband: Although I am not quite sure whether there is any logical reason why you should want to see an older cathedral).

Q. Yes, its funny isn't it? A lot of people have said that they just like older cathedrals, and I say, well why, and it is something they find difficult to explain?

Well I think it is the fact that, you know, people hear about how old these places are. (Husband: It's what you expect isn't it? If you find something different, like if is modern, you are taken aback a little, aren't you.) Also in the old ones, I always think, how did they ever build, you know, a building this size without this modern equipment?

Q. With their bare hands basically?

Yes, that's exactly right.

Q. So you feel a sense of admiration for the builders?

Oh yes, definitely. I do. Yes, I really admire them. It must have been terribly hard work. I also think that they were great craftsmen in those days.

Q. Really, do you think that those skills are still around today?

I think they are coming back more into being now. You know, I think people are realising that the old crafts need to be developed and nurtured as it were. (Husband: well so much can be done by machine in this day and age can't it? We don't need those skills).

Q. Yes but we can build skyscrapers and magnificent sports stadiums, do you feel that is a skill?

(Pause)

Q. Are modern buildings now as valuable as the old?

No, no I don't think so.

Q. So you think something like this is of more value?

Yes. I think so. I think the design is much more intricate isn't it, in an old building, rather than these new places where everything is so straight and plain, straight walls and ceilings. Places like this have unusual little bits, like nooks and crannies, and you find things that you don't expect. (Husband: And I think this has been built up over hundreds of years). That's right and it has all come together though into something beautiful. Everything goes beautifully. (Husband: There is plenty to look at too isn't there?)

Q. Absolutely, it was interesting what you were saying before when you were saying that you find things that you don't expect. The other day I interviewed a lady who saw the speaker's pulpit in the refectory, and she was so pleased that she had found something unexpected.

Oh yes, I saw that, I haven't seen that before either.

Q. So what has your experience been like today?

(Pause)

Q. Was it a positive experience?

Yes. As I said we have been before, but it was a long time ago, when I came. But you know I feel exactly the same as I the first time I visited you know. I don't think you lose anything by coming back time and time again. I think there is something always new to see in places like this.

Q. Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Two young women (30s) from United States.

Date: 30th June 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well, just to visit the city, we have had two recommendations that Chester is worth coming to see.

Q. I see, and what made you want to visit the Cathedral?

As we walked through the city, it just caught our eye.

Q. What was it that really attracted you when you saw it?

The architecture and the grandeur.

Q. Really, and if this had been a very modern building do you think you would have visited?

Probably not.

Q. So it has to be old?

Yes, it just looked so prestigious. And we know that cathedrals are just so beautiful from the inside. You can see the stained glass and the columns, so we wanted to see what the inside looked like.

Q. I see, where are you from?

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Q. I see, do you have any cathedrals like this in your own country?

How old is this Cathedral?

Q. About a thousand years old, but a lot of what you see is Victorian restoration.

Oh no. There are a few old churches, we have some that are copies of the very old cathedrals though.

Q. So coming to something like this is quite different for you?

Yes, absolutely.

Q. And what have your experiences been like in here today?

Very good. Wonderful. The production was nice, the singing.

Q. So you found that the music made you visit better?

Oh yes, they were a great choir, very melodic. (Friend: How do I say it, the sound, the acoustics were beautiful. I am a musician so I always appreciate acoustics like this in a building. And you know, when you have an actual production like we heard today, then you can imagine what it was like when the composer heard it all those years ago. And you can imagine in the time of Bach, erm the choirs, and why the music is written in the way it is because this is the kind of environment in which it was performed.)

Q. So it is good to hear the music in its proper environment?

Yes.

Q. Has your visit met your expectations?

Yes. Oh more. The one thing I really liked about it was the lighting, so many cathedrals are dark and grey. And that was just lovely, the warmth, the reddish beige colours were warm.

Q. So you don't mind the fact that they have lit up, and perhaps put a bit of modern technology in there.

No, I like that.

(Pause)

Ok, thank you for stopping.

Group Composition: Older married couple (70s) from South Wales.

Date: 30th June 1998.

(Interviewed wife)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because we like historical places.

Q. Really?

Especially the cathedrals. We had been told a little bit about the history of this Cathedral, and because it is part of Chester which we think is a beautiful city. (Husband: so we thought we would come in). We like looking at it. (Husband: In actual fact, my wife wanted to do the city walls, you know the walls, but she is not so easy on her legs now, so we thought this would be a lot easier to tackle).

Q. Yes the walls can go on for a long time.

Yes, but I am glad we chose to come here because we have thoroughly enjoyed it.

Q. And did you find history here?

Oh definitely. I said to my husband, we are rather lapsed churchgoers (Laughs). But I mean in the Cathedral, you do have that wonderful atmosphere. You really do, and it makes you feel that, yes, I should attend church again. (Laughs)

Q. Really, so did you feel a sense of God's presence?

Yes, it must be that.

Q. And even though there are hundreds of people coming in?

No I didn't mind it at all. It still has that wonderful atmosphere which I think is lovely. And the choir who were singing, they were wonderful.

Q. Oh yes, I heard them to, weren't they great?

Oh yes, I loved that last song they did with the maracas and the girl singing solo. She had such a beautiful voice. That was a real bonus. That really was. We came in, and we just sat and enjoyed it.

Q. So music playing made it that much better?

Oh yes, without a doubt. I love organ music. (Husband: But I think also, before we get carried away with the God thing, I think they are monuments to the men who built them).

Q. Really?

(Husband: Yes, I think of the men, and looking at the work that they put into it. I think that is fantastic.)

Q. So you feel admiration for the people who built it?

(Husband: Yes, more so than the God thing. Yes)

Q. Why do you think they put so much time and effort into them? Was it their faith?

(Husband: No I think they wanted to express something within themselves didn't they?)

Q. Really?

(Husband: Oh yes, I don't think it was faith, I think they just wanted to put their own craft into it, you can see that it is individuals who built it. It was not made to a grand design, each man contributed his piece. I think anyway, looking at it. I don't think it has been a planned out job, I think each man made it as he felt. I don't think it is anything to do with God.)

Q. Really, so it was pure craftsmanship and the love of their job?

(Husband: Yes. I mean you could say it was about God, but to my way of thinking it was the man himself. I am a great admirer of men, and I think of how could they have built a thing like this, its amazing.)

Q. Do you think we could build something like this today?

(Husband: Oh no, I don't think so)

Q. Why?

(Husband: Because the cost would be enormous.)

Q. Do you think we still have the skills today?

(Husband: No I doubt it very much. I doubt it.)

Q. Really, so even though we can build skyscrapers and sports stadiums? Something like this would be easy for us to build surely?

(Husband: No. I think it would be impossible. Everything is about mass production now isn't it? Everything is slapped together. Whereas this was built with love and care wasn't it? The men who built it put everything into it didn't they?)

Q. I see, so if this had been a modern building. do you think you would have visited?

I doubt it. (Husband: oh no)

Q. So it has to be old?

Oh yes, it has to have some distinctive history, yes.

Q. Did you learn anything today?

(Pause)

Q. Did you go to the visitor exhibition just in the entrance there?

(Husband: No that sort of thing is not for me. But I can see how other people would benefit from it. It might teach others to respect other people's faith. As you might have gathered I am an atheist. But I think this place is an oasis from the sea of troubles that are outside isn't it?)

Q. You know there are so many people who come in here who say they come in here for peace and quiet, and I say, peace and quiet from what? And they say 'from out there'.

(Husband: Yes, I think that is right. And especially if you had Bach on the organ. I think that really makes a difference. I don't know if you know this story, but there was a commander of the German submarines during the War, and they say he was always going to Notre Dame Cathedral, because he was losing a lot of men, and the only solace he had was going into Notre Dame Cathedral and listening to Bach on the organ. And I think that there you have got the two haven't you? You have got the music of Bach and you have got the Cathedral.)

Q. So it's like an experience in a way isn't it?

(Husband: Yes, its a very unique sort of thing).

Q. Did the Cathedral fulfil your expectations?

Oh definitely. Yes. Stained glass windows, everything.

Q. So it had everything you wanted?

Yes.

Q. Have you been here before?

No.

Q. You have not been to this Cathedral?

No. Never. First time. (Husband: But we have been to other cathedrals. We love St. David's. Have you been to St. David's?)

Q. No.

(Husband: Oh you should go. It's the smallest cathedral in Britain, or cathedral town).

Q. Oh yes I have heard about it, its in a very dramatic position isn't it.

(Husband: Oh yes, right out on the Pembroke Peninsula, very beautiful. Do they have a lot of visitors here?)

Q. Yes, they have about a million visitors per year, and that is one of the reasons why I decided to use the Cathedral for this study.

So you have a lot of writing up to do for your thesis? (Husband: your doing a thesis are you?)

Q. Yes, its a doctorate on motivations of cathedral tourists.

(Husband: it sound very interesting) Well all the very best. (Husband: Yes, you were saying about trying to build this Cathedral now, well look at the pyramids. Did you see the program on the TV about where they tried to rebuilt a pyramid, and they couldn't do it. And that is only a pile of rocks and covered with stones isn't it? Well you see they have lost the skills, it was like I was talking about before. Anyway all the best.)

Q. Ok, thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged male (50s) from Shropshire.

Date: 30th June 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well I have actually come up to Chester to visit friends.

Q. Who live in Chester?

Yes, who live in Chester.

Q. And where are you from?

Shropshire.

Q. And are you staying over in Chester?

Yes, I am staying with my friends.

Q. Right, Ok. So what about the Cathedral, what was it that drew you here today?

I think it is one of the places that one has to visit erm out of Christian faith, Christian background, and places of worship are important to me. It is something that has roots going back to Norman times and is of some importance.

Q. So there was a religious element to your visit then?

Very much so, yes.

Q. Its interesting what you were saying about its going back to Norman times, if this had been a very modern building do you think you would have visited?

Yes.

Q. Oh I see, so it doesn't have to be an old cathedral.

No, not at all.

Q. What has your experience been like today in the Cathedral?

I felt peace. Although there was a lot of noise and fuss going on around, yes I still found peace. Probably because worship has gone on here for a considerable number of years and I can feel it.

Q. A lot of people have said that they can feel, almost the continuity of worship over the centuries, is that the same for you?

That's absolutely right, yes.

Q. Did your visit fulfil your expectations?

Oh yes.

Q. Did you have a positive or negative experience?

Positive, very much so.

Q. When you go home, if somebody says "Chester Cathedral" to you, what images would you bring to mind?

The vastness, it feels very big. I originate from Rochester in Kent, which has a very small cathedral, so this is enormous by comparison. Erm, just the beauty of the workmanship, the wonder of it, what has been created over the years.

Q. Do you feel that we could build a cathedral like this today if we wanted to?

I am sure we could. Er, the wonder of course is the way that they could achieve such beauty without the technology that we have today.

Q. So because they built it with their bare hands?

That's right, yes. The gentlemen who I am with, is actually a stonemason, who repairs castles and cathedrals.

Q. So there are still craftsmen around then?

There are, and of course with all of the repairs that are going on with cathedrals these days, they are helping to keep those skills going, the continuity is there.

(Pause: felt visitor wanted to move on)

Q. That is it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Younger couple (40s) from Surrey. (Interviewed female).

Date: 17th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

I like history, and that's it really.

Q. I see, so do you see the Cathedral as an historic building?

Yes.

Q. Do you go to cathedrals a lot?

Quite a few, don't we? Around the country. The last one we went to was in Scotland, Dunkeld Cathedral it was.

Q. And again it was for the history?

Oh yes.

Q. If this had been a modern building would you have visited?

No. (Husband: No.)

Q. I see so the history is definitely the main motivator?

Yes, it has to be old.

Q. What has your experience been like here today?

I have really enjoyed it, I haven't been here since I was a child.

Q. Oh so you are repeat visitor?

Yes (Laughs).

Q. Has it changed a lot since then?

Not really no. It has toilet facilities and things like that, that were here when I was last here.

Q. And did you experience history today?

Yes, definitely.

Q. Did you learn anything about history?

Erm not really, I mean I have been before, so I knew about Hugh Lupus and things like that.

(At this point, interview was interrupted by Welcomer, who told us to go outside because entrance was becoming crowded).

Group Composition: Older couple (70s) on from United States.

Date: 17th August 1998.

(Interviewed wife)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

We are on a tour, and it brought it us here, and we really wanted to see this really beautiful Cathedral, and it is a really beautiful cathedral. All the beautiful work, the mosaic work that is in there, and the high ceilings, you know they always fascinate me. And the beautiful stained glass. Its just a beautiful cathedral. I have just enjoyed walking through history.

Q. Really?

Yes.

Q. Where are you from?

The United States, from San Francisco.

Q. And you feel that you are walking through history when you came into this Cathedral?

Yes I do.

Q. If this had been a modern building?

I would not have liked it as much as the older buildings.

Q. So that is a real mixed bag isn't it. You have talked about stained glass, and beauty and walking through history?

Yes, it is. It has everything.

Q. Did you know this Cathedral was a part of your tour, before you actually embarked on it?

No, not really. I mean we knew we were coming to Chester, but we did not know this was here.

Q. I see, are going to other cathedrals during your tour?

Yes. (Husband: Well we are going down to London, to Westminster Abbey and Westminster Cathedral. And whatever else we see on our tour which we are not aware of right now.)

Q. Is your tour based around historic places and sites?

No it is just a general tour of Scotland, England and Wales.

Q. I see. Are your ancestors from the British Isles?

(Husband: One of my ancestors was in Hayes, Middlesex. He was buried there in 1799. And my mother's forefathers are from here as well.)

Q. So do you feel you are coming back to your roots?

(Husband: Oh of course, absolutely.)

Q. Yes, a lot of American's have been saying this.

(Husband: Well yes, coming here, we are walking around the same places as they did.)

Q. So what has your experience been like at the Cathedral today?

Oh it is just wonderful. As soon as we got off the bus, this was our first stop. And we are looking forward to walking around the city now.

Q. Oh this is a very historic town, so you will be walking through history.

Talking of walking around, can you tell us if there are any good place to eat here?

Q. Well, there is the Cathedral refectory.

No, we think we should walk around the town a little bit. So anywhere except the McDonald's over there.

Q. Oh, no McDonald's?

Well we see enough of the place back home.

(Pointed visitors in the direction of the main street).

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from Coventry.

Date: 17th August 1998.

(Interviewed husband).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well we are on a trip going to Llandudno, and the coach has dropped us here so we can have a good look around, we have got three hours.

Q. Oh I see, you are on a coach tour?

Yes.

Q. Did you know that Chester Cathedral was part of your coach tour before you decided to join it?

(Wife: Not really. But we have been to Chester before, and we have been to the Cathedral before as well, and then thought it was very interesting, very nice. So that is why are here today).

Q. So you came back to the Cathedral, even though you had been before?

(Wife: Oh yes.)

Q. So had your past experiences been good enough to warrant another visit then?

(Wife: Oh yes, always very good).

Q. And so what have your experiences been like today?

Well we have scarcely had time to look around. But it looks a very interesting town. Considering it is an old town, it looks well planned. (Wife: Well we are from Coventry). Yes, we are from Coventry and there has been a lot of criticism about the way Coventry has been rebuilt after the War.

Q. Yes, I have interviewed people who have been to Coventry, or who live there and they say that they don't like the rebuilt Cathedral.

(Wife: Yes I would say that, I am not particularly keen on it myself). Oh no, I like the Cathedral.

Q. (To wife) Really, what is it that you don't like?

(Wife: The modern design. I mean the ruin is there of the old place, and it has the atmosphere about it still). Well I disagree with that, I think Coventry is lovely inside. (Wife: But I do feel that when you go into the old cathedrals or churches, once you've been in, you get that atmosphere, and when you come out you seem to feel different. I always think so).

Q. So have you felt that atmosphere today?

(Wife: Oh yes.)

Q. Has it been a good experience?

(Wife: Oh yes. It has been very nice.)

Q. As you can see there are thousands of people coming into the Cathedral.

(Wife: Yes we were surprised, I mean it is a Monday, I don't know where they are coming from.)

Q. Well a lot of them are coach tourists from all over the world.

You are not from Chester are you?

Q. No, Liverpool.

I thought you were. Cilla's country (Laughs)

(Pause: Felt visitors wanted to move on).

Ok thank you.

Group Composition: Younger couple (40s) from Kent.
Date: 17th August 1998.

(Interviewed husband.)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well it is the third time we have been to Chester, but the first time we have been to the Cathedral.

Q. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

Yes we do. Well we live in Kent so we go to Rochester a lot.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

Very good.

Q. In what way?

Well, you don't feel pushed. I mean some you go in and your are shoved along, because there are so many people.

Q. Yes, you can be herded can't you?

Oh yes.

Q. So did you just walk around at your leisure?

Yes.

Q. Did you read any of the information panels, or did you watch the video?

Yes, I read all of them, and I watched the video, the only thing was I couldn't hear it.

Q. I see, they can't have it on too loud, and I think the visitors are quite noisy as well. So did you learn anything about the Cathedral from the information?

Oh yes, about its history.

Q. Is learning important for you?

Yes, especially dates and events and things like that.

Q. That's interesting, did it meet your expectations?

Better than I thought.

Q. Really. Has the Cathedral changed since you have last been in here?

Well, as I said I haven't actually been inside the Cathedral before today. We have always been around Chester, because my wife has got relatives here, and we have come for weekends, but now we are here for a

fortnight, so we said 'right today we are going into Chester and we are going to do everything, including the Cathedral'.

Q. Did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came here today?

No.

Q. So you knew there was a Cathedral in Chester and that was enough incentive for you?

Yes.

Q. If it had been a modern building, would you have visited?

Yes, just out of interest.

Q. So you don't mind modern new cathedrals then?

No. I would have gone to the one in Liverpool, you know they have got two. Well we went there for the day on Friday and we didn't have time to go into the modern one, but we saw the older one.

Q. Did you? I have been doing research there as well.

Yes, it is huge isn't it? We only saw it from the outside, but we couldn't get over it.

Q. Oh it's even bigger inside.

(Pause: Visitor's wife had walked off.)

Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (70s) from Nottingham.
Date: 17th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well I am interested in building structures, in other words the fabric of the Cathedral mainly. But I think it is true to say that you have a religious affiliation don't you? (Wife: Yes, I do).

Q. I see, (To husband) so you are the structural person and (to wife) you are the religious half. So its good in a way because you have got a building that satisfies both your interests.

Yes.

Q. Are you an architect?

No.

Q. So is it an amateur interest then?

Well partly, but I am interested in the art rather than the architecture.

Q. I see, did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came here today?

I didn't actually, no.

Q. But you knew there was a Cathedral in Chester and that was enough for you?

Yes. Well we are here anyway, so we did not come specifically to see the Cathedral. (Wife: We are staying here you see)

Q. So the Cathedral is part of the things that you want to see in Chester?

Yes.

Q. What has your experience been like in the Cathedral today?

Well I am always impressed by the artefacts and the structure, the history, in the sense I was spotting how the development in the building styles has taken place, say from the 12th century through to the present day, and seeing what bits have been added.

Q. So you can tell what is Tudor and what is Gothic?

Yes.

Q. I see, so has your visit met your expectations?

Oh yes. (Wife: It is better than we thought it would be.) Yes, the interior to me is better than the exterior, it is not very Medieval on the exterior because most of that is Victorian restoration isn't it.? I mean yesterday we were looking at it from the outside, I said to my wife, it didn't look all that interesting.

Q. (To wife) Did you feel a sense of God's presence today?

Yes, a bit.

Q. As you can see there are so many visitors coming in, did that affect your visit at all?

Yes, I think it did.

Q. Do you go to cathedrals a lot?

Well, usually if we go to a new city, we will visit its cathedral if it has got one. (Wife: Yes). Even if there is only an old parish church we will go into it as well. (Wife: We went to Ely Cathedral didn't we, and we've been to Southwell and Truro).

(Pause)

Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Father (50s) and daughter (Teens) from Devon.

Date: 17th August 1998

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we are staying in Chester for a holiday. I am an Anglican vicar in Devon. And of course because the Cathedral is a place which is a focus of the diocese, it is a place of worship and celebration, and we also enjoyed a nice lunch (laughs).

Q. So you have taken part in a spiritual and physical visit then?

Yes, and we have said a prayer, and we just enjoyed looking at it. And I was particularly thrilled to see that this Cathedral seems to be very evangelical. Whereas some of the cathedrals are much more high church. And it is nice just to look at it, I am also an artist, and I am particularly interested in stained glass, and some of the windows in there are very beautiful.

Q. Did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came here?

Well, we saw it yesterday when we walked around the walls, but I had not actually seen it before we came here. I think there are some limitations about its outside views. The gardens are not able to be enjoyed by the public as much as they could be - they are not accessible, which is a pity, whereas Exeter Cathedral, which is in my diocese, the gardens are very much for the public, and that is a very shortcoming here. They should see whether there is a way they could get the community to enjoy the garden more.

Q. To open them out more. Have you had a good experience today?

What in there?

Q. Yes.

Yes, I was very edified and encouraged to see that the Cathedral is a place of erm, well the fact the Mission Declaration shows a decade of evangelism and I was particularly interested to see the SAMS Mission board inside the of the main section. So there is obviously a concern for mission, and it is not just an inward looking Cathedral, but they are concerned for world mission.

Q. As you can see, there are thousands of tourists coming in. Did that detract you from your experience of the Cathedral at all?

Not at all, because one expects that, and we were able to say a prayer quietly in one of the chapels at the side, so we did not feel inhibited.

Q. Did you use any of the information boards, or did you watch the video display?

Well, we didn't know that there was one.

Q. Oh really, it was just in the visitor centre through there.

Oh I see. Well we weren't too bothered with that. But my daughter was reading the leaflet aloud to me as we walked around. And the mosaics are exquisite. That one of Abraham and the sacrifice of Isaac was just beautiful.

Q. So it has been a visual experience, rather than anything else?

Yes, and we are sorry we are not here at one of the service times.

Q. Well there is Choral Evensong in an hour or two's time.

Yes, Exeter Cathedral does a lunchtime concerts and services just about everyday. I think it would be more of a witness thing if they did lunchtime things like that here everyday.

Q. That is interesting, because other people who I have interviewed have said that organ or choir music, and the call to prayer have made the Cathedral more of an religious building rather than just an historic building.

But I sensed that people were being reverent. And I watched one or two folks sitting down, thinking and maybe praying, just being quite. So it is not just another tourist attraction.

(Pause)

That was a good summary. Thank you.

Group Composition: Family of four. Parents (50s) Children (Teens) from Ex-patriots from Switzerland.
Date: 17th August 1998.

(Interviewed father).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we have come back to England with my son, to show him around Northern England. And we have come to Chester to look at antiques and to look at the city.

Q. So where are you from?

I am originally from Warrington, but I have not lived there since 1966. I have lived all over the world since then, but mainly in Switzerland, which is where our home is.

Q. So is this the first time you have come back to England?

Oh no. Well it is the first time my son has been here. But no, I come to Chester very regularly when I come home, which is almost every year.

Q. And you have been to the Cathedral before?

Oh many times yes.

Q. So you are going by your past experiences then?

Yes. It is so nice I thought I would bring the family here.

Q. What is it about the place which is so attractive?

Well it is full of history, and it is so close to home, this is the centre of home really. I think Chester is one of the nicest cities in the world. It is an old city, it is a Roman city, and this particular Cathedral, I think, is one of the better cathedrals in the country.

Q. Do you think so?

Yes.

Q. Have you been to other cathedrals in Britain?

Oh many, many.

Q. And you think that this is one of the best?

Maybe it is because of my heritage, I don't know, being from round here. But I like this one very much indeed. It has got a mixture of being almost a simple cathedral but at the same time, it has an awful lot of culture around. It has a sort of balance between being overly sophisticated and being very simple.

Q. So what has your experience been like here today?

(Wife: It is always a good experience to come here). They are Swiss, he is an American, and I am English.
So it is a kind of mixture.

Q. Yes it is. So has your visit met your expectations?

Yes, definitely.

(Pause)

That's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Young male (early 20s) from Holland.
Date: 17th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Erm, to look at the architecture and to find some rest.

Q. Rest in terms of what, physically or spiritually?

Oh spiritually.

Q. Where are you from?

Holland.

Q. Do you have cathedrals like this in Holland?

Well not exactly like this but similar.

Q. I see, and what has your experience been like here today?

It is a beautiful building.

Q. Did you know what this Cathedral looked like before you came here?

No.

Q. Did you know that there was a Cathedral in Chester?

I knew there was a Cathedral, but I didn't know what it looked like.

Q. I see, do you visit cathedrals a lot?

No. Not really.

Q. So this is not a usual place for you to visit.

No.

Q. Did you experience architecture today?

Yes, I had a good experience.

Q. Did you experience restfulness?

Yes I did.

Q. So it has met your expectations.

Yes.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) from Holland.

Date: 17th August 1998.

(Interviewed wife.)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

I don't know. I really don't know. It's difficult to express it. When we are in foreign city, we will always go to see what cultural things are around. Special things, and we always go to see the cathedrals.

Q. So cathedrals are part of the cities culture?

Cathedrals are part of the culture, and they do give me some rest, they are nice places to be. But I have to admit, mostly it is because of the things that you can't see at home.

Q. Really, where are you from?

We are from Holland.

Q. So do you have cathedral like this in Holland?

We do have some cathedrals, but not very much. But I think every country has special things left from the past that you can't find in other countries. We have seen an awful lot of cathedrals and churches in France, but all the wooden ceilings that you see here in England, had been burned in France. It was the first thing that struck us when we saw English cathedrals, all of the wooden ceilings. They have been preserved. And the way of building things, the forms of the things. In England it is very empty, but very long, very high and very narrow. In France they are very wide and low.

Q. So that it a quite mixed reason for visiting isn't it? You have talked about culture and architecture.

Oh yes we are very curious, it is just curiosity. (Laughs)

Q. So what has your experience been like today in Chester Cathedral?

We were saying, it is not the most beautiful cathedral we have seen. I like the form, I think it is not very large. But if you walk around, it has several outstanding areas, so it looks bigger than it is from the outside. (Husband: And very low). Yes and it is lower than other cathedrals we have been to in England. I love the windows, I love the stained windows.

Q. Yes they are very beautiful, did you like all of the windows?

Yes.

Q. Did you see the modern stained glass windows on the right there?

Yes we did.

Q. What did you think of those?

I don't like them.

Q. What, you don't like the design or the fact that they are in an old cathedral?

Yes, well. I don't really like the combination of an old cathedral and new windows. But I just like the old style, the old way they imagined things. And the new things, for me it is not suitable to put in stained glass. And sometime the colours. Very old stained glass windows have special colours, and the new ones looks a bit like fake. The new ones, you see, they have tried to use a lot of colours and they have tried to make it very, small pieces, and yet it is just fake.

Q. So you can tell what looks fake or modern?

Well, I am not an expert, but if they - I can't think of the word, but the modern design doesn't work.

Q. I understand what you mean. If this had been a very modern cathedral, would you have visited it?

Hmm, maybe not no.

Q. So it has to be old?

Yes.

Q. When you think of an English cathedral, do you think of an old building?

Yes. (Husband: Yes, we think of them as part of the history). Yes, I think so. You are looking for history aren't you? I mean we never visit modern museums as well. I don't know why.

Q. Did you learn anything about the Cathedral, when you were in here today?

Yes, well my husband reads everything, absolutely everything.

Q. Did you read all of the information panels in the visitor centre?

He reads everything. Where as I like to taste the atmosphere more than he does, where as he wants to know it all.

Q. So you just want to experience the building?

Yes, yes.

Q. Did it feel like a religious building?

Yes.

Q. As you can see, hundreds of people are coming in, did that detract from your experience of its religious side at all?

No. But if there had been a religious service, then it would have distracted me yes. Because my daughter and I were on Saturday evening during the service and then you see that it disturbs with all the people coming in and going out.

Q. If there had been music playing, like the choir singing and music playing, do you think that would have affected your visit?

Yes, it would have been even better yes. We love to go there, and actually we did hear a choir singing on Saturday.

Q. Was it Choral Evensong that you went to?

Yes, I think it was yes. And it makes it makes the atmosphere more intense.

Q. So it has been a good experience? (Could see husband fidgeting)

Ok, that is the end of the interview. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) from Nottingham.
Date: 17th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

(Wife: Well we like looking around them really don't we?)

Q. Really, do you visit cathedrals a lot?

(Wife: We don't go a lot no, but just when we go out visiting places when we are on holiday and days out.)

Q. What was it about cathedrals that attracts you though?

History, we like to go looking around them and making connections with history.

Q. If this had been a modern building would you have visited.

Probably not, no. In my book, I don't know about yourself. (Wife: No. I prefer something with history).

Q. Have you experienced history today?

Yes. (Wife: What about the relics? I was hoping for some relics).

Q. Well they did have St. Werburga's relics here but they were lost during the Reformation. Did you read the information panels?

No, no. They take too long to read.

Q. Did you watch the video?

No.

Q. Did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came here?

No.

Q. But you knew there was a Cathedral in Chester?

Yes.

Q. Was that enough to bring you here?

Well we knew about it as part of the city itself, and part of north Wales, which we are going on to visit after this.

(Pause: Felt visitors wanted to move on).

Ok that's it thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from North of England.

Date: 17th August 1998. (Interviewed wife)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well we are on a trip from the hotel. We are staying at in St. Anne's. And no matter where we go, we will always visit the cathedrals.

Q. So do you visit the cathedrals a lot then?

Not a lot, but we visit them when we are on holiday and such like.

Q. So it is part of being a tourist?

Yes.

Q. What is it about them which is attractive?

Oh I don't know.

Q. Is it the architecture or the religion of the place?

Oh both, and the history.

Q. So there is a mixture of reasons?

Oh yes.

Q. So what have you experienced at Chester today?

I think it is very beautiful.

Q. Have you just looked at the Cathedral or did you learn about it?

Oh we looked around and we sat down for a little while. It was very nice.

Q. If there was a choir singing, or music playing, would that have made your visit better?

No I don't think it would no.

Q. Did you read any of the information panels or watch the video in the visitor centre?

No we just read about the mosaics on the leaflet.

Q. I see. Has as it been a positive experience?

Yes, it has been very nice.

Q. Did you have any expectations about your visit before you came here?

Well, we just wanted to see it you know. (Pause: Could see visitors wanted to move on.)

Q. Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Young male (20s) from United States.
Date: 17th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral?

Specifically today, or in general?

Q. Well today, and in then in general.

Well it was just simply that we took a family trip here to Chester, and specifically here, because I am in seminary and I am in training to be a Pastor in America. And so it is a chance to see an ancient house of worship, where Christians have worshipped for a thousand plus years. And so, personally for me, last time I came here, five years ago, I prayed for my father at one of the altars because he was ill. He has since died, and it has got a lot of meaning for me here.

Q. So it is quite a personal visit for you then?

Yes.

Q. So that is quite a mixture of reasons.

Yes, it is.

Q. What has your experience been like today?

Very nice, although I am a bit rushed.

(Felt visitor was in a hurry).

Ok, that is it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Father (70s) and Son (50s) from London.
Date: 19th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well, we have visited Chester Cathedral quite a few times, when we have had the time to come. Because it is beautiful, because I am interested in history, architecture, I am an antiques dealer, which helps.

Q. So are you looking at it from an experts point of view?

Well I don't deal with churches, but I can identify the beautiful art, and I am visiting for religious reasons as well. Churches are beautiful, and this is a living church.

Q. So that is a real mixture of reasons isn't it. And do you see cathedrals as centres of history?

Yes.

Q. Did you learn anything while you were in there today?

Masses.

Q. Really, in what capacity? In terms of history or religion?

The most interesting thing I learned about was the seats in the choir, the misericords and all the carving which was done in about 1360. And it was made with two types of oak, which I have often read about in books, the upper screen is made with Baltic oak and the lower screen with English oak. So that means that six hundreds years ago, they were importing Baltic oak into this country. I have read about it, but I have never seen proof of it until today.

Q. So you have seen something new today?

Yes, absolutely. And of course there was the Ecclesiastical Court which was magnificent.

Q. Did you learn about these things on a guided tour, or from the information inside?

I listened in on a guided tour and I read the information panels.

Q. And what has your experience been like of the Cathedral itself?

It is magnificent. It is small, it is a living Cathedral. It is well restored. The people who are leading the tours seem to be taking a really active interest. It is not a dead cathedral. That is what my father has been saying for the last half hour. He compared it to Durham Cathedral, which he found interesting, but more of a monument. This is a living church.

Q. So the fact that there are people in there moving around, there is lots happening, that is what makes it feel like a church rather than a monument?

(Father: Yes, there is something alive about it, which I can't pinpoint.)

Q. Is it the atmosphere?

(Father: Yes it is the atmosphere. The whole thing sets you alive).

Q. Really, so do you feel different coming out?

(Father: Yes)

Q. So has it been a positive experience?

Yes.

Q. So do you visit cathedrals a lot?

Well like going to cathedrals. When we can.

Q. When you are tourist, and you go to a new city, would the cathedral be part of your plan?

Usually yes. But not just the cathedral, it might not be the first thing we visit, but if we have the time, yes.

Q. If this had been a modern cathedral, would you have visited?

Probably not.

Q. Have you seen Liverpool's Roman Catholic Cathedral?

From the outside, but I wanted to go there to see the tapestry in particular. And I think I would like to go, because it is an interesting architectural piece, but it doesn't attract me like a place like this.

Q. So it wouldn't be the same experience?

Well, I haven't been, so I would wait and see.

Q. Have you been to any modern cathedrals?

Well I have been to Coventry, but only to the ruins of the old Cathedral.

Q. So you would rather go to the ruins because they are old?

Well they were bombed during the war, and it is a very moving place. Have you been there?

Q. I haven't been to Coventry, but I have interviewed people who have been there.

It was bombed, there is the old wooden cross from the old Cathedral which is burned there. I mean I went twenty years ago, so I can't remember my experience in detail. Another thing is you can't park there which is a bit inconvenient, like here. It is extremely interesting. But then all these places are interesting, because there is history all the way through. But even here, that magnificent sculpture in the cloisters, it is just magnificent.

Q. The modern sculpture? Do you like that?

Oh it is magnificent. (Father: Fantastic yes).

Q. Really, people either appear to love it or hate it. Most people like it. But other say it is not in keeping with the old Cathedral.

(Father: Oh I don't agree with that at all)

Q. So you don't mind seeing new with old?

(Father: Well it was like I said before, this Cathedral is alive, therefore it is living now, so it is the present day.)

Q. So the modern day must be in there as well?

(Father: Of course. I mean cathedrals are not fixed in stone and that is it. They are not like the pyramids, they are fixed. This is alive and that is what I like about it.)

(Visitors then when on to talk about their holiday in French Alps, and compared how expensive Chester was to stay in). Well I have never been to this Cathedral before, and there is a good reason. Sometimes when I have been going around the country buying antiques, I have had to stay in Chester, and I always feel as if I am ripped off in Chester because of the bed and breakfast prices, erm and also because antiques are too expensive. But it might be a reason why people don't come here, is because of the poor accommodation. Anyway, is that OK.

Q. Yes that is fine. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older lady (60s) from Canada.
Date: 19th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well it is part of a tour. It was included. I was interested in it because of its historical value.

Q. Did you know the Cathedral was part of the tour before you embarked on it?

Oh yes.

Q. I see. Was that one of the reasons why you decided to come on the tour?

Yes, it was one of the reasons. It was because I'm visiting Britain from Canada, and I am very interested in history, and cathedrals are part of that. And you know this city is very rich in history.

Q. Why are you so interested in history and visiting historic places?

I don't know why I am interested in history, I just am. And we have only been over in the New World there for 200-300 years and we just don't have it. And we are still Anglo-Saxon and it is still our heritage, although we are not English.

Q. So you consider the history of this country to be part of your heritage?

Oh I definitely do.

Q. And do you see English cathedrals as part of that?

Oh definitely. Because it was part of its history, I mean they built churches through history didn't they?

Q. Yes, they did. Did you learn anything about the history of this Cathedral today when you were here?

Erm, no. I didn't really learn anything very much more. You know you can only take in so much. I mean I really enjoyed looking at the windows, the stained glass windows are beautiful. And I was wondering if you knew why they have this gorgeous colour blue in them.

Q. I think blue symbolises sacredness or saintliness. I think different colours denote different things in the windows. So you like the windows?

Oh yes.

Q. Did you experience anything else while you were in the building today?

I said a few prayers.

Q. That is a real mixture, history and prayer isn't it?

Oh yes (laughs).

Q. Did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came here?

Yes.

Q. Really you are the first tourist I have interviewed who knew what the Cathedral looked like before they came here.

Well, when I say I knew what it looked like, I knew that they are always in the same shape. I have seen many cathedrals in Britain, and they are all basically the same shape, but they do have their differences.

Q. Yes, I see. So you have visited a lot of English cathedrals?

Yes, I have seen quite a few.

Q. During this tour?

Not during this tour. No, I was over in Britain about forty years ago and I think I saw about every church and cathedral then. (Laughs)

Q. So has it been a positive experience?

Oh yes, very much so.

(Could see visitor's tour group was leaving).

Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle-aged couple (50s) from Scotland.

Date: 19th August 1998.

(Interviewed wife)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today please?

Well we are visiting from Scotland. And actually we are reminiscing because it is actually 30 years since we have been here before, and we are just updating on what it was like before and what it is like now. (Husband: The changes we have seen).

Q. Have you seen any changes?

Oh yes. The cloisters, the new part - the visitors centre.

Q. Do you like that?

Oh the cloisters are beautiful, that is something which I will remember. I mean you never used to be able to get in them before. So that was nice. And also I have got a 17 year old son who is quite interested in architecture and history and that, and it is just really nice for the youth to be able to come and see the old and the new married together.

Q. So you like the visitors centre, because it is bringing commerce into the Cathedral.

No, no. I think we have got a new generation that are coming up that have very inquiring minds, that are into the internet, so that is what they want. They have got a thirst for knowledge, not just for the past, but for the future, and they want to know how things work. They have got much more inquiring minds, they don't just want to come to see a building, they want to know how it works.

Q. Did you actually read any of the panels yourself today or watch the video.

(Husband: If we had had more time, I think we would have, but we didn't. And as we said, we were just reminiscing.)

Q. So did you just wander around?

Yes, just to get the feel of the place. It is just nice to see the old, the new and the future.

Q. That is very interesting. Talking about old married with new, what did you think of the modern stained glass windows?

Oh I think they are lovely, yes absolutely gorgeous. And that blue one at the back fits in really well. I mean I like the idea that the whole Cathedral seems to have a 3-D effect. Wherever you walk, you see everything walking through. You have got the blue windows, and then you walk back and you have got that very modernistic window which could be put in a brand new building, but where is it? It is in a Medieval sort of cathedral. I think that is brilliant. As a mother of a teenage son, I think he would be amazed by this place.

Q. Oh is he not with you today?

No, he is working. (Husband: Just out of interest, do you know anything about the statue in the quadrangle there?)

Q. Well, only that it was made in 1994. Do you like the statue?

Well I just like the idea from my son's point of view, the fact that you are now trying to bring the kids in. I mean what have you got now, you have got the Disney theme parks, everywhere is themed. And you have to go with that. But this is our heritage, and it is theirs.

Q. So do you think that the old image that cathedrals might have, may put young people off from coming in here?

No. Because you have got your computer games that are all about old castles and things. What have you got, that Dungeon Master, kids like that sort of thing. They like 3-D imagery, they walk through the dungeons and through the castles, they are more in tune than us.

Q. So they would experience that sort of thing when they come here?

Yes.

Q. What has your experience been like today?

Good. As I say the 3-D effect, and the fact that I can remember it was just an old place that you could walk around. But now today, it feels more in tune with the present and the past as well.

Q. So it feel like a living building?

Yes, it is in tune with modern times, and they have used the European Development money, and they have used it to their advantage. So yes, I think it is marrying the whole time era, of past, future and present very well.

Q. Has it been a good experience then?

Yes it has, brilliant.

Q. Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older female (60s) from Rotherham.
Date: 19th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Just out of interest really. I love old buildings, old churches.

Q. What is it about them that you like?

The architecture and the age.

Q. Do you visit these sorts of places while you are on holiday?

Yes, mostly.

Q. And what has your experience been like today?

Wonderful. Very, very nice.

Q. Really?

Hmm.

Q. Have you been here before?

No. It is one of the nicest cathedrals I have been in.

Q. Do you go to cathedrals a lot?

Churches more than cathedrals really.

Q. And it is one of the nicest in terms of what?

The atmosphere, the beauty of the place. The colour, the altars are very nice, very ornate.

Q. Yes the colour is quite unique isn't it?

Yes, very different.

Q. Did you know what this Cathedral looked like before you came here?

No, no idea whatsoever.

Q. Did you know Chester had a Cathedral?

No, not really. I just came to see Chester, because I like old places. So no I didn't.

Q. So were you walking past and then did you come in, or did you see the signs for it?

No, I just saw the Cathedral, and I thought 'I will go in and have a look', because like I say, I like old buildings.

Q. Did it feel like an old building?

Yes, it had that atmosphere.

Q. It is funny, a lot of people talk about this atmosphere in cathedrals, but find it difficult to describe.

It is a warmth, a warmth. Peace. Peace and warmth I should say.

Q. It's interesting that you say it is peaceful. As you can see there are crowds of tourists coming in, does that affect your visit at all?

Not really no. I think the building just holds the atmosphere and the peace.

Q. So you don't feel herded along at all?

Not at all. It is wonderful, really nice.

Q. Even the camera's flashing?

No.

Q. That is very interesting. When you go home, if somebody says to you "Chester Cathedral" what sort of images will come to mind?

I shall say it is well worth a visit, it is beautiful, very nice.

Q. Did you feel a sense of God's presence at all?

Absolutely.

Q. So it felt like an old religious building, not just an old building?

God's home yes.

Q. If this had been a modern building, do you think you would have visited it?

Not with the same interest no.

Q. So it would have been a different experience?

Yes.

(Pause: Could see visitor wanted to move on).

Q. Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from Devon.

Date: 19th August 1998.

(Interviewed wife.)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today.

Because we are in Chester for the first time. (Husband: And we go to cathedrals wherever we go visiting. We've been to Westminster Cathedral, York Cathedral).

Q. So you have a real interest then?

(Husband: Well relatively). Yes. It has grown upon us with touring.

Q. Is it sort of like a habit for you, when you go to a new town will you visit its cathedral?

(Husband: Oh, yes. Yes.) And the churches yes.

Q. If this had been a modern cathedral, would you have visited?

Yes. (Husband: Probably).

Q. So it doesn't matter how old it is or what it looks like?

No. It is not necessary. It is an interest in erm, in styles really, I suppose, you know. Because we come from Devon and we have got Buckfast Abbey and you know which is really modern. (Husband: Modern, modern. It was built this century). But erm, as many people go there as go to an old place like this. I mean we have an interest in history obviously, and the fact that it is old. Yes we really like the atmosphere in cathedrals that are old.

Q. Can you describe that atmosphere to me?

(Husband: It is the sense of history isn't it?) Yes, and the you know you are cut off from the hustle and bustle of the outside world when you are in a cathedral or church, it is a tranquil sort of place.

Q. You can see there are a lot of tourists coming in, does that affect your visit at all?

(Husband: Not really, you know. Because we realise that a Cathedral like Chester has got to do something to raise funds, and the have got to be commercialised, otherwise they wouldn't be here, it is as simple as that.)

Q. I see, did you notice that there was a visitor centre just in there, it has got wall panels and a video, did you actually read any of these?

Some of them, not all of them. (Husband: Some of them yes.)

Q. So the ones that looked interesting?

(Husband: Yes, well erm) Yes. Well it is like newspapers really, I mean you read the headline and decide if you are going to like the story. I mean you can read a story and know all about it from literature other than just going through a visitor centre. I do find visitor centres and things like that, do become a little bit boring really. They can be too much.

Q. I see. So would you say that you come to the Cathedral to experience history rather than to learn about it?

Erm, to compare I think. I mean we can compare. We can compare things that have happened in Chester, to things that have happened in York and kind of link between the two.

Q. So things like the Reformation?

Yes, exactly. I mean it is interesting, and it is something that we have an interest in. I mean it is not a hobby, it is only one of the things that we do while we are on holiday. One of the things we have done today is to come here, and the rest of the day is going to be spent at Chester race course.

Q. So you are doing the cultural bit first?

Yes, I mean this is the sort of thing we do. We spend a couple of days in an area and we see everything. (Husband: Yes we look at everything really).

Q. And has your experience been positive today in the Cathedral?

Yes. (Husband: We liked it. It is very different to other cathedrals).

Q. Is it? In what way?

Well it is less ornate. (Husband: Well we like the look of it for a start. I mean it looked like this from the outside. And the colour is different, isn't it?) Yes, that is the stone. It is the local natural stone. And I mean it is less ornate than many cathedrals.

Q. Do you think so?

(Husband: Oh yes).

Q. Really? Well I suppose when you compare it to Exeter, it is quite plain.

(Husband: Well that's right). It is very solid, it looks solid from the outside.

(Pause: Visitors started fidgeting).

Ok that's it, thank you.

Group Composition: Two females (Female 1: Late teens) and (Female 2: 40s) from Swansea.
Date: 19th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Female 1: Because we just came here for the day, and we thought we would just look at the main sites to see really.)

Q. Oh I see, and the Cathedral was one of those?

(Female 1: Yes. We quite like looking at buildings really.)

Q. Really, old or modern?

(Female 1: Both, I like both types really, but we do like stained glass as well.)

Q. I see so it is an interest in the building's fabric, or is there a religious element as well?

(Female 2: Erm, not particularly. I am not particularly religious, although I do like the atmosphere of these places.)

Q. A lot of people talk about this atmosphere in cathedrals, can you try to describe it to me?

(Female 2: Yes, I think it is the peacefulness. I mean when you sit down in the building, even if you now particularly religious, I think you do feel a peacefulness coming over you, which I think is quite nice.)

(Female 1: Yes it is quite nice, even though there are lots of people it is still quiet).

Q. Yes, I was about to say, there are a lot of people in there at the moment, does that detract from your experience?

(Female 2: I don't think it does really.) (Female 1: Yes, it seems to be quite calm really doesn't it?) (Female 2: Yes, and I think that the other thing that helps with that is that there are little parts you know, that you can go in to, sort of little sections, so you can always find a quite spot if you want to anyway.)

Q. Yes, I see. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

(Female 2: Erm, not a lot.) (Female: Only if it is in a place that we haven't been to before, you know).

Q. So if you go to a new town you will visit it's cathedral?

(Female 2: Yes, I mean we visited York on the way up, so we went to York Minster). (Female 1: Yes we went to the Cathedral there).

Q. Did you? And how did your experience at York Minster compare to this one?

(Female 2: Well, it is beautiful). (Female 1: It is bigger, but I wouldn't say it was actually nicer). (Female 2: Yes, I like this one better). (Female 1: Yes, I like this one more).

Q. Yes, it is strange that a lot of people will describe visits to York Minster when they talk about their visit here.

(Female 2: Yes, well at York Minster, the stained glass absolutely beautiful, and it is huge. But that is what I like about this one, it is smaller, and it has got a nice-) (Female 1: a nice feel to it). (Female 2: Yes it has got a nice feel to it).

Q. I see, and did you read any of the information panels or did you watch the video in the visitor centre at all?)

(Female 2: We didn't watch the video, but we did sit down and read the little leaflet).

Q. Oh the little leaflet that they gave you when you came in?

(Female 2: Yes).

Q. So did you just walk around then?

(Female 2: Well we did walk around, we went to the cafe and had a bite to eat, and we sat down for a bit in the main building).

Q. As you walked around, if a choir had been singing or an organ playing, would that have affected your visit at all?

(Both: Yes) (Female 2: Yes, I think that would have been really nice actually. I was at St. David's Cathedral a few years ago, and there was a choir actually just practising there, and that was really nice. It is really nice actually when there is a choir singing).

Q. Has your visit been a positive experience?

(Both: Yes). (Female 2: I think also the other thing that we commented on, which was nice, is to go into a cathedral, a church, and actually know it is being used as well). (Female 1: Yes, I thought that, you can see all of the local children's things laid out and stuff.)

Q. So do cathedrals in general feel unused to you?

(Female 1: Yes, yes). (Female 2: Well that's right, whereas this one does feel like it is actually being used, and that is really nice to see).

Q. So it feels like a living building?

(Female 2: Yes, it does.)

(Pause)

Thank you very much for stopping.

Group Composition: Two older ladies (60s) from Australia.

Date: 19th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today.

(Pause: Visitors look perplexed).

Q. It is a tough one isn't it?

Well just for no other reason than we came in because it looks so beautiful from the outside.

Q. Did you know the Cathedral was here?

(First lady: I did, but Diane didn't. We are both from Australia, and I am originally from England but emigrated to Australia twenty five years ago. This is the first time Diane has been to Chester).

Q. Really. (To Diane) Is this the first visit that you have made to an English cathedral?

(Diane: No, we have been to just about everyone. Durham, Westminster Abbey, Edinburgh.)

Q. And what is it about these places which attracts you?

(Diane: The workmanship, and how old they are. We haven't got anything as old as this in Australia. I mean even our own cathedral in Melbourne is only 100 years old).

Q. So just being able to come to a very old building is attractive to you?

(Diane: Yes, and to see the craftsmanship, and the way they were made.)

Q. Do you think that we still have that craftsmanship around today?

(Diane: No, no I don't. It just doesn't exist. Everything I look at in here, I am just amazed that they could have done it in those days, and that it is still standing and it is still beautiful. And you really don't see anything like that nowadays.)

Q. So was your whole experience based around looking at the architecture, or was there a religious side to your visit?

(Diane: There is no religious side I am sorry to say.) But the memorial stones, what was written on them, the memorial stones were interesting weren't they? (Diane: Yes I read all of those).

Q. What interests you about them?

(Diane: I like reading the dates, and how old they were when they died and that. I can't believe how young people were when they died back then. There is a whole family and all their babies died at 1 or 1 and a half and 3.)

Q. Yes, it shows how lucky we are now doesn't it? If, when you go back to Melbourne, somebody says to you "Chester Cathedral", what images will you bring up?

(Diane: Oh the stained glass. How beautiful it was. The Remembrance Garden.) (Visitors began to fidget).

Q. What a good summary. Ok that is fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) from Wiltshire.

Date: 19th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

To see Chester as a Cathedral and historic city.

Q. So you are interested in history?

Yes.

Q. And was it the history of the Cathedral which attracted you today?

Yes, the history of the Cathedral and the surrounding area. The buildings, the architecture, because Chester was one of the first cities to start preserving its architecture, and that is why there are so many historic buildings left.

Q. I see, so are you a history expert?

No, just interested in English history as an English person (laughs).

Q. So do you see cathedrals as a part of English history?

Well they are the centre to any English city, not from a religious point of view, but from the continuity of the architecture, the cultural history, they are the centre of the community.

Q. So do you come here to learn about history or to experience history?

Both, because I don't know much about Chester. We have already been to the Grosvenor Museum, it is very good, very people friendly. I think the city is well laid out, and they have obviously looked after it.

Q. Do you think so?

Yes. Well we come from Aylesbury, and they have absolutely ruined it. With all the modern developments, plastic shops that you can find anywhere.

Q. Does that make you angry?

Yes, extremely.

Q. So the preservation of historic buildings and towns is very important for you then?

Yes. Especially in the modern world, when standards seem to be going out of the window.

Q. Do you think so? In what way?

Well the buildings. I always think it gives you stability if you see a good, solid, old building like this, that has been looked after. And you think that people have been walking through it for a thousand years. Its marvellous.

Q. Yes, a lot of people say that, especially the Americans and Australians.

Well their own country is one 200 years old.

Q. Yes, exactly. So what has your experience been like here in the Cathedral today?

Very nice. Very well organised. Very commercial, but in a nice way.

Q. Yes, doesn't that type of commercialisation bother you then?

No, no. I think again, it is bit like running the gauntlet, they want your money in the box. But then again, if it keeps the building going, £2 is nothing. It has been well done. I mean having lunch in the refectory there, its really lovely. I mean I have never eaten in a cathedral before. (laughs).

Q. Haven't you?

Well usually they are added modern bits on the side. But to actually eat where the monks used to eat, with the vaulted ceiling like that, and the pianist, it was beautifully done. Good value for money. The ambience, wonderful. (Husband: And this Cathedral is different to the cathedrals we have been to in London, I mean St. Paul's is £5 to get in.) Yes you can't even see the Nave.

Q. And you don't like that?

No, no I don't.

Q. You feel it is wrong in a church?

Yes. Definitely.

(Pause)

Q. So you have experienced history?

Yes.

Q. Has it been a positive experience?

Yes, we found people here were very friendly. They have got more time. In London, the crowds were horrendous, and it was just push push all the time. So it was very nice.

(Could see visitors wanted to move off).

Q. Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Younger couple (30s) from United States. Coach Tourists.

Date: 19th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Wife: Well it was a stop on the tour.)

Q. I see, you are coach tourists?

(Wife: Yes.)

Q. Did you know that you were coming to the Cathedral when you embarked on the tour?

(Wife: No).

Q. Are you visiting a lot of cathedrals on your tour?

(Wife: Well actually, it was called 'the ABC tour'... 'Another Bloody Cathedral tour'. [laughs]. But actually we are enjoying very much seeing them, because in America most of our churches are not really old by the standards here.)

Q. So just the fact that they are old cathedrals is enough for you then?

(Wife: Oh well, the architecture of the buildings is wonderful).

Q. Actually I was going to ask you - what is it about the age of the cathedral which is so interesting for you?

(Wife: Well they are beautiful. And everything is so interesting, and so intricate. Around every corner you turn, there is something else to see. Even the ruins, we went to Glastonbury Abbey, and I could have stayed all day.)

Q. So what is it, do you actually feel the centuries of age in the building when you are in it?

(Wife: Yes, definitely).

Q. Why is it important for you to feel that?

(Husband: It is a sense of history. I mean compared to English history, American history is virtually in its infancy. You are looking at 220 years or something like that, whereas you look at the walls here in the Cathedral, many of the plaques are older than when the pilgrims even Columbus discovered America. You are looking at 1492. It is everything. A lot of the different things, I mean we visited a villa yesterday that was built 50 years before Columbus set sail. You know?)

Q. So it is just experiencing...?

(Husband: Yes it is actually experiencing history. I mean, you know, we read about it as far as being from the United States, because you know a lot of our ancestors are English, my background is English, and I have ancestry from Scandinavia, and so you can look at here and it is just comparing to what we have back in the States, everything is relatively new. I mean I belong to a church in my home town, that was probably built at the turn of the century.) (Wife: And we thought that was old!)

Q. So do you feel that you are making contact with your ancestral roots when you come to a place like this?

(Wife: Yes, I will probably know more next year, we haven't been able to trace my family, because my grandfather's people came through Canada, and Canada was very bad at keeping immigrant records.)

Q. Oh what a shame. So has it been a good experience today?

(Wife: Oh yes. Actually one of the things I was thinking about when I was in there was, one of the things I was reading before I came in was that God is eternal, and time to Him is nothing because he can see all the way forward and all the way back, and that is one of the things that struck me today, is that this place in particular is quite old, but it really doesn't matter because God has been here much longer, and He will continue to be. So he doesn't need places like this, although you can see His hand in it.)

Q. Really, do you mean through the work of the builders, the struggle that they went through to build something like this hundreds of years ago.

(Wife: Oh yes, I can't imagine how hard it must have been) (Husband: Well if you look at something that took, you know, the only church we have been to that 50 years to build, and that was relatively quick.) (Wife: Was that Salisbury Cathedral?) (Husband: Yeah, other than that, all the others took hundreds of years, and you think of the suffering that the people went through, and what they gave us. And you know with that type of thing, you have to look at what they gave back then years and years ago, as to what we give now. [laughs] I also think you get a good appreciation that every church that we have gone to, as far as restoration is concerned, this is probably by far the most beautiful church that we have been in.)

Q. Really?

(Wife: It is the most ornate, yeah. As far as the floors and the ceilings are concerned, and the carvings.) (Husband: And it is really a tribute to the people who restored it. Because if you look at some of them that are just starting to restore them, and the great amounts of money that they are pouring into them. And a lot of the different churches we were in. What was the name of that church we were in yesterday where the children were very interested in King Arthur?) (Wife: Glastonbury). (Husband: Yes we walked through there and looked at those ruins, they haven't been restored). (Wife: Where else have we been to, Coventry?)

Q. Oh Coventry is very modern isn't it?

(Wife: Yeah, quite a contrast).

Q. Actually, if this had been a modern cathedral, do you think your visit would have been the same experience?

(Wife: It would depend on how it was built. I am not a fan of modern architecture as such. You know, lots of plate glass, straight walls, and concrete. I think that with the old architecture, things like arches and stonework are much more graceful. And that is why it is so nice to see everything being preserved here, rather than torn down and built new.) (Husband: You look at the organ, you look at erm, just virtually the woodwork, it is so ornate. Virtually underneath that, the carvings become assimilated with the ceilings, as far as those things, what are they called, ceiling bosses.)

Q. Do you think the skills that it took to build this Cathedral, do you think that those skills still exist today?

(Wife: I think they do, but I think that people aren't paid for them.)

Q. They are not valued?

(Wife: No. I don't think people can make a living using these skills, because people aren't willing to pay for them. Why have something carved by hand, when you can get it much cheaper done by a machine? I have a friend a friend who's husband was a finish carpenter, which is the person who puts the last touches on all the woodwork. And it is really quite a skill, and take much time and patience to do, you know, in a really fine way. And really there is not a market for that. People want homes built very quickly and very cheaply, and the last house he built, in fact, they couldn't be bothered to pick out the tile for the floors, or the woodwork for the kitchen. And I thought, you are paying hundreds of thousands of dollars for this house to built, and you can't be bothered to build it well?)

Q. I see, so the attitudes through which people build buildings has changed a lot since they built a place like this?

(Wife: Right. I have been trying to convert my husband to the idea that old is better [laughs]. And he keeps saying 'well old houses aren't energy efficient and insulated well' and I say 'who cares I want old!' Well the woodwork is there. And you can get really fine woodwork in a new building but you will have to search long and hard for someone who will do it. And you have to pay a staggering amount of money!)

Q. So even if the woodwork was done by machine, would it not be the same.

(Wife: No it wouldn't).

Q. Do you feel that people lived better in the past than we do now?

(Wife: No.)

Q. So we do have better living conditions and life is better?

(Wife: Oh heavens yes. I think probably fifty years ago, it was even better though. Because people didn't rush so much.)

Q. So you feel that the pace of life today is too fast?

(Wife: Yes. Well people don't have time to sit down and enjoy themselves anymore. I mean, the rest of the tour today was given the option of going to North Wales for a couple of hours, and we said, no let's stay in Chester, and so that we don't have to hurry. Let's really see Chester.)

Q. Yes, I see what you mean. You just wanted to take it in. So what have you done while you have actually been in the Cathedral today?

(Wife: Well we have been in the refectory. Actually it was really nice to have lunch while the lady was playing the piano. That was really very nice.)

Q. Really, does music enhance your visit to the Cathedral?

(Wife: Well if somebody had been playing in the organ, oh I, would love to stay. In fact, I bought a CD of somebody playing on the Coventry Cathedral organ.)

Q. Oh yes, it is a very famous organ. Where are you from by the way?

(Wife: Minnesota).

Q. Oh I went through Minnesota when I lived in the States some years ago.

(Wife: Did you go through any of the forests during the fall?)

Q. No I didn't get the opportunity, but I lived in Boston for a short time and the foliage during the fall I remember was spectacular.

(Husband: Well you see Boston, that is the centre of or nation's history. If you go down to the wharves, then you talk about the country itself. You are looking at the 1600's. And it is not like here where everything is restored. There in Boston, something that is relatively old is just ripped down and something newer is put up. Everything that has been saved is really only a hundred years old). (Wife: There are few places that are actually preserving what we would actually call old from the 1700's, but it is a hard job).

Q. Really? So people are still pulling down old buildings in the States?

(Wife: Yes). (Husband: It all depends on the money) (Wife: And it depends on who owns it).
(Husband: Anyway, we are next going to the Roman Amphitheatre. Can you tell us where it is?).

Interview ended here. Directed visitors to amphitheatre.

Group Composition: Two older ladies (60s) from Buxton.

Date: 19th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well I always go into cathedrals. I am a Christian, I was brought up Church of England, but I became a Methodist many years ago. But I always do come into a cathedral if there is one close by, and it really is a place of God isn't it?

Q. So there is an overtly religious reason for your visit then?

Yes.

Q. So have you worshipped while you have been in the Cathedral today?

Yes, yes. Well you always that there is a contact somewhere. And you feel that you can make that contact in the Cathedral, because God is in this place.

Q. If this had been a modern cathedral, would this have been the same experience?

I do know Coventry, and at first it wasn't quite the same. But I think that it doesn't really matter if it is an old cathedral or a new cathedral really. I was really impressed with the altar piece here. Because it is quite unusual here, it is very modern. And I have had a word with one of the lady vergers, and I appreciated it was the wine and the grain, but I said to her 'what is the figure at the back'. She said 'it isn't a figure'. I said 'well I can see a face'. She said 'well if you can see a face, it is probably part of a grape, or it is a one of the circles which represents the Trinity'. But I have been and looked again and it still looks like a face. We think its a face don't we Marion? (Friend: Yes).

Q. That is interesting. So did you like the altar piece, because it is quite modern isn't it?

Well it is modern, it is. And at first I was a bit startled, but I can see that it is some of this modern interpretative work in the church now.

Q. Yes a lot of symbolism.

That's right yes.

Q. So has it been a positive experience today?

Oh yes. We are so pleased we have been in.

Q. Did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came in?

No we didn't, because we haven't been to Chester before, and we have always by-passed it. So we were going to North Wales and we said well we must go to the Cathedral. And we asked, didn't we?, the way to the Cathedral. So we are going to go to the walls now, can you tell us how to get there?

(Interview ends here as visitors follow directions)

Group Composition: Young family (father 40s with children under 5) from Cumbria.

Date: 19th August 1998.

(Interviewed father)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Erm, I'm just interested in it. It is the central point of the city and I was just interested in it. It was very peaceful.

Q. I was just going to say, I heard you say to one of the Welcomers that you thought it was peaceful. Was it to get away from the crowds?

No. I was more interested in the way that they built it. I suppose that nowadays they wouldn't actually build buildings like this because people would say that it was a waste of money, but in them days they actually built it because they wanted to do it. I don't know whether it was to glorify God or what, I don't really know. But you can see the work that people have put into it, the craftsmanship.

Q. So do you think that the skills no longer exist today, or because people just are not interested?

I don't know. I don't know how long these things take to build.

Q. This took about 250 years.

Yeah, that is what I'm saying. Nowadays they would be looking at how much it would cost per hour or something daft like that. Whereas they didn't build in that way. They weren't concerned with figures like that. Nowadays, even if you built that cross on the wall, people would look at how much it would cost. But then, if you loved doing it, then obviously. I don't no whether people did it as a hobby then or what.

Q. Yes. So it has been a calming experience then?

Yeah, I enjoyed it. We come from up north, and we've got Carlisle as our Cathedral, but I mean this one is totally different. The way it is built, I am just glad I don't have to clean it! But I mean I am very impressed with it. Maybe nowadays, like I said, they don't build churches like this anymore. I mean I suppose a lot of people maybe emphasise you know that the church is not really that important now, but in those days it meant a lot to people, and they respected it more.

Q. Yes. Erm. Did you read any of the information panels in the visitors centre, or did you watch the video?

Erm, no I didn't. Well when you have got kids with you they don't allow you to stop and read. (Laughs) No I mean I tried to walk around and look for things that would interest the little one really. So I mean nowadays you wouldn't see tombs like they have got in there, so that sort of thing really. So it is very interesting looking at them.

Q. So are you trying to get your little ones interested in visiting cathedrals by taking them now?

Well, not so much that. But we are interested in this sort of thing being sort of Christian, and we are interested in seeing the history, and why they built these sort of things. I mean a lot of people nowadays would ask why they built these sort of things back then, because it is a different generation isn't it? But like I say, when you see the craftsmanship that has gone into them, yes, you appreciate that they did it, because they wanted to do it.

Q. Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Locals: mother and son (early teens) from Manchester. Tourist: Young male (early teens) from France.

Date: 21st August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we have particularly come to the Cathedral today because we have a French visitor with us.

Q. So you are showing him one of the sites of Chester?

Yes, that's right. We brought him to Chester in particular because it is an historic city, and we live on the outskirts of Manchester, and I always think that Chester is a more interesting city to visit than Manchester.

Q. Why is that?

Because it has got more history and it just looks nicer, you know with all of the old buildings.

Q. Is your visitor particularly interested in history anyway, or is this a place where you always bring your visitors?

I always bring my visitors here (laughs). It isn't too large, some of the cities can be too big but Chester is just the right size to do in one day.

Q. What is it about the Cathedral which you think your visitors like?

I think it is a very visitor friendly Cathedral, particularly over the last few years, I think there have been a lot of improvements here.

Q. With the visitor centre?

Yes.

Q. You don't mind the visitor centre?

No, I don't. I think it is quite good. I know it takes away from the sanctity of the place, if you like. On the other hand, it is keeping the Cathedral going, and if the Cathedral is not kept going in some way, would we lose it? I don't know.

Q. Do you think that cathedrals are under threat.

Well, I don't think they will be knocked down or anything like that, but I think they will be in trouble financially, because not so many people go to church now you know?

Q. I see. Have you been to the Cathedral before then?

Yes, many times.

Q. And you are going by your past experiences when you bring people here?

Yes.

Q. Is your French visitor with you?

Yes, he is here.

Q. Can he speak English?

Not bad, have a go.

Q. (To French Visitor) What has your day been like in the Cathedral?

(Visitor: It has been good)

Q. (To French Visitor) What did you like most about the Cathedral?

(Visitor: I liked the stones, the statues). Yes and we found references to France in the - you know - the Memorial Book, of the soldiers who had died. We found some places where French cities were mentioned and on some of the kneelers there were some remembrances to the Second World War and things like that, and Alexander found those.

Q. (To French Visitor) So you liked to hear about your country?

(Visitor: Yes).

Q. Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Single male (50s) from Kent.

Date: 21st August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Oh erm. Well that is not a simple question. I have come on a coach tour, and I do go round visiting all the cathedrals a lot anyway.

Q. Do you? Did you know that this Cathedral was part of the tour, before you joined the tour?

Erm, not really no.

Q. Did you know Chester was part of the tour?

Well, I didn't know that until we got on the coach (laughs).

Q. You know when you say that you visit cathedrals a lot, what is the attraction then?

Well I just like the buildings, the atmosphere of them, yes.

Q. What is it about the building?

It is the architecture, the history, and the way that they was built years ago.

Q. A lot of people say that they like Cathedral because buildings today are not built with the same effort and skill, what do you feel?

Oh, I think that is obvious, you only have to look at them.

Q. Do you admire the people who built the cathedrals when you visit them?

Oh yes. Considering the tools they had then and what they must have lived through.

Q. Yes, it must have been very hard. What has your experience been like here at Chester today?

It is quite nice here today.

Q. Does it compare to the other cathedrals that you have been to?

Yes, really it does.

Q. Did you get a sense of the history that you were talking about before?

Yes, you do.

Q. Did you feel the atmosphere that you have felt in other cathedrals?

Yes.

Q. As you can see there are a lot of people coming in, it must be getting crowded in there.

It wasn't when I was in there.

Q. Wasn't it?

No.

Q. If it had been crowded, would have that affected your visit at all?

No, it wouldn't bother me at all no.

Q. Where are you from?

Just south of London, Kent.

Q. Oh you have a lot of cathedrals near to your home then. Winchester -

I've been to Winchester, I've been to Canterbury, Westminster is the nearest and then there is St. Paul's, so they are all near. I've been to Winchester, Gloucester, Exeter - which I think is one of the best.

Q. Oh yes, they are all very old cathedrals aren't they. If this had been a modern building, do you think you would have visited?

Not really, no. I have been in modern buildings but they don't say the same thing to me.

Q. Really?

No, they are not in the same league are they.

Q. So is that why you visit old cathedrals?

Erm, that is still a difficult question.

Q. Yes, I know.

I must admit when I was younger, I didn't go to them. But when I got older, I don't mean really old, but when I got to about 40 I just started taking more interest in them. I suppose I had more time really.

Q. I see.

(Pause: visitor begins to walk off)

Ok that's fine. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) from Scotland.

Date: 21st August 1998.

(Interviewed wife.)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well as you can tell we are Scottish, we are here on holiday, and it was just something to do, to look at the Cathedral to see what it was like.

Q. When you go to a different town will you visit the cathedral?

Yes.

Q. And what is the attraction?

(Pause, visitors look perplexed).

Q. Is it the architecture or the religion of the place?

Oh the architecture, and the art, the mosaic work.

Q. And what have you done while you have been in the Cathedral today?

Well we have just wandered around.

Q. Did you read any of the information panels in the visitor centre?

Yes we read them.

Q. Did you watch the video?

No.

Q. What type of experience have you had today?

Its been nice.

(Husband moves off. Could see visitor wanted to follow)

Ok that's fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Young male (20s) from Canada.
Date: 21st August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well, first of all because it is here (laughs), and number two I like, in this particular Cathedral, I like learning about how a monastery worked rather than just a cathedral.

Q. I see, so there was an educational side to your visit as well?

Yes.

Q. Have you been to many English cathedrals?

Zillions.

Q. Are you on a tour?

Erm, yes, but I haven't been to Chester before, but I have been on other ones when I am over from Canada.

Q. Are your ancestors from England?

Yes, from Shrewsbury.

Q. Have you been there?

Twice.

Q. Have you found any evidence of your ancestors there?

Well I saw the house that my dad was born in. I got a tour of his house from the people who live there now.

Q. So you made contact with your roots?

Yes.

Q. And what is the attraction about English cathedrals?

Erm, well, nothing over and above the other cathedrals in Europe. I like the art, if it has nice stained glass I like that. Erm, organs. I am actually coming back because there is supposed to be an organ recital this evening. I love the acoustics and usually they are choked full of interesting art.

Q. Are you an expert in art?

No, I am a teacher.

Q. So you have an amateur interest then?

Yes.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

I loved it. I wandered around on my own. And I read the information signs and what not. And then I took the tour, which is one of the best cathedral tours that I have ever been on.

Q. Yes, they are good aren't they. And was the tour based around the art and the history?

Erm yes, he went through the whole thing. There were reconstructions and what not, plus the day to day lives of the monks and the times that they lived in.

Q. So did you learn something today?

Oh, an incredible amount.

Q. When you go home, if somebody says to you "Chester Cathedral" what images will you bring to mind?

Well, as I was coming out I was saying to myself "Gee, I wish so and so was here to see this", so when I go home, I will be telling everybody that when they come to England they should come to Chester. I think the fact that the town is so well preserved, I think it adds to it. I guess the town adds to the Cathedral because it was here first.

Q. So did you feel a sense of history as you walked through the Cathedral?

Oh God yes. There was really quite... what I particularly liked was that most cathedrals are built in the Gothic style or in the Romanesque style, and this is a combination of the two, and they haven't totally wiped out the Romanesque for the later Gothic, so it was quite nice to see that.

Q. That is interesting. If this had been a modern building, do you think you would have visited?

A modern cathedral?

Q. Yes.

Probably not. Not unless it had some famous piece of art in it that I would be interested in, but no.

Q. So being old is an added attraction?

Not just being old, but being different. I mean with a modern cathedral, I can go to one of those back home.

Q. So you have modern cathedrals at home and they are nothing new to you?

That's right.

Q. A lot of Canadian's have said this, that they like English cathedrals because they just don't anything like them at home.

That's right. Well the oldest building in my province of Vancouver is 1840, so (laughs).

Q. I see. (Pause)

Q. So has your visit been a positive experience?

Oh yes, I would do it again. That is why I am coming back for the organ recital.

Q. Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older lady (50s) from Australia.

Date: 21st August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Erm, because I enjoy it. I have been for the last four years. I come up once a year when I am come over hear on holiday. And erm, I think mainly for historical reasons, but there is something special about the place as well.

Q. About Chester Cathedral?

Yes.

Q. What do you think that is. Can you describe it?

Oh no (laughs)

Q. It is difficult isn't it?

I think it is just the fact that it has been here for so long. That there is the constant worship here for so long. It is interesting. But I just like the whole ambience of the place. And I have seen changes, when my friend first took me here four years ago, and we walked down the nave, and the floor was all rutted. Last year of course I had to look at it from the viewing gallery because they were doing the floor. But erm, the thing I like the most are, the beautiful, well the misericords are lovely, but the beautiful carving on the choir screens. I could just sit and look at that all day. And it is seven hundred years old, and I think that is incredible. Erm I like the peace of the place, I think that is about all I can tell you (laughs).

Q. That is great. So do you feel different leaving now, than when you came in?

Yes, I always feel better.

Q. Where are you from by the way?

Well originally Australia, but I now live in Surrey.

Q. And you come up here every year?

Well I have a friend who lives in the Wirral. So I do like to have one day here.

(Pause, visitor wanted to move on).

Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from Lichfield.
Date: 21st August 1998.

(Interviewed husband.)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well for a day out, because we are stopping off here from Shropshire.

Q. And the Cathedral is part of having a day out in Chester?

Yes.

Q. What is the attraction of the place for you?

(Wife: Well we are interested in cathedrals because we come from Lichfield, which has a lovely Cathedral, and so I suppose everywhere we go that has got one, we always go in and have a look. We have noticed that there is rather a lot of work that has been completed since we have been here last, two years ago).

Q. Oh the new floor?

(Wife: Yes. They were in the middle of doing the floor. So we thought we would come and see it now that it is finished. And also we came in to have a cup of tea. (laughs)

Q. A lot of people do. Actually that is a good point. Some people would say that there are lots of places to eat in Chester, so why the Cathedral?

(Wife: Well it is the lovely atmosphere isn't it?)

Q. I see. And you say that you are from Lichfield. So how does the Cathedral compare to Lichfield?

Well it is bigger. (Wife: It is very different.) This is a cloistered Cathedral for a start off. (Wife: Which is very nice, because you are able to do more things to attract visitors, like having, using the refectory for visitors. Because we have got a separate one in the building close, but not in the Cathedral) They are so fortunate here in having cloisters because you have got that big space that you use as a refectory, that could double as a wonderful concert hall. The acoustics would be good in there. (Wife: Well I was saying earlier, they had a lady playing the piano, and it was lovely, it sounded really nice didn't it?) Oh yes.

Q. So has the Cathedral itself been a good experience?

Oh yes, well we love Chester, the Rows you know, the Cathedral, it's a day out isn't it? And where we are staying, it is just so much easier to get here from than from Lichfield.

(Pause)

Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Two younger females (early 20s) from France.

Date: 21st August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Female 1: Because of her [laughs]). (Female 2: Well I knew something about Chester and Cheshire in general, and so we were travelling in Great Britain, so we decided to come here in Chester because we are on the Inter-rail.)

Q. Oh yes, and are you just travelling in England?

No, in Germany and Spain also.

Q. I see, and what has your visit to Chester Cathedral been like today?

(Female 2: For me this Cathedral is marvellous, I really like it. I really enjoy the feeling here. It is so peculiar, it is very beautiful.) (Female 1: We have never seen a cathedral like this.)

Q. Really? Even in France?

(Both: No.) (Female 1: No because there are some French things, what do you call them, styles, that we don't have this type there.)

Q. I see, so the style of this Cathedral is very different to those in France?

Both: Yes. Female 1: Yes, because the roof is painted and is wooden, and the Gothic stones.

Q. So that is different to what you find at home?

Both: Yes.

Q. So have you enjoyed your visit?

Female 2: Yes, I think the merit is in the guided tours, which we have done.

Q. Oh the guided tour. Was it good?

Both: Yes.

Q. Did you learn anything on the tour?

Female 2: Yes we learned about the history of the Cathedral, and about King Henry VIII.

Q. I see, so there was education as well?

Yes.

(Visitors began to fidget)

Q. Ok, that's it. Thank you.

LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL.

Interview Code: L1

Group Composition: Two couples - Locals (50s), Tourists (60s) from New Zealand.

Date: 4th August 1998.

(Interviewed Tourist Male).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well, we are visiting from New Zealand and we have only got one day here, so we just wanted to look at the most magnificent sites in Liverpool. And our friends here have suggested that we come to this cathedral. And we have looked at the Roman Catholic Cathedral, and there is quite a difference.

Q. Yes there is quite a difference between the two isn't there? And what have your experiences been like as you have walked around today?

Oh well, I was very moved by the size and the grandeur of it.

Q. I see, was it an architectural visit or a religious visit?

Oh definitely architectural.

Q. Would you say you were here as a tourist?

Definitely here as a tourist.

Q. I see, so when you go back home, and somebody says to you "Liverpool Cathedral"; what sort of images will you bring up?

Oh the size and magnificence of it. The stained glass windows are quite amazing.

Q. Do you have any cathedrals like this in New Zealand?

Yes we do, but probably not as big.

Q. So it is the sheer size of the place which is most impressive for you then?

Yes, and the beauty of it, its just magnificent.

Q. So between this and the Roman Catholic Cathedral, which would you say was your preference?

I wouldn't. The two are just so different you just can't make the comparison.

(Pause)

Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Young woman (30s) from New Zealand.

Date: 4th August 1998.

Q. Ok, so can you tell me why you have come here today please?

Well, I was just passing and I saw it. Erm, I like cathedrals anyway. Whenever I see one I will always visit, I like to light candles. I am away from home, so I like to light candles for my family. I am not religious at all, but it is something that I just like to do. So yes, I have seen a lot of cathedrals and I just like looking at them.

Q. Really? So is it a case of whenever you see a cathedral you will go in?

Yes, if I am somewhere different.

Q. I see, so if you go to a new town, you will go to its cathedral?

Yes, if there is a cathedral there I will visit

Q. I see, are you working in this country?

Yes, I am a student.

Q. Oh I see, but you are from where?

New Zealand.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

Erm, it is a different one again. It is very spacious, I liked that. Very new looking, so I thought that was a bit different.

Q. Did you know it was a modern building before you came here, a lot of people think this is a Medieval building?

It looks more modern, clean, no scaffolding or anything which a lot of them seem to have, but it is not ultra modern. I mean I went to one in, erm, I can't remember where it was, I think it was Coventry, and it was new but it was modern, it had all the modern architecture in it, and I did not like that at all.

Q. So do you prefer it if it is an old cathedral?

Yes, I like the old style and I like the history that goes with it. I think that coming from home, we don't have a lot of history there.

Q. So you don't have old cathedrals in New Zealand?

No. I mean English cathedrals go back a lot, and the history goes back even further, and that is what I like.

Q. Did you try to learn about the history of the cathedral today?

No I just wanted to walk around and look at it.

Q. I see, and when you go home, if somebody says to “Liverpool Cathedral”, what sort of images would you bring up?

Oh, I would just talk about the height of it I suppose, its very big, very spacious, very uncluttered, very clean, no scaffolding. Is that ok?

Q. That’s great. Thank you very much for stopping.

Group Composition: Single male (30s) from the United States.
Date: 4th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Erm, it looked so big and beautiful from the outside, I had to pay a visit.

Q. I see, so you were drawn here then?

Yes I was drawn here definitely. (Laughs)

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

Erm, I feel very calmed. It is a peaceful experience, erm, I could see it is definitely a place to worship, seeing the people that are laid to rest here, it was a striking religious feeling.

Q Did you feel a sense of God's presence here today?

Yes I did.

Q. Would you describe yourself as a religious person?

Erm, not so much.

Q. Do you have cathedrals like this in your home-country, are you from the United States or Canada?

The States.

Q. Do you have anything like this in the States?

No not like this, no Anglican church that I know of. I have visited some Roman Catholic churches in the States, the one in New York city.

Q. St Patrick's?

I am not sure. But they are quite impressive churches.

Q. Did you learn anything about this cathedral today? Even if it was only facts and figures?

I have learned that the people in Liverpool, it is not such a big city, but back in the 1900's they must have been very religious people to have built such massive cathedral.

Q. Oh yes, it was. So if, when you went home, somebody says to you "Liverpool Cathedral", what sort of images would you bring up?

Oh, erm, the size. The beautiful windows. The peacefulness.

Q. Did it meet your expectations?

Oh yes. (Pause)

Q. Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Two couples - Locals (50s) and Tourists (60s) from Canada

Date: 4th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today.

(Local Male: Because we have brought a visitor from Canada).

Q. Oh I see, who is the Canadian?

(Local Male: Here she is).

Q. I see, you have been nominated I am afraid.

Well I am a Canadian, but I was born in Liverpool.

Q. I see, how old were you when you went to Canada.

(Tourist: Nineteen, over forty years ago).

Q. I can see you have developed the accent. So you have decided to come back to visit?

(Tourist: Oh I always come back, every couple of years).

Q. And do you always come to the Cathedral?

(Tourist: I always visit the Cathedral).

Q. And what is the attraction for you?

(Tourist: Well its a focal point, no matter where I go, I know it is always here, and I always like to come back to see if there is anything new).

Q. So you must know it very well by now?

(Tourist: Well I always see something new when I come here. My nephew is very good bringing me over hear from the Wirral. And we can go right to the top and the views are wonderful. You can see the mountains in Wales).

Q. Yes, it is amazing. And what has your experience been like here today?

(Tourist: Oh, I love it. I just love it).

Q. Did you learn anything, was it an educational sort of visit?

(Tourist: No, I just like to look around and it feels very spiritual).

Q. Really? So did you get a sense of God's presence?

(Tourist: Oh yes, I always feel that here. Always).

Q. So it not just an architectural phenomenon?

(Tourist: No no, it is very special to me).

Q. I see, you can see there are a lot of visitors coming in. Does that bother you?

(Tourist: No, because they are most probably as interested as I am. So. Oh yes, and I watched it, they had it on television in Canada when they had the Paul McCartney thing, was it the Liverpool Oratorio. It was wonderful, I felt so proud. (Local female: yes I think you have brought up another aspect of it as well, we are very proud of it) Oh yes, very proud of it. And I think they are cleaning up Liverpool so nicely. So we are going to the Albert Dock now, and to St. George's Hall).

Q. So you are doing all of the sites.

(Tourist: Oh, yes. Thank you).

Group Composition: Day-tripper - female (50s) from Wakefield. Tourist - younger male (20s) from Canada.

Date: 4th August 1998.

Q. Ok, so can you tell me why you have come here today?

(Female: Well, I have brought Ashton here, because he is from Canada, and I was explaining to him that this is one of the few cities to have two Cathedrals, both Protestant and Catholic. So we have been to both of the Cathedrals, to look at the differences between the two.)

Q. Oh I see. So do you go to visit cathedrals anyway.

(Female: Well, Ashton is a student of architecture.)

Q. Oh I see you are an expert visiting from an experts viewpoint?

(Male: Oh yes). (Female: Yes we thought it would be interesting for him, and tomorrow we are hoping to go to Fountains Abbey and then Buckingham Palace)

Q. You are doing a real grand tour aren't you?. Are you from Liverpool?

(Female: No, I'm from Wakefield in West Yorkshire, and Ashton is from Canada. And we are trying to show him around all different sorts of architecture).

Q. And what has your experience been like today? Has it been an architectural experience for you?

(Male: Oh yes, I like this building more than the other Cathedral. Its a little more intricate)

Q. Yes there is a little more to it, a lot of people say that. It looks like an old building doesn't it? Did you know it was a new building before you came here?

(Female: We that is what we said, I was quiet surprised to read it was only what 1904 that it was started and finished in 1978 was it. So the other cathedral is in fact older than this one, its incredible to think isn't it?)

Q. Yes it is. Did you feel a sense of spirituality or God's presence here today?

(Female: I don't really know, no more than the other one I wouldn't have said, anyway predominantly we came to look at the architecture and to compare the two, and it has been very interesting).

Q. Did you learn anything while you were here today, or was it a visual experience?

(Male: Oh, much more a visual experience.) (Female: There were certain things that we have learned, like we learned when it was built, that is why it was such a surprise to us. I mean I was saying to Ashton as we were coming here, 'oh this one is much older than the Catholic, but it is obviously not, which was quite a surprise.)

Q. Oh a lot of people think that.

(Female: But nevertheless it has been a very enjoyable visit, I really enjoyed it.)

Q. Did it meet your expectations?

(Female: Well I have been before, so I knew what to expect. I have brought people back here who are visiting.)

Q. Yes it is interesting that you bring your visitors here isn't it? It is like you have a list of stopping points in Liverpool?

(Female: Yes, I think it is the novelty factor that you do have two Cathedrals in the one city, and that is of interest to people, especially to people from overseas, and it is one of the places we always consider bringing people to, especially if they are interested in cathedrals anyway.)

Q. Yes it is a good opportunity isn't it? Do you have cathedrals like this in Canada?

(Male: Nothing this old, no. We have some that are built in the style of old. But I think I like the idea of visiting somewhere that is really old).

Q. Yes, I know a lot of Canadians I have interviewed especially at Chester Cathedral, which is a thousand years old, say that they are visiting because they just don't have anything as old as this in Canada.

(Male: Yes, that's right).

(Pause)

Ok, that is it. Thank you.

Group Composition: 3 Women. Local (50s), Day-tripper (70s) from Twickenham, Tourist (50s) from Germany.

Date: 4th August 1998

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

(Local: Well we have come here for lunch basically. (Laughs)

Q. Well a lot of people would say 'Liverpool is full of places to eat, so why the Cathedral?'

(Local: Well I wanted my cousin to see it, it is such a beautiful place to come to, and I wanted Doris to see it. She is from Stuttgart.)

Q. Oh I see.

(Day-tripper: And I am an old Liverpudlian, but I now live in Twickenham)

Q. So you are a tourist as well?

(Day-tripper: Well I am here for the day. And I am thrilled to be back here, and I would like to know which of those chairs it was that I bought. I paid for a chair years ago and I don't know which one, I thought they would have the name labels on).

Q. Yes they do at a lot of other cathedrals don't they?

(Day-tripper: But what I was saying was, what intrigued me was, I mean I remember it before the War, being built, and when it was first opened I was disappointed, because it felt cold and empty, and it is interesting how an atmosphere has built up now, with age. And you see with so many services under its belt, it has brought a spirit to the place. And you feel now that there is something about it which is positive.)

Q. So does it feel like a cathedral now?

Yes, more than a big building now.

Q. And what have your experiences been while you have visited today? Has it been a tourist experience or spiritual experience?

(Day-tripper: Oh everything, its been a mixture. I was saying to them before, I came here with my father when he was 80, and we just sat quietly and that made his day. It has its recollections).

Q. So it is a very personal sort of visit for you then?

(Day-tripper: Oh yes, and I know the man who did some of the carvings on the tower. A Mr Crompton-Roberts, he lives in Hamburg now.)

Q. Is he working on a cathedral there?

(Day-tripper: No he is very old, he is retired.)

Q. But that is really nice, to actually know somebody who built the Cathedral.

(Day-tripper: Well yes, there are not many people around who can say they actually know somebody who built an English cathedral because they are all Medieval aren't they.)

Q. Yes, it is quite a unique thing isn't it? So when you go home, what sort of images will you have of the Cathedral?

(Tourist: It has a lovely atmosphere, not cold.)

Q. They have cathedrals in Germany of course. Is this the same type of experience?

(Tourist: No I am amazed that you can actually have a meal here. It is wonderful.)

Q. Oh, so in Germany they do not have visitor centres and refectories in their cathedrals?

No.

Q. That is very interesting. Is it quiet novel for you then?

(Day-tripper: Oh yes, she took a photograph of it.)

Q. Oh good, I am sure the Cathedral will be glad to hear about that. That is interesting.

(Tourist: It makes the Cathedral feel very inviting, to be able to have a meal makes it feel very friendly).

Q. So it has been a positive experience.

(All: Yes)

Q. Has it fulfilled your expectations?

(All: Yes)

Q. Ok that is great. Thank you.

Group Composition: Male (20s) Birmingham.

Date: 4th August 1998.

I was just listening to your interview with those ladies and I was wondering if I could make a quick contribution.

Q. Oh of course you can. Ok, so can you tell me why you have come here today please?

(Laughs) Well I come from Birmingham, and I am staying in Chester, and I think the main thing about seeing cathedrals is that it is they are like a once in a lifetime experience aren't they? Because when you go to different towns and cities that have got cathedrals that is always the first thing you look out for. Its like Lincoln. If you go to somewhere like Lincoln and Liverpool, they are the first things you look for so that you know you are getting to the city. Like when we were coming here on the train this morning from Chester, if you look as you get past Port Sunlight, you start seeing this Cathedral across the River Mersey and you know you are coming close to the city.

Q. I see, before you came to Liverpool, did you want to visit the Cathedral, or was it only when you actually saw it from the train, that you wanted to visit?

Oh I knew that I was going to come here. I will be honest with you, I have been here before, but even so it still amazes me when I see it again. This is quite a unique Cathedral. Even our Cathedral in Birmingham is unique, because it is 17th century, which there are not many of. The windows, if anything, the windows are quite famous in Birmingham. So if you go to somewhere like a smaller place like Malvern Priory, I was surprised to find that Malvern Priory has got nearly all of its original stained glass, even more than the biggest cathedrals.

Q. Well the cathedrals lost most of theirs to the iconoclasts during the Reformation.

Yes, that right, and the Priory was passed over. But you see where we live, we have got access to Worcester, Gloucester, you know they are the first cathedrals that we would look for.

Q. Have you been to them?

Oh yes.

Q. Have you been to Coventry?

Yes.

Q. And what did you think of that?

It wasn't too bad. I have seen the model of the original and I walked up St. Michael's tower. But I reckon, from what I have seen of pictures, it would have been a more imposing place.

Q. So you would have preferred the old?

Probably yes, it is difficult to say really.

Q. That is very interesting what you are saying about preferring old. I have been interviewing people at Chester, and I ask them would they have visited if it was a modern cathedral, and most of them say no.

Yes, I see. I mean I have been in the catholic cathedral here.

Q. What were your experiences like there?

It was nice. It was different.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

It is very pleasant. You know. I think it is the grandeur of it. It is just so big. You know, just the size of it really.

Q. So could you compare your experience to that of any other cathedral, I know you said it was a unique building?

St. Paul's perhaps. But I think it even surpasses St. Paul's because the thing is about St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey, is that there is something decidedly touristy about them.

Q. Yes. I have heard people say that they have been and I has been so overcrowded and littered with things like coke cans lying on the floor.

Yes, that is the sad thing about it.

Q. So you would not think of this as a tourist attraction?

No, this feels like a cathedral. What I am saying is, what has happened here is very sparse. It is good. Not a lot of touristy things. It involves the community, it displays artwork and the different groups that the Cathedral is involved with. I mean I might be generalising a bit, but in London, they just lap it up with the tourists and of course abroad, like I have heard that if you want to go to the Vatican, you are queuing up for at least a couple of hours. I mean I will be honest, I have never been abroad, so the only Cathedral I would like to see in comparison to this is Chartres. Just to see the windows.

Q. Oh yes, I have heard that it is amazing.

So yes, I like this Sathedral. I mean I am a Catholic, and I remember when the Pope came here.

Q. Yes, me to.

(Pause)

Q. So when you go back home, and somebody says to you "Liverpool Cathedral", what images will you bring up?

The windows, the two windows at the end. Basically the fact that it stands above Liverpool.

Q. Does it feel like a Liverpool Cathedral.

Well the image of it is imposing on the skyline. I mean the good thing about the cathedrals, even today, despite the office blocks and that, they still dominate, because in those days they were the first things you saw, they were the focal point of the city, to remind people in a way, that this was supposed to be their home community.

Q. Well a lot of them were built as pilgrimage shrines and were built to inspire the pilgrims.

Well yes, I can imagine. And I just hope that in the future, particularly in the Medieval ones, that they are able to stay there.

Q. So are you worried that the cathedrals may be lost? Because somebody said this to me the other day?

Well, I think what might happen is, you can see with the requests for donations, they ask that you put in £2.50, but I will be honest with you, you are going to find it very unrealistic for people to do that. I will be honest with you, I put in the equivalent when I went to the refectory and the gift shop. But I think in some cathedrals, they actually watch that you put the money in. And I think what will happen is, unless the Lottery is extended to preservation, you may find that the cathedrals in the future will be passed into private ownership, and that is what worries me, that the commercial aspect will take over.

Q. Well a lot less people are going to church now, and putting the donations in the box every week, that cathedrals are just not getting the money they need to run these places anymore.

Well yes. I know.

Q. Well Chester Cathedral did get money off the National Lottery last year to replace the nave floor.

Oh right, I think that will become an even more important thing in the future. If anything if I have got a criticism of the cathedrals as a whole, is that I think they should not be afraid to have limited access to something like that (pointing to Chapel of Holy Spirit). I mean to be honest at Chester, there is a really nice part of the Cathedral that they have roped off and I don't know why they have done that. But I just think, I don't know, even with this current government, I would not be surprised if the Church of England is forced into passing them into private ownership. And that is what worries me, because you will then see the advertising creeping in here.

Q. And you do not like to see that in cathedrals.

No.

Q. Are you a religious person at all?

I am not a regular visitor to mass. I am not as they say, an 'anorak', but wherever I am in a town or city, I will go into the parish churches, like Kilpeck, I don't know if you have heard of it, it is in Herefordshire, I recommend that you go there. It is one of the oldest chapels in Britain, and it has got like pagan and Christian artwork.

Q. So its got things like the 'Green Man' carved into it?

Yes, things like that. Those old churches on the border of Wales. I like the ruined abbeys like Tintern and Rivelaux, I love going there, just look around. I don't read the guide books or anything, I would rather explore it for myself.

Q. And just look, yes somebody said this to me a couple of weeks ago, he said he didn't buy the guide book because he always ends up looking at the guide book rather than the cathedral.

Yes, one of the biggest bane's of my life is trying to get a decent stained glass window shot with my camera, so sometimes I will buy a guide book just for the pictures of the windows. I did at Lichfield because my pictures just showed blobs of colour. You should go to Lichfield. Anyway, I mustn't keep you any longer.

Q. Ok, thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged female (50s) from Bedfordshire.
Date: 4th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the cathedral today?

I have come as part of a visit to Liverpool, to get to know Liverpool.

Q. Oh really, so you are not a local then?

No, I am from the South of England, from Bedford.

Q. So you wanted to get to know Liverpool, do you have family connections here?

Yes, my family live just outside, and it is a town that I do not know very well, so I bought a guide to Liverpool and one of these walk leaflets and I am doing it in three easy stages.

Q. You are very methodical!

Well it is practical.

Q. So did the guide book tell you to come here?

Well it was part of the route, and I have a friend who is a Christian lady and I know that she used to know the cathedral very well. So it is just part of my itinerary really.

Q. So you have a tick-list of things that you want to see?

Well I am following the route on the guide book.

Q. I see, and what has your experience been like in here today?

Well when I first came in, and I found out how much a second or a minute it costs to run, and I thought, well I didn't ask them to build it in the first place. So that was my immediate response.

Q. So you didn't like that?

Well no. I am not saying it is unreasonable. But I am saying is that this huge extravagant building, what is it about really? But then, I mean as I walked around, I began to think it is really rather wonderful, the fact that it is a modern building but it has all the feeling of a traditional English cathedral. And it is nice because it has all been built more or less in one piece, whereas if you go to other Anglican cathedrals, and of course although they go back centuries, they have become too piecemeal, whereas this has a feeling of oldness about it but it is perfect.

Q. So was it purely an architectural or artistic visit, or did you feel anything else, did you feel any sense of the building's spirituality?

Erm I am not a religious person, but I did actually light a candle today (starts crying).

Q. I see, it must have been the effects of the building on you. Ok I will stop there.

(Decided to stop interview as lady was quite distressed. Had lit candle for recently deceased relative).

Group Composition: Two middle aged (60+) couples from South of England

Date: 4th August 1998.

(Interviewed one female.)

Q. So can you tell me why you came here today?

Well, I first came here in 1982, and my small grandson had just been born, and he had five heart defects, and we never thought that he was going to live but we prayed. He was sent to Liverpool Children's Hospital, and my husband and I were here on the anniversary of his first birthday, and my daughter came into the cathedral to meet us, and we were sat down there near the altar, and she came in and she said 'it is bad news, Richard is so bad they don't think they can do any more for him'.

Q. That must have been terrible.

Well I just had a feeling that everything was going to be all right, and I felt someone say to me, just don't give up hope. Anyway, we then moved him to Harefield, under Professor Jacob and he had another heart operation. And yesterday, on Monday, he started work. Yes, so every time we come up to Liverpool, I always come in here and pray.

Q. To give thanks?

Yes.

Q. Are you from Liverpool?

No I am originally from Blackpool but I now live in the South.

Q. So is this a touristy trip to Liverpool?

Yes, well we have a lot of friends from all over the world, and of course when they come to visit us we bring them to see Liverpool Cathedral.

Q. So this is one of your stopping points.

Oh well the majesty of the place is just so special, to me especially. But nobody could fail to be impressed by the place so that is why we bring our visitors here.

Q. So has it been a good experience?

Oh yes.

Q. And did your visitors enjoy it?

Oh yes, they can't get over the majesty of the place at all. And we were just talking about how they managed to build it without the equipment that we have got today. And we just marvelled at how the people, you know the men, actually managed to build it.

Q. So you feel admiration for the builders as well.

Oh yes, I think you have to. (Pause)

Q. Ok that is it, thank you.

Group Composition: Local couple (60s) and two female tourists (30s) from Japan.

Date: 5th August 1998.

(Interviewed local female).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well we have brought some Japanese guests who are staying with us to see one of the sites of Liverpool.
(Husband: And we live locally so).

Q. Oh I see, you have been here before?

Yes.

Q. So your past experiences have made you want to bring your visitors today?

Yes. (Husband: Well we always bring our visitors to Liverpool and to the Anglican Cathedral, yes.)

Q. What is it about the cathedral which you think would interest your visitors?

Well the fact that it is the biggest (Husband: Yes, the largest Gothic cathedral) and its the biggest in Europe, and we usually go the Roman Catholic Cathedral to show them the difference between the two. (Husband: Its the terrific contrast between the two) Yes, the terrific contrast, and also because it dominates the city and we can see it from the Wirral.

Q. Oh I see, so it is a real landmark of Liverpool?

Yes.

Q. (to the Japanese visitors) And what have your experiences been like here today?

We liked it very much. It is so big and so prestigious, and whenever I go to visit places I will visit the churches.

Q. Do you really? In England, or wherever you are?

Wherever I go. And sometimes I will go to the services at Christmas and Easter in the cathedrals.

Q. Oh I see, so is it a religious visit as well for you?

I am not a Christian, but you know I like to visit because the services and festivals are so nice, with the singing you know?

Q. I see, and has your visit been a positive experience for you today?

Oh yes, very much.

(Visitors want to move on).

Q. Ok that is it, thank you very much.

Group Composition: Younger couple (40s) from the United States.

Date: 5th August 1998.

(Interviewed female)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well, we were on a tour yesterday and it was led by a man from Liverpool, who was very proud of his city, and told us that we should not miss this during our stay here.

Q. And so you took his advice and you came along today?

Yes.

Q. And what has your experience been like?

(Husband: Very impressive, very impressive.)

Q. And do you have cathedrals like this in the United States or Canada?

(Husband: Maybe in New York City, St Patrick's, but we don't have any in the western part of the United States no. So maybe in New York, but even then it is not quite, there is nothing on this size.)

Q. So has this been a novel experience because of that?

Well we have been to other cathedrals. St Paul's and Westminster Abbey, you know, and in France.

Q. And are they a similar experience to this?

No, they are different. This is nice because it is modern, and the man talked about, you know, how they cut the bricks and built it all from local stone. (Husband: And that it was started in 1904 and finished in 1978, which is, you know, that is pretty impressive. So this is relatively new.)

Q. I know, a lot of people when they first see this cathedral, they think it is Medieval.

(Husband: Yes, I know it is amazing who Gothic it looks.)

Q. So, when you go home, if somebody says to you "Liverpool Cathedral", what sort of images will you bring up?

(Husband: Well, what did I say outside, I remember we took a video of it, it is just gargantuan, humongous, you know it is just indescribable. I mean when we first pulled in, that was the main thing that kind of stood out, was this massive building, and I thought what is that? It actually looks bigger from the inside, if that is possible.

(Visitors look as if they want to move on).

Ok that is it, thank you.

Group Composition: Young couple (20s) from Poland.
Date: 5th August 1998.

(Interviewed male)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

To the Cathedral or to Liverpool?

Q. Just to the Cathedral.

Well first of all I would say that this church feels very cold to me, you know?

Q. Really, in what way, in temperature?

No, no. In atmosphere.

Q Does it feel like your idea of 'a cathedral'?

No, no.

Q. Did you feel of sense of God's presence at all?

No, I don't think so.

Q So does it just feel like a big building

Yes a big building. I think there are some nice piece of work, but I am studying the Middle Ages at this time, so if you want to compare this Neo-Gothic with the Middle Ages then I think that there is no comparison, because even though it is nice work that people have done and it may have taken them a long time, in the Middle Ages they took 50-60 years to build each part of a church, to finish it.

Q Oh I see, so the same time and struggle hasn't gone into this one?

Yes, I think that now we want to just, well maybe it is the fault of this 20th century, that we want to have things very quickly and we do not want to wait for things, so that here you could admire something and think it is very nice, but when you move your sight to another piece you can see it was very quick to build, and it seems very strict and very straight, not like Middle Ages.

Q I see, so does it feel like a modern building, or a building of the modern age?

Yes, I had this impression that maybe in the future it will be something were people will say here we tried to make a building that looked like it was built in the 12th century, that that they tried to connect with the past in our modern society, and I don't think it is a nice connection.

Q You feel that it is not a good side of our society?

No

Q Are you going to go to the catholic cathedral?

I have been there.

Q. And what have your experiences been like there, have they been the same as here?

(Laughs). Sincerely it reminds me of my parish church in Poland, it was built in a very quick way with concrete, I don't like concrete buildings you know? But in that cathedral I got the impression that it was a nice place for celebration you know? I could feel that it brought people together, I would like to go there for a celebration to see how it works. I would like to see this church during a celebration also, to see how it is working, because you know if this church was filled with people, then you know maybe their presence would make it much more, I don't know how you say it?

Q. It would give it much more of a cathedral atmosphere?

Yes.

Q. Do you have cathedrals in Poland which are Medieval, I know Poland is mostly Roman Catholic isn't it, do you have Medieval cathedrals there.

Actually, we did have a lot of Medieval cathedral churches but most of them were destroyed in the Second World War. So I don't know, I am not a specialist but I know there is only one old cathedral church in Poland, it is in Krakow, but it was rebuilt from the ruins and it is not very typical of a Polish cathedral now.

Q. Oh what a shame to lose all of your cathedrals.

Yes, everything was destroyed during the War actually. So we do have a number of Neo-Gothic cathedrals also, but I like French Gothic more.

Q. Have you been to any French cathedrals?

Sure.

Q. Have you been to Chartres and Notre Dame?

Yes, I think Chartres is the best. I mean that is what I was saying, it is nice the beautiful work here, but it is not the same.

Q. Ok, that is it, thank you.

Group Composition: Young male (20s) from Spain.
Date: 5th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the cathedral today?

Because it is the first time that I have been in Liverpool and it is a landmark.

Q. What in particular was it about the cathedral which attracted you?

The architecture, and the bigness, huge:

Q. And what has your experience been like here today? What have you felt as you have walked around?

Erm, I feel calm, it is a quiet place.

(Tour party leaves)

Q. I can see your group is leaving please don't let me keep you.

Thank you.

Group Composition: Older woman (40s), younger male (20s) from Devon.

Date: 5th August 1998.

(Interviewed female.)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Because I don't come to Liverpool very often, and I used to come to the Cathedral a lot as a child and I wanted to show it to my grandson Andrew.

Q. So you saw it being built?

Yes, this part wasn't even here when I first came, yes.

Q. Are you from Liverpool originally?

Yes.

Q. So it is a sort of feeling of pride?

Oh yes. It is a lovely cathedral, and to see it again [sighs] I always like to come in.

Q. So is it just for memories or are there any other reasons?

Well, I think it is so impressive, it is nice just to come in and be impressed, you know. Come in and be impressed by it. Just to see something so stupendously big, you know. And also memories, my grandma used to bring me here when I was little, and I was just telling Andrew, I came to a BeeGees concert here in the 60s. (Laughs)

Q. I never knew that, I wouldn't have thought churches would have allowed that back then.

Oh well, Dean Paytee was very trendy at that time you know in those days. (Laughs)

Q. Oh I never knew. Do you live in Liverpool now?

No, I live in Devon.

Q. So you are here as a tourist today?

Yes I am here as a tourist (Laughs)

Q. What has your experience been like today?

It feels the same as usual. I like the smell of the Cathedral, I like the smell of the sandstone, it reminds me of the smell when I used to come in as a child, and I mean it has been lovely just to stand in the central space and just look up, just to look at it. And I went into the gift-shop to look for a card that I bought when I was last here, but I couldn't find it. But you know, it was definitely one of the destinations for me when I came to Liverpool. We have been on the ferry, been on the Mersey, been to the Pier Head, been to the Maritime Museum.

Q. I see so do you have a tick-list of the place which you want to see?

Yes, and after here we are going to the Phil and then to the Catholic Cathedral.

Q. Oh yes, and you will be able to show the contrast between this and the Catholic Cathedral.

Well exactly, that is what I said to him, that is one of the things you should do. I mean really, the Catholic Cathedral is older than this one. I remember when I came in here as a child, and there was all scaffolding and sheets and stuff up you know. So yes, it is just to come and see it is so great, you know?.

Q. Did you try to learn about the Cathedral while you were in here?

No. I wouldn't do that. No. I just want the feeling of the place, it is an emotional thing, not an intellectual thing.

Q. What a good summary to end on. That is it thank you.

Group Composition: Two middle aged ladies (50s) from South of England.

Date: 5th August 1998

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

To the Cathedral?

Q. Yes.

Because I happened to be in Liverpool and I wanted to see the Cathedrals, because I have never seen either of them before.

Q. Really, have you seen them in books or on television before?

No, I just knew that there were two Cathedrals in Liverpool and they are landmarks aren't they? We have been to a couple of the museums and I thought I would quite like to see the Cathedrals while I am here. I just like looking at cathedrals.

Q. In what way, from an artistic viewpoint?

Architectural I think mostly. Not that I am any great expert, but it is just what I like. I like just looking at the buildings basically.

Q. So it is just a visual thing?

Yes and more in-depthly, I like looking at the statues and the carvings and the windows, and the altar, but still in an architectural sort of way.

Q. So was there any spiritual side to your motivations?

Erm, that is not what draws me to cathedrals really.

Q. Do you visit cathedrals often?

Well, wherever I go I tend to visit the cathedrals while I am there. (Laughs) So yes, there are great tourist draws aren't they?

Q. So because of that, do you think that they will guarantee a good experience?

Yes, because they are all different. Some are very, very old and have famous tombs in, and some are like this are very different, very different, and you walk in and you say 'Gosh', and you walk further up the aisle and you see this vast space, and it is really quite pretty inside because of this sandstone, it is much warmer than a lot of the grey stone that other cathedrals are built with. But of course this it has its own place as well, it is all of its time as well, as architecture should be of its time.

Q. Actually it is interesting you should say that, have you been to the Catholic Cathedral yet?

Not yet, that is next.

Q. Do you prefer older cathedrals or modern ones, or do you not mind?

I don't like very stark modern things, that are very minimalist, that is not the sort of thing I like to see at all. I think I like the more traditional I suppose.

Q. So it doesn't bother you to the extent that you wouldn't visit. Or would you say, 'oh look this is a modern building, I was expecting old'?

Well, it wouldn't, but then you see I would not call this modern, I would call this traditional. I am not so sure about the Catholic one. I think I will have to visit before I make up my mind.

Q. Yes, I think once you get in there, a lot of people say they are very surprised by their experience.

Really to me a cathedral speaks of ancient times really, because they are not built these days. So to find something really modern and stark, I don't think I like it.

Q. So you have an image of what a cathedral should look like?

Yes, you do don't you? We all do. Yes, because by and large Anglican cathedrals are old. I was just saying that my daughter lives in Nottingham, and the one cathedral in Nottingham is a Catholic cathedral, there isn't an Anglican Cathedral there. Southwell Minster I suppose is there closest Anglican Cathedral.

Q. Well I think they have diocese which cover different areas.

Yes.

Q. So what has your experience been like today?

I think this is quite beautiful actually.

Q. Has it been a positive experience?

Yes, yes, I really do like it.

Q. And has it been an architectural experience like you were expecting?

I don't think I actually had any expectations really. My mother in law who brought me had said as we were travelling here, 'oh it is such a huge space inside, but wasted space'. But we differ on that, because I don't see it as wasted space, because what would you do with that space up there? I think the acoustics must be wonderful, I would love to hear the organ.

Q. Oh yes, it is the second largest in the world, and when they have an organ recital they always play Bach's Toccata and Fugue.

Oh I bet that is deafening! I would really love to hear that actually, I should think that that is magnificent.

Q. Is music important for you when you pay a visit to a cathedral?

Yes.

Q. You would like to hear music when you visit?

Yes. I have sometimes been in cathedrals where organs have been played, obviously the organist is only practising, but I think it adds something to it. It makes it a bit more of a church than just a monument.

Q. I see. So instead of just being a large building?

Yes, you feel that something is happening in there.

Q. That is very interesting. When you go home, what sort of images of the Cathedral will you take with you?

Well I have friend who also likes to go to churches and cathedrals and I shall tell her that this is one that she has to come and see. I think because it is different. I really like it, I will have a positive image that I will take away.

Q. What a good summary. That's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from Kent.
Date: 5th August 1998.
(Interviewed wife)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Erm, I just like looking at cathedrals. Wherever we go we always look at churches and cathedrals, whether we are in the country or the city really.

Q. Do you mind if it is a modern cathedral like this, or do you prefer an old cathedral?

Well, I prefer the older ones, but having said that I have not been to the, is it the Catholic one?

Q. Yes. Are you going to go to that?

Well, we will probably walk past it, but we probably won't bother actually going in, and that will be just to do a comparison really.

Q. Yes, the are extremes on either end of the scale really aren't they?

Oh yes.

Q. So what drew you to this one today? Is it the art or the architecture?

No, not really, I don't know what it is really, I have just always liked to go in them. I think it is just the workmanship really.

Q. So you are admiring the people who built them?

Oh yes. Definitely.

Q. Is there a spiritual side to your visit?

Erm, well I suppose there must be in a way really. I mean I have always been brought up with the church and what have you. But the main thing is, we came to Liverpool for the first time, I think was it two years ago? And we didn't get a chance to see the Cathedrals, but they dominate the skyline really don't they? So we have come here today with our daughter, she wanted to go to the art gallery, the Tate Gallery, so she has gone off into town now and we have come here. (Laughs)

Q. Oh I see, she is shopping, and you are the cultural ones?

Oh yes.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

Well I just can't get over the vastness of it really. It really is wonderful, the size of it, you just can't imagine. Well even from outside, I mean I said I have got a crick in my neck from looking up, it is so tall. I said to him, I wish my daughter had come with us really because you just could not explain to anybody what it is like, the size of it.

Q. I know, you have to experience it yourself haven't you? What sort of images will you take home with you?

Erm, well I think that we go in a lot of cathedrals and they are very fussy aren't they, there is a lot of carvings and a lot of wood, we were saying that in here it is nearly all stone, there is hardly any wood at all, which is unusual. And erm, I think the fact that it is so open, because a lot of cathedrals have got very tiny little rooms and are partitioned off and make smaller areas, whereas here it is very very open, which just gives it that image of size really doesn't it. (Husband: I think also the fact that it more or less took one man, it was one man's life's work really.) Yes we were reading about him, I mean he was twenty when it was commissioned, and he was retiring when it was finished!

Q. Yes, he died before it was completed.

(Husband: I think the whole project as a whole, must have been such a vast project to embark on really.) Well at the age of twenty that is the most amazing thing, I remember myself at twenty! I think that it is just so simple as well.

Q. Yes, so there is a bit of the modern age in it as well isn't there?

Yes.

Q. Has your idea of modern architecture changed after being in here?

Well I just don't like modern architecture really, I mean wherever you walk, if you don't look up, then it is all modern isn't it. I mean if you look at a lot of buildings as you go through cities, we are originally from Manchester, and I mean if you look up, you will see all of the old buildings and architecture, but if you just walk just looking through shop windows and what have you then it is all modern and I don't like it at all.

Q. So coming here is quite different then isn't it?

Oh yes, I mean if you go to the Albert Dock. The first time we went there, the University were doing a film about it, weren't they? And I got lumbered with another interview didn't I (Laughs). Anyway, they asked me what did I think of the Albert Dock and I said I thought it was wonderful, because near where we lived, they had just done Salford Quays, and it was just like 'Lego Land', it was just horrible. It was just a let down. And then when you come here, and you see what they are doing with all of the original ideas, there is no comparison to the old really, so I just don't like modern architecture at all, I like looking at something that looks as though it has had some thought put into it, and actual craftsmanship as well.

Q. So it is not just what it looks like, but the actual attitude it was built with?

Yes. What has gone into it.

(Husband: Well I think so, it has got to have some sort of character to it hasn't it? And the character comes from the actual workmanship) Well the old architecture has not been done by machines, it is all done by hand, when you look at the scaffolding they had to build these places with, it is wooden poles (laughs).

Q. So today's buildings are not of the same value to you?

Oh no they are not. There is no effort gone into them really.

Q. So is that why you are not that bothered about going to the Catholic Cathedral?

Well probably I suppose so (Husband: Well given the choice of the two, I think I would pick to come here first). Yes. I didn't know that this place was the biggest in the UK either. (Husband: I mean the other place

is not the same is it, if you look at it. It is not as imposing.) Oh no it is not. I mean the style and the ideas of these places will just go on forever and ever and ever, while these modern places will look dated won't they. (Visitors look like they wanted to move on).

Q. Ok, that is great, please don't let me keep you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (40s) from Coventry.

Date: 7th August 1998.

(Interviewed wife)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

To the Cathedral or to Liverpool?

Q. To the Cathedral.

Well it is so nice, and you can't not come in can you? And I am a Christian and I like the old churches rather than the new ones that they are building now.

Q. So you like this more than say the Catholic Cathedral?

Oh yes. My husband has been in the Catholic Cathedral and he wasn't impressed with it were you? (Husband: No I wasn't impressed with it at all, whereas this is phenomenal, absolutely. I mean when you look at the stonework, some of that stonework it looks more like it is made of wood or lace and all sorts of things. Its the craftsmanship). Well it is what you expect a cathedral to look like.

Q. So even though it was only finished 20 years ago and was built in this century?

Yes. You still have this thing in your mind of what a church is and what one should look like. The church I go to is a quite modern one and I find that you don't the same sort people coming as you would to the old type cathedrals.

Q. Oh that's interesting.

Yes, because they use it as a hall as well as a church, and you don't get that same sort of feeling when you walk in, of it being a church. You know?

Q. So is it because people have prayed here for many years.

I think that is really true, particularly with the really old cathedrals, they have that sort of ambience, there is nothing of that in the new churches, it is very sterile, whereas this, I mean the colours in the stained glass, I mean you could sit here for hours and nobody would move you out. I don't believe in the idea of locking churches, I know have to because of the vandals, but years ago you used to be able to walk in any church, which you can't do now, which I believe is wrong. But it is just the atmosphere, you even talk hushed, there is no shouting, and you couldn't imagine a toddler play group playing in here as they do in our church. And it is just the churches should be separate, they are somewhere to be quiet in.

Q. I see, is it important for you to have quiet when you come in here?

Yes.

Q. Because there are hundreds of tourists in here a lot of the time. I mean if you come in at about 1pm, there will be a lot of coach parties coming in, would that detract you from your experience?

I don't think it would because whatever lifestyle you have, I mean everybody acts different in a church than to what they do outside. Do you notice even with the tourists coming in, you get that same sort of hush as soon as they get through the door?

Q. Oh definitely, as they come in they are chattering, but then they quickly become very quiet.

Oh yes, everything goes quiet, because that is the sort of atmosphere you expect.

Q. So has it been a positive experience today?

Oh yes.

Q. Is this the first time that you have been to the Cathedral?

It is here. But I am from Coventry, and we have a new Cathedral there, because the old one was bombed out during the war. But the old one is next to it, and my mother still prefers the old Cathedral.

Q. So is the old Cathedral just a shell?

(Husband: Yes, it is a shell).

Q. And what do you think of the new modern Cathedral?

Humph! (Husband: Well I saw it being built, so yes, I'm quite erm) I like it but there are some bits of it I don't like, you know like the spires. (Husband: Yes it is a modern one, and it is modern you have to understand that, everything about it is modern. Even though it was built many years ago now, let's see 1960 something, it is still very modern, whereas this is old, regardless of when it was built, it has got nothing to do with it.) Yes, they still built it in the old style.

Q. So has your perception of modern architecture changed after being in here? Do you think that we can still build things in the style of the old cathedrals, that we still have the skills?

(Husband: I am glad to see that the skills are still there, that is the most important part. It's the fact that the skill to be able to work something that is well as hard and as difficult as stone, the stone can still be made to look like lace or wood or anything else, and to see it, as we were saying before when we came in, it's phenomenal isn't it. It really is a marvellous place.)

Q. So do you feel different after being in here?

(Husband: Oh yes. Erm, yes, when we looked at it from the outside when we first came, because of all the stingers [nettles] and all the rest of it on the outside) Yes, that's a shame. (Husband: I kept saying that the ought to have a gardener, and then we came round, I mean I couldn't believe it when we came through, because you suddenly come from that into this. You know, it is almost as if someone has drawn a line and said this is wilderness and this is now the church. And you could almost imagine you know a bubble effect, and it is in a bubble, like a time-bubble if you like, erm and you walk from one to the other, and it is a definite feeling of separation).

Q. I see so you are leaving the outside world, out there?

Yes.

(Felt visitors wanted to move on.)

Ok thank you.

Group Composition: Female (20s) from United States.

Date: 7th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come today?

Erm, I am a Christian and I am saved and born again. And I just wanted to see what people have done in the churches here, and how they look. To magnify His name.

Q. I see, so it was predominantly a religious visit?

Yes.

Q. And what have you experienced while you have been in the Cathedral today?

I just looked at it, and saw the beauty and how they created things long ago, and you know, that God gave them the power to create such beauty with their hands.

Q. So you admire the people who built the Cathedral?

Yes, I admire their faith and the gift that God had given them, he has given them a great gift to have this talent, I mean he was 22 years old the guy that designed it, and it is breathtaking to know that God made us as humans to do so much.

Q. I see, when you go home, and somebody says to you "Liverpool Cathedral", what sort of images will you bring up?

Erm, just the beauty, the overwhelming building, there is just no way that you can describe it, that is why I took some photographs (laughs).

Q. Yes you have to actually come here to experience the proportions of the place don't you?

Oh yes. My husband's grand-parents live here, and we wanted to see them and then his cousin is having a wedding and we have come here for that, and our third reason for coming here was to see the cathedrals.

Q. Really? So you are going to visit a lot of cathedrals while you are here?

Yes, we are going to try.

Q. Are you going to the Roman Catholic Cathedral?

I am not sure, because there is a whole group of us so, it is up to everybody.

Q. So it is a group visit?

Yes. We are going to Cheshire next. My cousin is getting married at Cheshire Cathedral tomorrow.

Q. Is she? well I am doing research there, I was there a couple of weeks ago. That Cathedral is over a thousand years old, so you will probably feel a difference there.

Oh I'm sure. Anyway I seem to have lost my family.

Q. Oh please don't let me keep you.

Group Composition: Older Couple (70s) from Stockton on Tees.

Date: 7th August 1998.

(Interviewed Male.)

Q. So can you tell me why you have decided to visit the Cathedral today?

Well we normally visit cathedrals I suppose. Liverpool is a bit unique because it has two cathedrals built this century, so we thought we would visit both of them. We have visited the Roman Catholic one first and this one second. We have come to Liverpool for a few days because we have never been to Liverpool before.

Q. So you are tourists?

(Wife: Oh yes, definitely tourists) We come from the other side of the country.

Q. Really, where are you from?

Stockton-on-Tees.

Q. Oh, I know somebody who lives in Thornaby.

Oh yes, we know it well. In fact, Stockton was called Stockton and Thornaby at one time. Anyway, we decided we would spend a few days in Liverpool to look at the place. (Wife: We knew we would see the cathedrals).

Q. So that was on your tick-list then of the things you wanted to see in Liverpool.

Yes. (Wife: We take our time, we don't want to see them in a rush, in one day). So with this one, we have had a nice walk around.

Q. Really, I was about to say, what have your experiences been like while you've been here?

(Wife: Well for me, wonder and awe). We think it lacks wonder and awe. (Wife: Well not completely, it is so big). Well all cathedrals are big. (Wife: No they are not, they are not all as big as this. The contrast between the two Cathedrals is just, oh they are at opposites). The thing I noticed going around today, was how few visitors there were, and in the Roman Catholic one there were even fewer.

Q. Are you surprised at that?

Oh very surprised. (Wife: Not very surprised). Oh you go ahead and answer the questions then. (Wife: Well you were saying because it was away from the town, but Liverpool is a city and not everybody goes to cities). No, what I said, was that there would be many more people in York Minster today, than in both these Cathedral put together, many more.

Q. True, this Cathedral gets about half the amount of visitors of York Minster.

Yes.

Q. Why do you think that is?

Well, its new isn't it.

Q. So its the age of the building which you think is attractive to people?

(Wife: Oh yes) Oh of course.

Q. So even though this looks old?

It does look old. We noticed this, it does look old, even the steps look worn. And I said as went down the stairs going towards the Lady Chapel in particular.

Q. Well that is the oldest part of the Cathedral, they have been there for ninety years.

(Wife: Yes, we were very impressed with the Lady Chapel, it is not often that you will get one quite as big as that. But I don't know. It doesn't give me a feeling of religion if you like. [Laughs]) Well the first thing you are greeted with is 'come and look at the menu for our refectory'. It was the first greeting with both of them. The second thing is 'it costs £2, or please give £2 minimum'.

Q. Do you not like that?

Well, it is necessary. (Wife: I think there are other ways, I prefer something like that [pointing to collection box] which doesn't stipulate anything. I think there are nicer ways of doing it, we know it has to have an upkeep, I don't mind that, but I think most people don't like being told).

Q. So do you feel it is to commercial?

(Wife: Yes, I can understand they have to be because it must cost a colossal amount to keep this place going). I mean I have been to Notre Dame, let's see about fifty years ago, and Notre Dame is like a market, they were selling things everywhere. (Wife: But that is what they were originally weren't they). Oh sure, but what does St Peter's in Rome tell you when you go in there? It is magnificent and all the rest of it, but the first thing that greets you is 'were the biggest, we are the heighest, look we have the marks on the floor to prove it, St. Paul's only comes to this line' (laughs). (Wife: Yes you get a little bit lost and you think, where is the real religion?)

Q. So do you feel that having the shop, and asking for a certain amount of money, does it make it feel like a tourists attraction?

(Wife: Yes!) Yes, I am not saying you shouldn't do that. (Wife: Yes, I understand why they need the shop and everything.) But should it be the first thing that greets you. You are given the menu in the refectory, its saying 'come and eat' instead of come and worship. (Wife: It does give you more of a feeling of a tourist attraction, yes).

Q. So your perception has changed?

(Wife: Yes it does). Well you don't say where is it going? You say what is of interest? (Wife: I mean when you walk around you think this is marvellous, but what is it all for? I think what is it all about). But it is nice, it has got some good things about it. (Wife: Oh I am glad we came to see it. I wouldn't have missed it.) Yes, the stained glass windows at the end are phenomenal. I don't mean the stained glass itself, I am not an expert or anything, but the way it is designed gave an impression of trees, you have to stand a fair way back to see it, but that's rather clever. To old eyes in particular some of the stained glass is too bitty.

Q. Is it?

Yes, you have to strain your neck to see what the pictures are.

Q. Does it not come up to your expectations of what stained glass in cathedrals should be?

(Wife: Not necessarily that, its just that there is stained glass and stained glass. But looking at this, there is a problem for me, it is too complex for the eyes, that might be because I am old, but I can still admire it. I mean the work that must have gone into it, its just unbelievable.) There are a lot of organs as well in this one.

Q. Oh yes, it has one of the biggest in the world.

Does it? (Wife: Well now that would be of great interest to an organist.)

Q. Yes, that is an interesting point. If the organ had been playing, or a choir had been singing would that have affected your visit at all?

(Wife: Oh it definitely would have given you a different feeling.) Mind you, we are not very religious. (Wife: But at the same time I think we did feel something.) I mean, to be fair, we visit cathedrals the same way as we visit the Liver Building, and the docks and the steamer across the Mersey.

Q. So it is a site-seeing visit?

(Wife: I wanted to see Liverpool for a long time, I mean there are a lot of cities that I haven't seen or don't want to see, but Liverpool is one that I wanted to see. I thought it had something to give).

Q. It has more novelty?

(Wife: Maybe because it has more history.) And it's to do with the sea. Anyway, we have to go, but I'll just say that the reason we came here was because were heard Liverpool has two Cathedrals and they were both built this century, and there probably aren't many other cities that can say that. (Wife: And they are worth seeing.)

Q. So they have fulfilled your expectations would you say?

Oh yes.

Q. And you have had a positive experience?

(Wife: Oh yes, and I think it is wonderful to have the two so contrasting) We didn't know about the troubles at the other one, about the ceiling. I think they have just about managed to fix it now. (Wife: Somehow or other, because we always associate cathedrals with age, and some of the biggest are so old, and even though they are crumbling, they don't have the same problems, so we were rather surprised to find a new one that was having those problems.) It is not as good as Durham of course. (Wife: But he said that when we went to Canterbury). Anyway, good luck with your thesis.

Q. Thank you for stopping.

Group Composition: Single male (70s) from the United States.

Date: 7th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why me why you have come to the cathedral today?

Well I tend to collect cathedrals, particularly British cathedrals.

Q. Oh that is interesting?

Well not really, I just think they are so wonderful as pieces of architecture. I am not religious myself, but I admire the beauty of cathedrals.

Q. The beauty of any English cathedrals or Gothic cathedrals.

Oh Gothic. I am an American, and we don't have Gothic architecture except like St Patrick's and St. Johns in New York, which are fake Gothic. They are beautiful churches I'm not arguing on that point. I mean St Patrick's is beautiful.

Q. Yes it. I have been there.

But it doesn't have the history. I mean I am interested in history, in the history of Britain, and in English literature and English architecture, and English history.

Q. Are you descended from English people?

My father's side of the family was Scots, and my mother's side is Irish and German, so there is a link, but it is many generations back.

Q. I see, and so is it a purely architectural visit for you then?

Yes, it is for the sheer pleasure of the hugeness, the serenity and the architecture.

Q. Do you try and learn about actual facts about the architecture when you are in the cathedrals?

I usually learn something, but I know a lot about Gothic architecture to fill in.

Q. So coming here you are experiencing what you have learned about in the past?

I would say certainly yes.

Q. So coming to Liverpool today was a purely architectural interest?

Coming up here, I went to the museums a day or two ago, and I went to the Catholic Cathedral yesterday, because my hotel is quite near it. So I went there on the first afternoon. And so that left me with this Cathedral to come to, because I thought I had better see both.

Q. Oh yes, many visitors say that. And what has your experience been like in here today?

Very interesting. But I wonder about the value of duplicating a Gothic cathedral in the twentieth century, I am not sure. I certainly think it works, in the sense that Scott simplified the Gothic a great deal. But the idea that any one man, or even two men or five men, could conceive something as multiple as this is

fascinating. Again, that is one reason I came, it is like going to Chartres, there is not experience like it in the world.

Q. So you feel admiration for the people who designed and built the Cathedral?

Oh my, yes!

Q. A lot of people have been saying this during my research. They are amazed who people managed to build something like this.

Well that is the thing that astonishes me. I am not sure that you can build - and I am speaking as someone who was raised as a Roman Catholic and who's father was what you would call Anglican - but I am not sure you can build a religious building in the twentieth century, and certainly not on this grand scale. However, if you had to, this would be a very good way of doing it. I have compared this with the Metropolitan Cathedral and thought the interior of that Cathedral works very well. I am not sure about the exterior, but the lighting is wonderful inside. The glass here is very interesting and very good, I mean, again does one make stained glass in the twentieth century? I am not sure you can get away with it. When you see a stained glass window of say the 'Tree of Jesse' which was made in the fourteenth century, that's a different matter, but I think the Cathedral works. I am just a little hesitant about accepting it entirely, because it looks to me as if Scott, having conceived of it, also had to think, what am I going to do with it? You can see he simplified the Gothic down, and yet every once in a while he goes berserk on a piece of Gothic tracery or something.

Q. So when you go home, if somebody says to you "Liverpool Cathedral" what sort of images will you bring up?

As I say, I got the same impression that I always get in cathedrals, which is of beauty, peace, particularly the harmony of the architecture. I have always felt that since I was quite young.

Q. So has it fulfilled your expectations?

Oh my, yes (laughs).

Q. And has it been a positive experience?

Oh yes, although an inauthentic one, although it is a different experience to the fake Romanesque of St Patrick's and St John the Divine. I don't know if you ever visited St. John the Divine?

Q. No I never made it up that far, it is in Harlem?

Yes, about 110th Street. Anyway it was originally it was built by a man, who was like Scott, who studied classical architecture and Greek architecture, and they built a Romanesque dome over the crossing. And then some later person decided that they wanted a Gothic cathedral so the whole apse is being built in the Gothic style, including the towers. However, there are no people that know how to do the carvings. You see, they are determined to have a Medieval facade, why I don't know, because it is what you would call Church of England. But it is a fake Medieval Gothic cathedral.

Q. Yes, it looks like Notre Dame or Chartres doesn't it?

Yes, and it is brick underneath, I don't know if you know that. St Patrick's is built the way Americans build buildings, with a steel frame and bricks. And then they have put this Gothic facade over it, and then at St. Johns, they have had to go everywhere to find stonemasons. Of course nowadays they are not carving the ways the did in Medieval times, they are blasting stone into shape with machines.

Q. Yes, I was about to say, you can use machines to do all that sort of thing now.

Yes, but they had to go to Italy to find sculptures, and what they are doing now at St. Johns is they have got these sculptures to train young people, who are often poor, to give them a specialised trade, so that they carry it on.

Q. Isn't that a good thing that the cathedrals are keeping these skills alive that would otherwise be lost?

Yes, there is no other way. But no one today is willing to do what people did in the 1400's, and that is what I mean about can you build a cathedral today? It is a matter of attitude towards other people that we have cathedrals. I mean in the Medieval era cathedrals were built to keep people in awe of the church. People's attitude towards Christianity is now different. The church no longer tries to subjugate the population, so why carry on building the cathedrals? I mean all you are doing is building it to be a grand building. So then you may as well build it to be a skyscraper or an airport. As I walked over here today I was thinking about airports, and that they are manifestly a product of the latter half of the twentieth century. They are all identical, it looks as if the same guy has sat down and designed the same chairs, those awful plastic chairs, and they all have a McDonald's etc. Of course Americans do that, but the rest of the world seems to be doing the same thing.

Q. Isn't that done to make people less anxious when they are travelling though. If they get on and get off at the same type of place, it reduces the stress of being in a strange country or environment?

That could be, but then why travel?

Q. Well, in here you will see a lot of coach tours who come in here they choose to travel in that way because they are in a safe environment.

When I was 22, a friend and I went to Italy to see his family, and we resolved that we were not going to be involved with any tour groups, we were not going to take any pictures of ourselves standing on the steps of the Louvre or a cathedral, and we lived up to it of the whole two months we were there. I came here for twelve weeks. But my point is that when we saw the tour groups coming, we ran. No you go to a cathedral and there are tour groups coming in every twenty minutes. I am appalled. I mean Liverpool doesn't get it because it is not on the main tourist route. I mean Liverpool is not a place that anyone is going to come to, unless to see something specific.

Q. Yes, if you got to Chester Cathedral you will see hundreds of tour groups, because Chester is on the main coach tour run. Why did you not want to be part of the tourist crowd?

Well because we wanted to do it ourselves, because we were two fairly bright twenty-two year olds and between us, we could see what stained glass was, and we could evaluate what was beautiful and what wasn't.

Q. So you didn't feel that anxiety about being alone in a strange country?

Oh heavens no. No I am a freelance writer, and I was a professor of English, so many years ago I started writing. And the first country I wrote about was Surinam in South America, a place where nobody goes to, even today. My point is that to get a story written I can't be on a tour bus, where I get twenty minutes in Liverpool Cathedral or twenty minutes in the Metropolitan or the Albert Dock or the Tate. So I by travelling at my own pace, I am able to write many articles. But I have to see the place and I can't come here on a tour bus and really see this place, I have to go to the town and stay there, and meet people, talk to them and do the background research, but then of course I am an academic.

Q. Oh yes, you are reflecting your job even in your vacation time.

Yes so that is why I came to Liverpool for a few days because I may write something in the future. Anyway, I have kept you for long enough.

Q. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from Gatwick.

Date: 10th August 1998

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well because we particularly wanted to see this Cathedral and the Catholic one. But we are very impressed with this, it is quite a stunning building and I am interested in architecture.

Q. Are you? So you are visiting from an experts point of view?

Oh no, an amateur expert. What else can I say? Oh I like the style because it was built on Norman style, it has that Norman influence about it, you know the grandeur of the Normans. (Husband: Well this has got a permanence about it, where as the Catholic Cathedral, being made of new materials and new techniques which hadn't been tried and tested, and which have proved to be actually a failure, it looks as if it is going to collapse at any moment. It's not a permanent structure; it's more like a prefab.)

Q. So it doesn't feel like a cathedral?

No, absolutely not at all. (Husband: Well my view of cathedrals is that it is something that you should leave for future generations, erm, and you have to got an idea of permanence when you are constructing it. It shouldn't be 'what can we do which is novel, that has never been done before', like they did at the Catholic Cathedral. A cathedral should say, 'what is going to last, what can we leave for the next generations to come', and I didn't get that impression over there. I felt well, its here, but will it be here in fifty years time? Or even thirty years time? Or will the whole lot go down?) Well it is like the 1960's, were people were trying to be clever with architecture. I mean we have got architectural friends who were practising in the 1960's, and their buildings are being pulled down now, so it makes you wonder about modern buildings. But this has got such a wonderful, it has got an air of serenity in it and it is so impressive. I mean our first view of it was last night, and it was from the Albert Dock, and we turned and just saw it in the sunlight. The sun was just setting and it just looked so stunning. But it is such an impressive building. (Husband: Well we said to our friend David, who is the architect, lets hope he never finds out that they haven't put a lavatory on the roof with four spotlights on it, because if he finds out it hasn't been done, he will want to be the first [laughs]. And that is what they were thinking in the 50's and 60's, it was all about 'must be modern, must be new, tear down the old'. They weren't thinking what was going to happen later, they just thought about that particular moment in time.) We were saying earlier this morning that cathedrals quite often evolved over a great period of time, but this took considerably longer than the Catholic Cathedral. But what fascinated us is that there is a Catholic church near were we live, which is near Gatwick Airport, it is a circular church like that, so it was interesting to go and see a larger version. (Husband: Yes it was built around the same time, so obviously it was the in-thing to do then was to build a circular church.) We were talking to a member of staff up there before, I don't know what you call them?

Q. One of the stewards?

No no, a member of the clergy.

Q. A canon?

Yes, anyway he was saying that in the Catholic Cathedral that the seats can't be moved, that they are permanent. But here you can use your space, which is what would have happened in Norman times, and that sort of thing, which I think is starting to happen again now.

Q. This is a modern building, but it looks old, do you mind that?

It doesn't bother me at all because we again live near Guildford in Surrey.

Q. Oh yes, I was there earlier this year.

Yes, well I like it, but my husband doesn't. I think the inside is quite nice, but it is very plain, and it is in a lovely situation on Stag Hill, isn't it?

Q. Yes it is very austere inside, but I liked it.

I don't like the outside. Well it looks like an electricity power station or something doesn't it? It has got no - from the exterior - it has got no feeling to it. But I do like the interior, but you don't do you? (Husband: No, I am not moved much by it. But this one I like very much.)

Q. Because of its style?

(Husband: No, because it has got this air of permanence about it, it feels as if it is going to last, I don't even get that in Guildford Cathedral, I think anytime now, they could sell it off as a multi-story car park or something.) Oh yes, this feels as if it could go on. (Husband: It just doesn't have an air of permanence about it.) This has, it is big and it is solid, and the stone is such a gorgeous colour isn't it? And looking at the stonework, like over there, it is elaborate, it is all broken up, so it doesn't look like a flat wall, its got features in it.

Q. I see, so it is different from the modern in that way?

Oh yes.

Q. Do you prefer older cathedrals?

Oh yes, I think Durham and Winchester and Salisbury, I think that we can say we do really. (Husband: Oh yes).

Q. A lot of people I have interviewed have said that, they say it is about the age.

Well that is what sets your imagination racing doesn't it? I mean have you been to Hexam Abbey? Well if you go there, down in the bowels of the earth, they have got the original little Saxon chapel.

Q. Oh it is like Ripon.

Yes, yes exactly. And it is stunning. And Ripon is lovely. But I think it is the sense of people, you know you stand and you imagine. But you could almost do that here because it is built on those sort of lines. But we were in Venice last year and I mean the churches there are so ornate.

Q. Well the further south you go in Europe the more ornate churches become, because of the Arabic influence.

Yes. (Husband: Oh yes, my favourite church in Venice was the Greek Orthodox Cathedral, I could have spent all day in there just sitting, because there is such an air of peace, peace and serenity in there.) But then a funny thing is, the man we were talking to this morning, he said there was a Greek Orthodox Church here.

Q. Yes, not far from here at all.

I would have liked to have seen that. But as I said we have thoroughly enjoyed this. I mean we have come back this afternoon, we were here this morning, because we wanted to see the view from the tower. But I think it is a stunning building.

Q. Would you recommend other people to come here?

Definitely.

Q. And has it fulfilled your expectations?

Oh over.

Q. Because you said you saw it last night. Is that what inspired you to visit?

Not just that, we wanted to see Liverpool. And we are amazed that there is so much to see and do in Liverpool.

Q. Really?

Oh yes.

Q. So has this changed your perception of Liverpool after being here and experiencing it?

I think anybody in the South, it is quite true, north of Watford, it is all chimneys and black smoke. I mean we have been to Northumberland, we love Northumberland, and the North East, but never the North West. But here, we are amazed at the architecture as we walked up towards the Pier Head.

Q. Yes, it was a very rich city at one time.

Well we were thinking of going to the Walker Art Gallery, its on my list.

Q. Well if you go around that area you will see some amazing Neo-Classical architecture. Especially St. George's Hall which has a beautiful mosaic floor which you will like, if you like the old architecture.

(Husband: Well we are only in Liverpool until Wednesday, so we are on an American tour, we are racing around to see as many things as possible, so we can we pick out the ones that when we come back, we can have a more in-depth look at. I mean my wife likes the pre-Raphaelites and so do I, but we disagree on the Italians. When we were in the Sistine Chapel, by the time we came out, I said to myself, if I see one more pudding-faced virgin with one more pudding faced child I will scream. Not a bit of expression on their faces.) One day at Padua it was pouring with rain, so we spent the whole day in the Souven Chapel, I mean he didn't like it, but I thought it was quite stunning. (Husband: Well I didn't quite believe it to be quite honest. The frescos were far too fresh, and I said to my wife, these frescos have been restored, they have been re-painted. They are six hundred years old, they couldn't possibly be as fresh as that. The colours were as fresh as the glass over there.)

Q. And would you have preferred it if they had been the six hundred year old frescos?

(Husband: Well I just thought it was a bit of a con trick. I mean they got you in there to see these thirteenth century frescos, but your weren't seeing thirteenth century paint, you were seeing thirteenth century frescos repainted. And we saw a cross, in a museum, and we saw a photograph of it before it was restored, and then of it after restoration, and it could have been two different crosses, there was hardly a speck of paint on the original cross, it was just a bit of wood. So they had completely re-painted this bit of wood, and the said that it was Giotto's cross.

Q. So you wanted to see the authentic thing, no matter how decrepit?

(Husband: Yes.) Well you can't please everyone can you. Anyway we had better go.

Q. Ok, thank you for your time.

Group Composition: Single Male (30s) from Bristol.
Date: 10th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me you have come here today?

Erm, architecture.

Q. Really?

I appreciate architecture, workmanship, stone masonry, carpentry, leaded glass. Erm, I also find that places which were built through beauty and where time is not really relevant, I can think a lot clearer. It is not really not for the Jesus, the God part. Spirituality yes, but I can think clearer.

Q. So your own spirituality?

My own spirituality yes.

Q. Are you an expert in architecture?

Er, I appreciate architecture, but I am not very good at rattling off names and dates and that sort of thing.

Q. So you are an enthusiastic amateur.

I love looking at cathedrals or any type of building.

Q. So do you visit cathedrals a lot for those reasons?

Yes.

Q. Has it been an architectural experience today?

Yes.

Q. In what way? Did you have an emotional or educational experience?

Well, what impressed me about this building is that it has just been finished, whereas everything else was finished hundreds of years ago. There are very few buildings, there are a couple I can think of which are still being built today. Erm, what I said earlier is that there are very few things nowadays which are being built through, well it is all to do with money and time, and it has got to be finished as quickly as possible. There are very few things where a man can work at his best, and produce his best work.

Q. So no craftsmanship.

Very little craftsmanship now. So you come to these places and it is the best a human can produce.

Q. So you admire the builders?

I admire the craftsmanship of the builders yes, and the craftsman which have done it.

Q. So is this cathedral a building of craftsmanship?

Oh yes.

Q. Is it a building of the twentieth century?

The styles obviously go back a long time, but they are still used nowadays, because they are beautiful designs.

Q. Do you think we still have those skills which you spoke of?

No they are dying. I was a carpenter, I am doing a degree next year, I am getting out of the trade. One of the reasons for me giving up the trade is that it is all to do with money and speed and there is no sense of enjoyment. It is just knock it out as quick as you can, get paid for it. Erm yes, so it is a dying trade, very much so. I am not sure there are many people around who can still do it. I have done a bit of travelling and there are people in places like Indonesia, they have got a lot of craftsmen still, but in the West I find that European architecture and European craftsmanship is, or was, the best in the world, and it is dying out you know.

Q. How does that make you feel?

Erm, I think there always will be a handful of people. I don't think it will die out completely.

Q. Has your visit met your expectations?

Oh more so. This is the first time I have been to Liverpool and I am very impressed with the architecture. I thought it would be a lot more run down than it is.

Q. So has it changed your perception of the city coming here.

Yes, very much so.

Q. Ok that is it. Thank you very much for stopping.

Group Composition: Day-trippers - older couple (50s) from Halifax. Tourists - family (teenagers and middle aged adults) from Canada.

Date: 10th August 1998.

(Interviewed female day-tripper)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Because I have my brother and family from Canada, we are from Halifax, and we are trying to find interesting things for them that we haven't visited on their previous trips. And we actually had a wedding on Saturday, my daughter's, and we had to take some hired suits back to Manchester, so because we had to come in this direction, so it was either Blackpool or Liverpool today. I think the weather made our minds up for us (Laughs).

Q. So did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came here?

Yes, well I have been here before.

Q. I see so you are going by your past experiences of the place?

Well yes, I think coming here and coming to the Roman Catholic Cathedral, you see the two extremes, don't you? I don't mean extremes in a bad way, I mean extremes in a good way.

Q. In an architectural sense?

Yes, yes. And the religious sort of, well we are Christians, so it means more than just a building.

Q. So it is not just an architectural phenomenon, there is a religious element?

Yes.

Q. And what has your experience been like today?

Well good. Erm we have wandered around. They like it. The two youngest have gone up the tower. I come from a Methodist family, and we usually have small churches, and it is too big for me (Laughs).

Q. Too big, so that it doesn't feel like a religious building?

No. I mean we have been in the little chapel at the top of the Cathedral and that is fine, but this is too much. Too big.

Q. So there is no sense of God's presence?

No, that is not exactly what I mean. I can't explain it, it hasn't got that intimacy.

Q. Oh I see. So has your visit met your expectations?

Well yes, because it has been what we needed to do for our visitors, and we had a lovely lunch (laughs).

Q. Oh I know what you mean, it's a nice refectory isn't it? So you feel that your visitor have had a good experience?

Yes, we have been to the Catholic one, so we seen the contrasts, and now we are going down to the docks, and that should give them a good day out.

Q. Yes, a lot of people do that.

Yes, we wanted to see the Cathedral first though, that was our priority. I think also that in Canada they haven't got any history as such, so things old, I know this isn't old, but it feels older than it is. But to get the feeling of the buildings that are really old, and the styles from the past is interesting for them, because they don't have them in their own country.

Q. Well this is what I have found at Chester, a lot of ex-colonial residents say that they don't have the history in their own country.

Well, I think that's right. I mean we did Chester last time. Over the last few years, I have had a sort of habit of doing one cathedral per summer, so we have visited a lot of cathedrals actually. We've been to Ripon, and Wells, Lincoln and York Minster of course. So you know, we just like visiting them.

Q. Really, well that is interesting.

Yes, and we're not Anglicans you see, but that doesn't matter. We are Christians and that is all that matters.

Q. Well exactly.

(Pause, felt visitor wanted to move on).

Thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from Sussex.

Date: 10th August 1998

(Interviewed wife).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well, because we like cathedrals.

Q. Really? Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

Well, if we are in a city when we travel somewhere, we will visit the cathedral.

Q. And what is the attraction of these places for you?

Architecture.

Q. Do you prefer older cathedrals or the more modern ones?

We prefer the old, because they have got history haven't they?

Q. I see, so it is the sense of history as well?

Yes.

Q. Have you been to the Catholic Cathedral yet?

No, but we will be.

Q. A lot of people say that they do the two in one day.

Yes, well of the two, this is the one that we wanted to come to the most, because we don't really like very modern buildings.

Q. Did you know that this Cathedral was built in this century before you came here?

Yes. But it looks old, its not very modern in design, and we like that.

Q. Yes, a lot of people think it is Medieval.

Yes, it look like that. I like the stained glass to, that is the other attraction.

Q. Really? Some of the stained glass in here is quite a modern design, do you mind that?

No. I just like looking at the colours.

Q. So it is purely visual for you?

Yes. (Husband: Of course it is the time and effort which has gone into it.) Yes.

Q. That is interesting. Is that one of the reasons why you don't like modern architecture?

Yes. I must admit of all the cathedrals we have seen, York Minster, is my favourite. I still like that the best.

Q. I wonder why?

I think because there is just so much there. This is quite plain or bare really compared with it. This is very spacious isn't it, and at York there is just so much more detail, and the time it has taken to do it. You just imagine the stonemason hundreds of years ago working on it, and how they did it all, wondering how they actually physically did it.

Q. Because they didn't have the technology that we have today?

Well no.

Q. So do you feel admiration for the past builders of cathedrals?

Oh of course, particularly of their skill.

Q. Do you think we still have the skills today?

I don't know. (Husband: No) I don't know today, whether people would have the patience to work so hard. I don't know.

Q. A lot of people have said that.

Well when you think of the sophisticated tools we have got today, compared with what they were using hundreds of years ago, and yet what they could create out of a piece of stone, I really don't know.

Q. I see, what has your experience been like here today?

(Husband: I suppose I was a bit in awe of it really. I was in awe that so much time and effort has been put into it, and it has created such a wonderful building.)

Q. Did you know what it looked like before you came here?

No. (Husband: I had a vague idea or a sort). It is nice, it is very spacious, more spacious than I thought it was going to be actually, the glass is so beautiful. We were too late to go up the tower, but I heard it was too hazy. My son is at University here, and he said to us, you must go up the tower, and look at the view. Anyway, because it was hazy, we decided just to have a walk around the Cathedral and come back another day to do the tower.

Q. Oh yes you can do that. When you go home what sort of images will you have of the Cathedral?

For me the stained glass, it is absolutely wonderful, I have just loved the colours. And just the richness and spaciousness of it. I just expected more clutter. And it is bigger than I thought it would be, I didn't think it was going to be so big inside.

Q. Is it a positive largeness though, or do you feel threatened by it?

No, not at all. It is positive. (Pause)

Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older Couple (60s) from Bournemouth.
Date: 10th August 1998.

(Interviewed wife).

Q. So can you tell me why you are here today?

Well, we are staying on the Wirral with my son, his wife and grandson, and we thought we would come to Liverpool because we have never been here before, and we wanted to see the two Cathedrals.

Q. I see, and where are you from?

We are from near Bournemouth.

Q. So do you visit cathedrals a lot?

Yes, we do. If we go to a new town we will visit its cathedral. And in actual fact, I am a retired teacher, and my main subject was Religious Education, and I have always taught in a girls independent school, I was head of RE. So yes, we did visit lots of churches and cathedrals over the years, and yes it has become part of a hobby.

Q. I see, so you are following something you have done for quite a long time?

Yes, that's right, because we are interested.

Q. So are you interested from purely a religious point of view?

I think its that, and because of the architecture and art, I am interested in all aspects, yes.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

Well this is the first place we wanted to visit today.

(Interrupted by member of public).

Q. I can't remember where I was, oh yes, what have you experienced while you have been here today?

I thought the Cathedral was older than it is. I was very surprised when I found out how new it is. I expected it to be a lot older. On our way here, we could see it from the train, and I said to my husband, 'is it early English, or Perpendicular', we couldn't work it out, and then we found out it was so new.

Q. Were you disappointed because it is so new?

Oh no, I think there is a nice feeling here you know, a lovely atmosphere.

Q. So does it have the same atmosphere as other cathedrals you have been to?

Yes. I think so. You get the feeling that it is a lot older than it is. There seems to be an ancientness to it if you like.

Q. Is that something to do with the architecture?

I think so, we commented on how quiet it was, and we particularly liked the Lady Chapel, didn't we? (Husband: Oh yes). It is lovely down there. And the Virgin Mary statue, I kept thinking it was a real person because it is so lifelike. I thought it was an actual woman kneeling there. And my roots are actually in Salisbury, I was born in the shadow of the Cathedral spire there, and I actually worked in the Cathedral Close for 23 years. But yes, the Elizabeth Fink statue here, made me think of her, because there is a life-size statue of the Virgin Mary in Salisbury Cathedral Close, which I do not care for very much, I will be honest with you now. It is the a depiction of the Virgin Mary when she is old, she is all sort of scraggy and frail, and she seems to be striding in quite a sort of manly way, which doesn't go with the Close.

Q. That is interesting. How do you actually feel about modern art and statues in old cathedrals?

I don't like the modern art here, I don't like the two modern paintings over there in this Cathedral actually.

Q. You don't like the actual paintings or the fact that modern art is in the Cathedral?

I don't like the paintings, they don't go with the architecture, but having said that, this is a modern cathedral and that is what throws me.

Q. Did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came here?

No, not at all.

Q. So just knew that there was a Cathedral in Liverpool and that was enough for you?

Yes, yes we did. We said 'let's make for the Anglican Cathedral' and that was it.

Q. Has it been a positive experience?

Yes.

Q. Would you recommend other people to come here?

I would yes. In fact, our son who lives on the Wirral says he hasn't been, and I said I am surprised, and I will strongly recommend that he does. Oh yes, and we bought two lovely books in the book shop for the grandchildren, so we are perfectly happy with our visit (laughs).

(Pause)

That's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Local couple (50s). Tourists - relatives (adults and older children) from Italy.

Date: 10th August 1998.

(Interviewed local female).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well we have brought a visiting Italian family here, who are the relatives of two people in our family in Liverpool. They have come from Sicily, they have just visited the Catholic Cathedral and now we are visiting this one. We are doing the Liverpool sites (laughs).

Q. I see. Do you have a tick-list of the things you want to see?

Yes, like the Albert Dock and St. George's Hall.

Q. Have you been here before?

I have been, and so has my wife.

Q. So your past experiences prompted you this time?

Yes of course. It is a major site that we would come to see anyway.

Q. And what have their experiences been like today?

(Translated) We have liked it. We prefer to this Cathedral to the modern one.

Q. Can you ask them why that is?

(Translated) Because it is more traditional. And the other one is obviously modern. (Local female: Personally I prefer the Roman Catholic one).

Q. Really?

(Local female: I do. Well its the design isn't it? You either love it or you hate it. It is my personal taste).

Q. Can you ask them whether it has been a positive experience today?

(Translated) Yes it has.

Q. And has it met their expectations?

Oh yes they have liked it. But they think that Italian cathedrals are more ornate, they thought this was quite plain in comparison. But we told them it was part and parcel of the Protestant Tradition, with the destruction of all the icons in the Reformation.

Q. That's right yes. (Pause. Italians began to move out of the door).

Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Two older couples (70s) from South of England.
Date: 12th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

(First Female: We are here on a five day break and we just wanted to see the Cathedrals.)

Q. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

(First Female: Yes, yes we do.) (Second female: Well when we go around the country, we like to go and see them.) (First Male: Or any landmark, we will go to see any landmark, not just cathedrals, we'll go to see bridges or anything man-made.)

Q. So you see cathedrals as landmarks then?

(First Male: As a sort of landmark yes. They are man-made objects and they take a lot of doing and how did they do it?)

Q. I see so when you come here you are admiring the builders?

(First Male: Well a lot of my interest is practical, so it's the architecture.)

Q. I see, so not so much the religious aspects of the building then?

(First Male: No.)

Q. What have your experiences been like here today?

(First Male: Well we have only just arrived and we went down there (pointing along nave) and now we are going up the tower, we are trying to find the entrance to the tower.)

Q. It is just over there. What are your impressions of the Cathedral?

(Second Male: It is very simple compared to the others we have been to. Very plain.) (First Male: Not what I expected. I mean we went to Canterbury Cathedral and it was totally the opposite, it was really detailed and I was really impressed by that.) (Second Male: This is just a building.)

Q. Does it feel like a cathedral?

(Second Male: No.) (First Female: No.)

Q. It just feels like a big building?

(First Female: Yes.) (Second Male: It feels like a big garage.)

Q. I wonder why that is?

(Second Male: Because it has got no atmosphere.)

Q. So what gives a cathedral atmosphere would you say?

(First Male: The effigies, the tombs. They have only got about three bronze figures laid, you don't know why those particular three. While at Canterbury Cathedral it was totally different. This is a much younger cathedral isn't it, that's the difference isn't it?) (First and Second Females: Yes.)

Q. So it is the age which is the difference?

(First Male: Yes.)

Q. So really old cathedrals have got the atmosphere you were talking about?

(Second Male: Oh yes.) (First Male: Yes they've got more character than this.)

Q. Because this is so plain?

(First Male: Yes too plain and too new.)

Q. Does it feel like a religious building?

(First Male: No, no. The stained glass windows do, but beyond that its not erm, its a bit too plain. I mean all these blocks have been machine cut, and to me, it's a building put together like too easily.)

Q. So being machine cut, not has much effort has been put into it then?

(First Male: No, no. Mechanical means have put these blocks together I think, whereas the old ones were put together with manual labour and ingenuity. I mean at Canterbury I was asking myself 'how did they get that big stone on the top of that one?')

Q. So you admire the builders of the old cathedrals?

(First Male: Basically yes.)

Q. When you go home, if somebody says to you "Liverpool Cathedral" what sort of images will spring to mind?

(Second Male: Plain. Second Female: Not a cathedral as such.) (First Male: It is too new, it hasn't got as much going for it, and you can tell by the number of visitors, I mean at Canterbury Cathedral it was packed. I mean you were talked around that, you had guides, taking groups around and explaining things, and you could get the cassette thing.)

Q. An audio tour?

(First Male: Yes, and wherever you walked in a certain direction it was explaining what this and that was, who did this, who did that, all these heads had been knocked off at a certain period when the reign changed and all that. I mean that was history, whereas this doesn't appear to have any history.)

Q. Well I suppose because it's so new.

(Second Female: Yes that's right.)

Q. Last question, was your visit a positive or negative experience?

(First Male: Neither one nor the other. It doesn't feel like a religious building, but we have visited out of curiosity.)

Q. So does it feel like a tourist attraction?

(First Male: It could be a tourist attraction but there aren't enough people here. I think they could do more to attract people to help with the upkeep. But to be honest I can't honestly see why they need an upkeep fund.)

Q. How do you mean?

(First Male: Well because it is so new, how does it need to be restored and such? They need to do a time and motion study, I mean if it is costing them £1200 per day to run it, I want to know why.)

Q. So you can see how they can justify coming to that total?

(First Male: Well no, because it is not balanced by what you see. I mean it's not crumbling is it? So if it costs that now, what's it going to cost in a hundred years time? Another thing, I don't know whether this is man-made material or whether it is real sandstone?

Q. It is real sandstone quarried from here in Liverpool.

(First Male: And these blocks have been sawn by a machine you can see the saw marks here. They look so artificial and the cement doesn't look old, it looks like it has been laid by a machine as well).

Q. I see, so you want to see old, or evidence of age when you come to a cathedral. Is that what you expected to see?

(First Male: Yes, I want history.) (Second Male: Well we are doing this, and then we are going over to the Wigwam as well, because we have come to Liverpool and we wanted to do the two Cathedrals.) (First Female: Well we could have gone to Southport but we wanted to go and see the two Cathedrals instead.)

Q. Oh I see so you are doing your bit as tourists?

(First Female: Yes.)

Q. Well you will have quite an experience at the Catholic Cathedral as well because that is an overtly modern building.

(First Male: Yes, we heard it was built this century, for me it is not a cathedral really, because it was only built this century really.)

Q. I see, so when you come to a cathedral you want old?

(First Male: Yes.)

Q. That's a good summary. Thank you.

Group Composition: Two young males (20s) from Germany.
Date: 12th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

I was interested in Liverpool and visiting the city, because I have heard it is very fascinating, seeing the contrasts. And of course the Cathedrals are a vital part of the city as well, so I wanted to see them.

Q. I see. And what has your experience been like here today?

It is very fascinating, it is a fascinating building. Of course, I like the architecture, it is very impressive on the one hand, but it is quite simple on the other hand.

Q. Yes.

There are not so many ornaments and stuff like that.

Q. So compared to the cathedrals that you have seen, there are not as many ornaments?

No.

Q. Where are you from?

Germany.

Q. When you go home, if somebody says to you "Liverpool Cathedral" what sort of images will you bring to mind?

Oh a very nice image indeed.

Q. Would you recommend other people to come here?

Yes, I would recommend.

Q. Do you visit cathedrals a lot.?

No not really.

(Pause)

Ok that is it, thank you.

Group Composition: Older female (60s) from Lincoln. (Saga Coach Tourist.)

Date: 12th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you are here today?

Well we are visiting Liverpool with Saga, its the 'over 50s' holidays, and we are staying at the University and this Cathedral stop is part of our tour.

Q. I see, so there wasn't any specific motivation for you to come to the Cathedral as such?

No.

Q. So what has your experience been like today?

Well it is a beautiful place, it really is. Erm it is like a lot of other cathedrals that I have been to, I've been to York Minster and I live near Lincoln Cathedral. So it is the same sort of thing, though on a different erm pattern. But you get the same feeling, I think it is comforting.

Q. Really, so even though it is newer than York and Lincoln, it still has that same feeling?

Oh yes, I still get that same feeling in this as I do in the old cathedrals.

Q. Did you feel a sense of God's presence here today?

I do all the time duck. I am of that age group (laughs).

Q. I see, so there is a religious element to your visit?

Yes.

Q. So when you go home today, and somebody says to you "Liverpool Cathedral", what images will you bring up.

Oh I will remember the altar. That will come straight into my mind, I will never forget that.

Q. Which, the Last Supper scene?

Yes, well the whole of it. As you walk up to it, it is gorgeous. It really is.

(Pause: Tour party were leaving.)

Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older male (60s) from South of England. (Saga Coach Tourist.)

Date: 12th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you are here today?

I am with Saga, I am a Saga tourist.

Q. So it was part of the itinerary?

Yes. And we are visiting the Roman Catholic Cathedral as well.

Q. Oh I see. And what do you think of them both?

Oh they are not comparable really. They are too different. They are both beautiful in their own ways.

Q. Right, so you don't mind modern cathedrals?

Oh no.

Q. Did you know that the two Cathedrals were part of your tour itinerary before you came on the coach tour?

No.

Q. So there was no prior motivation?

No.

Q. And what has your experience been like in the Cathedral today?

I enjoyed looking at the stained glass windows. The Lady Chapel, the organ.

Q. So it was an architectural visit for you?

Oh yes.

Q. Did you feel a sense of spirituality in the Cathedral at all?

It feels more like a museum I would say. It is just vast really. The architecture. I mean we don't have very long, that is the thing. We have only been here for about 20 minutes. But I might come again myself to see it at my own time. To see everything.

Q. Ok that is it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from South of England. (Saga Coach Tourists.)

Date: 12th August 1998.

(Interviewed wife).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today.

Well we are part of the Sage tour group.

Q. I see, so it was part of your itinerary?

Yes.

Q. Did you know the Cathedral was part of your tour before you started it, or decided to go on it.

No.

Q. And what have your experiences been like here today?

(Male: The refectory is super.)

Q. Really, you like the refectory?

Yes (Laughs).

Q. You don't mind that being in the Cathedral?

(Male: Oh no, it is necessary.) It is necessary. I think the art is wonderful, but I don't like the modern paintings.

Q. Really, those two modern paintings over there?

Yes, I hate them, especially that one on the right. The colour especially.

Q. So you don't like the colour rather than the subject or style.

Oh I hate the colour and the style, I think it clashes with the whole cathedral. The colours are horrible and the cathedral doesn't need it. The subject is fine, I understand that, but the way it is depicted is just horrible.

Q Really?

Yes, that is what I hate about it.

Q. But apart from the paintings, what about the rest of the cathedral.?

Oh it is absolutely fantastic.

Q. Is it?

Oh it is the best I have ever been to, I felt really moved.

Q. Yes, a lot of people say that. (Tour party leaving) I'm sorry I have to go to the bus now.

Group Composition: Older couple (70s) from Torquay.

Date: 12th August 1998.

(Interviewed husband).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well we are on holiday up here. (Wife: In Chester). And we love churches, we are followers of a religion, so we came because we were really interested, and I think you can pick up a lot of history from cathedrals. I mean just walking around here, the people that are buried inside, it tells you a lot.

Q. So there are historic aspects to why you want to come here then, as well as religious?

Oh yes. Another thing is to see the beauty and the grandeur of the building, it makes you wonder how the men back in those days did it. You know, with no machinery, it was all done by hand.

Q. Oh I see, so you feel admiration for the people who built them as well?

Oh yes.

Q. This Cathedral was built this century, but it looks old doesn't it?

Oh yes. That's right.

Q. So you don't mind that, I know you were saying it was history that attracted you?

Oh no. I think this is lovely.

Q. Have you been to a lot of cathedrals?

Oh yes. (Wife: Well we have visited a lot of them because wherever we go, we will always visit a cathedral if there is one around.) Yes, wherever possible. (Wife: I mean today we are going to go to them both today, both this and the Catholic one).

Q. There is a contrast between them?

Oh yes. (Wife: Oh there is. I don't like them going too modern. I prefer them to be more traditional, you know, older).

Q. Oh, you prefer older cathedrals?

Well we would like them to look like the olden day churches. (Wife: There are a couple of modern posters here)

Q. Oh the two modern paintings over there?

(Wife: Yes. I am not sure if I like them, they are not in keeping with the church at all).

Q. Even though they symbolise stories from The Bible?

(Wife: I know, but they are modern, and I don't like them. I don't like modern art).

Q. So what has your experience been like here today?

Oh very nice, very peaceful. (Wife: I loved it, peaceful).

Q. Did you see all of the coach tourists come in before? Did that bother the peacefulness?

We are from a coach tour as well. (Wife: This is within the tour sort of thing. If we were private visitors, and were in the area, we would still come though. Because when we go on holiday abroad or anywhere, we always visit the churches and cathedrals that are around).

Q. So it is like a habit for you?

Oh yes. (Wife: Well yes. I mean you get some people who will say, 'you have seen one church you have seen them all', but you don't, because they are all different. I mean it went through my mind in here, I thought well it is beautiful, it is years old. I know we have got the Catholic as well, because we are Roman Catholics, but here I felt a joining together with the Anglican church. Because, we all serve the one Lord, but there isn't much difference between this and our own church. I mean really there was that one stumbling block back in the Reformation. But there is room here for members of all faiths really isn't there?)

Q. Oh yes. There are a lot of denominations that come in here, and other religions as well. When you go home, if somebody says to you "Liverpool Cathedral" what sort of images will come to mind for you?

(Wife: Well as I say, the Catholic one, the modern one, is too modern and I am afraid that these days churches are becoming more modern. I mean, I suppose then again you have got to keep up with the times.)

Q. But how do you feel about modern architecture personally?

(Wife: I am not a great fan, no. I don't mind it in other places, but not in cathedrals, no.) No. Not in churches. Maybe somebody else will hear this and take down those pictures. They are definitely not in keeping with the building.

(Pause, tour group moving off.)

Q. Please don't let me keep you.

Group Composition: Two older females - Local (50s). Tourist (60s) from Australia.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Tourist: Well I am not very good at answering questions so can we do this together?)

Q. Yes, of course.

(Tourist: Well I am not a Liverpoolian, I am from Australia, and I am staying with my friend here who does volunteer work in this Cathedral) I work in the refectory. (Tourist: So we came to have lunch today. It is not my first visit to the Cathedral, so I was looking forward to seeing it again, because it is a beautiful cathedral.)

Q. I see, so your past experiences were good and made you want to come back?

(Tourist: Oh very much so. It is such a fantastic building).

Q. So can you remember when you first came here, what were your motivations then?

(Tourist: Again it was visiting by my friend here.) Yes it was a typical Thomas Cook's tour you know?)

Q. And what have your experiences been like here today?

(Tourist: Well, we have been to St. George's Hall, and that was very impressive, the mosaic floor was beautiful. Again when I came in here, I felt the same as I did before, I thought it was a wonderful place.)

Q. You can hear the choir is singing, did that affect your visit at all?

It did for me certainly. (Tourist: Oh any choir or organ experience in here is just wonderful).

Q. So it makes it feel more of a religious building, or more of a grand building?

(Tourist: Oh more of a religious building).

Q. So when you go home, if somebody says to you "Liverpool Cathedral", what sort of images will you bring up?

(Tourist: Size, colour, balance, beautiful windows).

Q. Do you have cathedrals like this in Australia?

(Tourist: Not on this size)

Q. Ok that is it, thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from Southwark.
Date: 12th August 1998.

(Interviewed wife).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Well because we just love visiting churches and cathedrals. Wherever we go, we visit cathedrals.

Q. Really? Is this the first time you have visited Liverpool?

Yes it is.

Q. And did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came here?

No idea, we had no idea at all.

Q. But you knew it had a Cathedral and that was enough?

Yes.

Q. What is it about churches and cathedrals that you like in particular?

Architecture.

Q. Are there religious elements to your visit?

Well, a bit of both.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

Wonderful. I was just listening to the choir and I thought they were using microphones, but I was told that they weren't. So the acoustics must be marvellous.

Q. Oh yes.

And it is not very old is it? But it doesn't look new.

Q. Do you think so? Does it feel like an old building or a modern building?

No it doesn't feel modern.

Q. Is that because of the architecture, or does it have the atmosphere of an old building?

No, I think it is the architecture.

Q. Have you been to the Catholic Cathedral yet?

No.

Q. Well that is an overtly modern building.

Oh is it? Oh dear.

Q. Did you know what the Catholic Cathedral looks like?

Well I have just bought a card. Is it a round building with sort of spikes at the top?

Q. Yes, that's it.

I don't like modern cathedrals. I went to Coventry Cathedral and I didn't like it.

Q. So you don't think cathedrals should be modern?

No, they should be like this.

Q. So even though they are new?

Yes, they should be built like this.

Q. Ok, did the choir singing affect your experience today?

Yes, they are lovely aren't they? They are from Oxford aren't they? They are beautiful.

Q. Did it make it feel more of a religious building?

Yes, definitely.

Q. What images will you take home with you?

I will say to people, 'for goodness sake go and see it'. Oh it is marvellous.

Q. Do you feel different for being here?

Oh I do, much better.

(Husband walks up).

I was just saying how marvellous it is.

Q. (To husband) What has your experience been like here today?

(Husband: Oh it was wonderful. Who was the architect do you know?)

Q. A man called Giles Gilbert Scott.

(Husband: Oh the architecture is wonderful).

Q. Does it feel like a religious building to you?

Oh yes. We are going to the Roman Catholic Cathedral now.

Q. Yes, your wife was just saying that you were thinking of going there.

(Wife: Yes it is a modern building apparently.) (Husband: Is it? Oh...)

Q. Do you like modern architecture?

(Wife: No, there is no imagination to it It is not in keeping with what cathedrals should look like).

Q. I see, so you expect to see old style architecture when you visit cathedrals then?

Yes. (Visitors begin to move off).

Ok, thank you.

Group Composition: Local male (30s). Tourist female (20s) from France.

Date: 12th August 1998.

(Interviewed local male).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Yes, Christa is a French au pair who has been staying with us for the past few weeks, she is due to go home so she is having a day in Liverpool. I am on my dinner hour so I thought we would come here, to use the refectory, and to have a walk around in some peace and quiet.

Q. So you think you would like to see the Cathedral today?

Yes.

Q. Did she want to come and see it, or was it a suggestion of your own?

No, it was my suggestion.

Q. Is it an architectural visit for you, or religious?

It is a bit of both. Certainly I have worked in Liverpool city the past 10 years, very near by, it has been a point to come to. I work in the police, and I used to escort people to and from the Cathedral on particular occasions. So a few times I have been here on duty.

Q. So you have been here for lots of different reasons haven't you?

Yes, it is just nice to park the car, the refectory is very good, and I meet people and colleagues at work here about once a month for lunch.

Q. So you use the Cathedral for a real mixture of reasons?

Oh yes.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

Well we have just been to the refectory and we had a walk around.

Q. Did you hear the choir?

I heard the choir, I have never heard a choir here before, that was very nice. We have just visited in its Cathedral capacity. So we have had a slow walk around, visited the Lady Chapel, and everywhere we could hear the choir. It was very nice.

Q. Did it make it feel more of a religious building because of the choir?

Oh yes, it certainly did to me. It took away the 'tourist' aspect a little bit.

Q. Oh I see. There have been a lot of coach tours and tourists coming in here today. Does that detract you from your experience of the Cathedral at all?

Sometimes it can yes. I always find that, well I don't have a great deal of experience of cathedrals, but I would say it is a quiet cathedral, it is very big, it absorbs the noise and it gives you plenty of opportunity just to walk around at your own pace, it is not traipsing through Notre Dame, or Sacra Coeur, were you are

stuck in the flow, here is quite different, it is very peaceful. It has got a good refectory, and I come here to think.

Q. What a good summary. Thank you for stopping.

Group Composition: Two females. Local (60s). Tourist (60s) from North of England.
Date: 12th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

Because I am staying with my friend Bet, and we have come to see the sights. We have been to see the Docks, and I have been to the Catholic Cathedral last time I was here, so this time I am visiting the Anglican.

Q. And did you compare between the two?

No, I was interested in this Cathedral because it is a modern cathedral and I knew it was one of the largest in Europe.

Q. So it is a real sight-seeing trip for you today then?

Yes.

Q. Where there any religious aspects to your visit today?

Well historically yes, but not personally for me. I was recently in St. Paul's when I down to sing the Verdi Requiem in London, and we also went to Westminster Abbey to see the new carvings around the door. So I am in the middle of a religious tour (laughs).

Q. Do you visit a lot of cathedrals?

Well if I go somewhere new, I will always visit yes. Well it is the history of our land isn't it?

Q. So you see cathedrals as part of English history?

Oh yes.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

Well there are some absolutely wonderful aspects. That beautiful window (pointing to West Window) up there, it is absolutely staggering. The space in here, I couldn't believe that anybody could still understand how to build stonework like that. The fan bits there, you can see them coming out up there, you wouldn't think they would remember how to do those, not since the Norman days really.

Q. So do you think we don't possess the skills to build cathedrals anymore?

No, because I know that are continuously mending cathedrals like York Minster and Durham Cathedral. But the way they actually built them, well they were built with much simpler tools than now. But I think the old ways of building come out rather better and last longer (laughs).

Q. There was a choir singing just a few minutes ago, did that affect your visit at all?

Oh yes. We are all musicians, so we are very pleased to hear anything. But Bet was saying that they have some difficulty with the acoustics in this Cathedral, she plays in an orchestra which has played here. (Local: It is like playing with cotton wool in your ears, you can't hear anything). And this choir was wonderful, that girl was just throwing that voice. It was just lovely.

Q. So the choir did enhance your visit.

Yes. But I will say one thing, they should burn that picture over there.

Q. Which the modern picture on the right?

Yes.

Q. You don't like the two modern pictures?

Well the other one is all right. But that right hand one is just awful, it has got no artistic merit at all as far as I can see.

(Pause: Could see visitors wanted to move on.)

Ok, that is great thank you.

Group Composition: Older lady (60s) ex-patriot from Australia.

Date: 28th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well I am English, but I have been in Australia all of my married life, and my daughter is over here, and she is in Liverpool. And we have come here because not only our cousin was George Gilbert Scott, and at a very young age he helped to design this Cathedral.

Q. Oh my goodness! You are a Gilbert Scott. Last year I interviewed one of George Gilbert Scott's great nephews, he is a doctor in London now.

Well my brother in law is Humphrey Gilbert Scott and he has been a doctor, but he going around Australia at the moment with his wife.

Q. Oh I wonder if it is the same man?

I think it is.

Q. What a coincidence! So you have come to this Cathedral to see what one of your ancestors has designed?

Well I think coming to this Cathedral, it is absolutely breath-taking for me. It is a spiritual experience, and a sort of exultation of the king - the king of kings - Jesus Christ. It is really. I think, it is something over Liverpool really. And I think it affects the Catholic Cathedral too. And I just love the idea of Hope Street connecting the two. Perhaps it might the beginning of something in this country, bringing the two together.

Q. You must be so proud that you are related to a man who could design something like this?

I'm - well it is not proud - but I am glad to have a sort of fellowship of feeling, of the spiritual feeling that he had.

Q. Did you know him personally?

No. But through his architecture you get a sense of his feeling, and so I feel it to.

Q. Absolutely, I was just about to ask you about your experience here today?

One thing that I have to say is that my son is helping with the Front Line Kids Club in Liverpool and I think that they have got 700 children, mostly from Toxteth, are going to this Kids's Club. And I have prayed for the whole of Liverpool, that Liverpool gets employment. It will be a miracle, but I will pray, and when it comes, they will know that it is God given.

Q. I see, so you are aware of the problems that Liverpool has?

Well I just see people who have been under pressure for a very long time, and from a Christian point of view, I would like to see that pressure lifted so that they can really see the sky.

Q. I see. If you had been a tourist in this city, and one of your ancestors had not been involved with this Cathedral, do you think you still would have visited?

Absolutely. I saw the crown at the top of the tower and I knew what it was straight away. That it was the king of kings, and this has been about the first thing that we have come to see.

Q. Did you come to Liverpool to specifically see the Cathedral?

No, my son and daughter are here. My son is getting married tomorrow so it is a combined trip. But it doesn't take away really from experiencing the Cathedral as it is, because there is not only spirituality in the design, there is music, there is harmony, there is just the awe of God and it feels quite special.

Q. Does it feel like a sacred place?

Yes, it does. And it is nice to meet you, because when we went to the Catholic Cathedral, we were bowled over by all the friendly warmth there, and I would like that for here. Because then you have got everything, so not just the building, but also the heart of what it is meant for.

Q. So does it feel like Liverpool's Cathedral, rather than just a cathedral that could be anywhere?

Yes, absolutely. And I just hope for great things for Liverpool.

(Visitor moves off).

Q. Ok that is fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Younger couple (40s) from United States.
Date: 28th August 1998.

(Interviewed wife).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we have an hour and a half and we are meeting somebody for lunch later, and we decided we would take a look at it while we have the time.

Q. Do you visit cathedrals in England a lot?

Yes, a lot, yes.

Q. And you are from the United States?

Yes.

Q. And what is the attraction about cathedrals or this Cathedral in particular?

Well this Cathedral is really unique in my British experience. I think cathedrals are wonderful places, and I like unusual places, but I found that this one made me ill. Very ill.

Q. Really? In what way.

It is fascist. Slightly fascist. Over-sized, its erm. The culture doesn't fill it. They have little art exhibits and I find I am very uncomfortable with this as a space. It makes me feel that Christianity is totally dead when I see this.

Q. Really. Is it too decadent?

It isn't decadent, it is kind of pathetic. It is like it can't fill itself. You can see that it is too big a building, it is pompous, its over-sized. They have to put little art shows, little this, little that. And you know, you do a little flower decoration, and it just gets lost in this massive, over-sized, over-done, dead institution.

Q. I see, so it doesn't feel like a sacred site of any kind to you then?

No, it feels like a totally dead place to me. But I don't say that about other cathedrals.

Q. I was about to say, so it doesn't feel like an English cathedral, going by your past experiences?

I think this is about 200-300 years late, and I think Christianity had practically died by the time they put it up.

Q. Yes, somebody has said this before, he felt that it had no place in the 20th century, because Christianity in the modern day is not the same as the cathedral building days of the Medieval era.

Well, this just doesn't work for me like the old cathedrals do.

Q. I see. When you go to other English Cathedrals, the older ones, like Canterbury, what is your experience like then?

They are wonderful places, you know, they are legitimate places, they are real places, this is a place trying to be like them, it's not real. It's like it is eras out.

Q. I see, are you going to the Catholic Cathedral today?

I would like to, but I don't think we will have time. I mean that one looks like an entirely new thing, but at least it looks, I mean I don't know what I would say about that one.

Q. But it is a Cathedral of its age?

Well it is not so much the architecture, it's like, I think the architecture, I mean Jesus outside there, the statue, he looks Egyptian and catatonic. It is all this art deco, which I find always sort of fascist looking. But it is just like it is over-done, it is like they are trying to. I don't know. When you over-do something, and you are overdressed and you make something to big, it always makes you feel uncomfortable socially. This is like, I don't know, just socially they can never fill this place, and I am sure they never do. Maybe at Christmas they have filled it. But there is something depressing in a space that you can never fill.

Q. So do you think that here they have just built a huge cathedral for the sake of building one?

Yeah, yeah. I think so. It's like you know, they have said we have the money, we are powerful, we are going to build this. I think it is a real power trip, but I think the people who have power aren't here anymore, and all of the little people are trying to fill it, with gift shops, and you know, cut rate books on Christianity, and luncheon places and third rate art shows, and you know. The art is just awful here, it just makes me cringe.

Q. So it has not been a positive experience?

No, it has been a great experience, and I am glad I came. Because it gave me, I mean we have a cathedral like this in New York, called St. John the Divine, and they are always trying to fill that with animal shows and fish tanks, and you know, it is not as bad as this. But I understand a lot more from this. I mean this was a great visit, I am really glad I came.

Q. But like you were saying before, it kind of symbolises the death of Christianity.

Well, I don't know, I think Christianity, well not really. It is like you know, cause it is just somebody out of touch with what they are, it is like they are making something big when it isn't big, you know. I don't know, I mean I could see people being Christians today, I am not a Christian myself, but I can see it. But certainly if I were a Christian I certainly wouldn't want to ever come to a place like this, because it is all out of sync, all out of sync.

Q. That is very interesting.

(Visitor began to move off).

Q. Thank you. That's fine.

Group Composition: Older male (50s) from Norfolk.

Date: 28th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because I am going to meet someone in Liverpool city centre a little later on, so I had time to kill.

Q. I see, have you been here before?

Many, many years ago.

Q. Are you a visitor to Liverpool?

Yes, in a manner of speaking.

Q. Where are you from exactly?

Diss, in Norfolk.

Q. And what is the attraction of the cathedral for you today?

Erm I read a book about two weeks ago, called "Mersey Seen" which discussed artists on Merseyside, and it mentioned the man who did the sculptures in here, so I decided to come and see them.

Q. So it was very specific then?

Very specific yes.

Q. I see and what has your experience been like here today then?

I was diverted by the amateur artists thing here (laughs). But yes it is fine, I enjoyed the peace and the space here, I had forgotten about the sheer space.

Q. Really, I was about to say, was it the same experience as last time you came?

I was a youngster then, we are talking about forty years ago, so I can't remember that much.

Q. Was it a positive experience today?

Yes.

Q. Do you feel different leaving to the way you did when you came in?

It was not a spiritual visit. Well I don't know how you would define these things, I enjoyed the windows, and the experience of this space and looking at the colours of the windows.

Q. So it was a visual rather than a religious experience?

Yes.

Q. Did you learn anything about the sculptures when you were here?

Well I thought I might find, in the bookshop, some cards of the sculptures giving some details, but I couldn't find any.

Q. Oh what a shame. Ok that's fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) ex-patriots from United States.

Date: 28th August 1998.

(Interviewed husband).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the cathedral today?

(Pause)

Q. It's a tough one isn't it?

No not really, I am just trying to be honest. We know there is a good cup of coffee here, and that is basically the truth really (laughs).

Q. Right I see, so you have just come for coffee today?

Well, we always come here when we are in Liverpool.

Q. So you have visited here before?

Many times.

Q. And is it always just for coffee?

Well, no I do like to look around, and look at the, well I always look in the memorial book but it is never on my name.

Q. Yes they turn the page every now and again don't they?

Yes, and they have never been on 'J' yet, even today they are on 'D'. (laughs).

Q. Are any of your relatives in the memorial book?

No, I would just like to see my name in there (laughs).

Q. I see, and what has your experience been like here today, have you just been in the refectory?

No. I have walked around a little bit, (to wife) I don't know whether you did, you were in the gift shop weren't you, looking for a sympathy card? (Wife: Yes).

Q. And why do you look around, is it for the architecture or is there a religious side to it?

Well we have done, we even took the elevator on one of our experiences, to the very top. It was very good, a great view, and you can also see the architecture on the outside much better.

Q. So has your visit today been a positive experience?

Yes.

Q. Do you feel different now, to when you came in?

I always feel more calmer. (Wife begins to walk off).

Ok, that's fine. Thank you.

Group Composition: Younger male (40s) from South of England.
Date: 28th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the cathedral today?

Erm, just to look at the architecture and we went to the communion service as well. My wife comes from the Wirral, and she came here as a child, so we brought our son to see it.

Q. I see, so are you a tourist in the city today then?

Yes, I suppose I am. We are staying on the Wirral.

Q. I see, and what has your experience been like here today?

Yes, it is a fantastic building. We have taken Holy Communion as well, which was nice. Erm, we actually lost one of our children three weeks ago, he died, and so it was kind of a nice experience. We want to do this sort of thing weekly, as a memorial to him.

Q. So was it a comfort for you?

Yes, yes it was.

Q. So there was a religious side to your visit as well then?

Yes.

Q. Have you been to this Cathedral before?

Well I haven't, but my wife has as a child.

Q. And did you know what this Cathedral looked like before you came here?

I did, because we can see it from where we are staying on the Wirral.

Q. So did you want to experience it for real today was well?

Yes, to see the real size of it and the splendour of it.

Q. In terms of architecture?

Yes.

Q. Do you go to cathedrals a lot?

Yes, I suppose if we are away somewhere and there is a cathedral around, or even just a building that is worth visiting, we will go in it. I mean we have been to places like Notre Dame and things like that.

(At this point had to stop interview because someone began to tune the organ and was impossible to talk or record).

Group Composition: Day-trippers - older couple (60s) from Bolton. Tourist - older male (60s) from South Wales.

Date: 28th August 1998.

(Interviewed day-tripper female).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the cathedral today?

Yes, my brother-in-law is up from South Wales, and he has never been to Liverpool or to the Cathedrals, and I thought it would be nice for him to come and see the Cathedrals today.

Q. I see. So is it part of him being a tourist in Liverpool then?

Well yes, we have come over from Bolton, and when they were up last time, I said we must go to Liverpool to see the Cathedrals, because he had never seen them before, and I have been in this one and the Catholic Cathedral, and I wanted him to go and see them both so he could compare them, you see?

Q. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

If I am visiting anywhere, yes. I went to Hereford Cathedral a few months ago.

Q. And what is the attraction about cathedrals for you?

Well it is the architecture. I just like looking at the architecture, and to get the feeling for it.

Q. What type of feelings are you talking about?

I don't know, the majesty. In here, I think this is very majestic.

Q. I was about to say, what has your experience been like here today?

Erm I came in here last time in the evening, a good few years ago. I feel it is very majestic, and even though the Catholic Cathedral is so different, there is a certain atmosphere in there. That one inside, is certainly much nicer than you expect.

Q. Why because of the outside image?

Yes, it is very modern, but inside erm, but you know I was very impressed with the inside.

Q. In what way?

Well the lighting, the stained glass.

Q. Yes, I was there yesterday and people were saying that.

Yes, that's right.

Q. So you feel this place has a very majestic feeling to it?

Yes.

Q. Is that because of its size or its style?

I think because it is just so big, and when you really sort of try to take in all the masonry, you know, and all of the windows. I mean the windows are just fabulous.

Q. You know when you think about the term English Cathedral, do you think of a modern or an old building?

Oh an old building like this. And even though this is modern, compared to some of them, it has still got the same atmosphere, I think, and the same style of architecture.

Q. Oh that is interesting. But you knew it was a modern building?

Yes. Mind you, my brother-in-law thought it was a very old building.

Q. And when he found out that it was modern, how did he feel?

He was quite surprised, yes. He did say that the quality of the masonry was good as well. So we do still have the craftsmen.

Q. Still?

Still.

Q. So do you feel different leaving here, than when you first came in?

Yes, I think you go away and think.

Q. Was there a religious side to your visit?

I don't know. It is hard to explain, and those things I like to keep to myself anyway, it is a very private thing.

Q. Oh I see. But have you had a positive or negative experience?

Oh very positive.

Q. Ok, that is fine. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) with older teenagers from South of England.

Date: 28th August 1998

(Interviewed adult female).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we are on holiday, and we are staying in Southport, and my cousin, who lives in Manchester, said that you really must come and see it. She said it is very impressive. And we certainly have been very impressed.

Q. Really?

It is quite an amazing building, and I am particularly impressed because it is built in this century, and so quickly for a cathedral.

Q. I think the tools that they had in this century were much better than they had in the Medieval era?

Yes, exactly.

Q. Are you surprised that we can still build things like this in the 20th century, in terms of the craftsmanship?

Exactly.

Q. Did you think that the cathedral building skills had gone?

Probably I did think that. I mean, even though I knew that this was a modern cathedral, I had not ever been here before, so I had no idea of the workmanship here. And so yes, I probably thought it was a Medieval skill that had been lost, definitely.

Q. You know when somebody says to you the term 'English Cathedral', do you think of an old or a modern building?

Yes, I think of an old cathedral?

Q. So this is quite a surprise for you then to find a modern cathedral?

Yes, definitely.

Q. And what has your experience been like today?

Well we have been extremely impressed, we have found it most interesting, and just a wonderful building. We enjoyed ourselves tremendously coming here, and I am very glad that we didn't miss it.

Q. In the architectural sense?

Well, I think it has been a great achievement architecturally, it is wonderful. I don't know what other adjectives to use (laughs).

Q. I see, did you feel a sense of God's presence in here today?

For me its was more of an architectural visit. I am not actually a Christian, so it was not a particularly religious experience.

Q. A positive or negative experience?

Yes, very much so.

Q. Do you feel different now leaving than when you came in?

Erm, I wouldn't say different, but I would say erm, certainly glad that I came and I feel that I have learned something coming here.

Q. Really, so you actually learned about the Cathedral during your visit today?

Yes, very much so. We learned about the building dates, and the architect.

(Family begin fidgeting).

Q. Ok, that is very interesting. Thank you.

Group Composition: Local - younger male (30s). Tourists - Teenagers from France.

Date: 28th June 1998.

(Foreign students could not speak English - Interviewed local).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the cathedral today?

Erm I am an English language teacher, and I have four French students in my care, who I teach in the morning, and take on local excursions in the afternoon.

Q. And this is one of the places that you go to?

Yes, we always include the Anglican and the Metropolitan Cathedrals on our excursions.

Q. And what do you think is the main attraction of these Cathedrals for these students?

Erm, mainly the architecture. They are quite stunning. And I think that this Anglican one, is so vast, it makes a real impression on them. I am taking mostly teenagers around, and they are mostly only impressed by gigantic statistics. I mean things like, the fact that it is the fifth biggest in the world, it has such an enormous tower, and that visually it is so stunning, they can appreciate it just for its size and its grandeur.

Q. So you feel that you can almost guarantee that they will get something from coming here?

Oh yes. The sort of teenagers I have, they are nice, but they are not into little gems. Like if you showed them a little 18th century figurine, they would have no interest at all, and would shrug their shoulders. But this, they themselves are quite televisual anyway, so anything that is grand, enormous and impressive makes an impression.

Q. So it is a purely visual experience for them more than anything else?

Yes, the visual impression. Although I suppose sometimes they come out they feel quite rested, so I suppose it has been a bit of a spiritual experience for them as well, well as spiritual as teenagers can get (laughs).

Q. So you have brought some here today?

Yes, the four of them are looking around now. They are aged 17 and 18. They like the size, this lot.

Q. Yes, I think the younger people do.

Yes, and they like the stained glass windows as well. Particularly like that (pointing to West Window). I think what impressed them also was that it was so modern.

Q. Did they think it was Medieval?

Yes, when they first saw it they thought it was at least 400-500 years old. And they couldn't believe it was only started in 1904. And they didn't really think that you could have a Gothic cathedral finished in 1978 (laughs).

Q. Why? Did they not think that the Gothic cathedral building skills didn't exist anymore?

Well, I think possibly that. But I think more, for example, they are from Normandy. And where a cathedral had been completely bombed, it would be rebuilt in the modern style, like at Coventry. So I think it is more a question of taste, I mean, why would a Gothic cathedral be built in the 20th century, or so late on?

Q. So do you find that they do get something from their visits then?

Yes, I do. Erm, we tend to be in rather a rush, so we don't tend to spend a lot of time here. Also at the same time, I think the thing that they enjoy most is going on top of the tower. And I think that is possibly because they are all sensationalists, and the tower has a sort of spooky, there is a faint sense of danger when you go up there (laughs). But you know I think they get a lot out of it, and I think that it is visually so stunning. Actually, I think the effect it has is very much the effect what the original Medieval cathedrals were meant to have on people. It is vast enough, even in this world of modern office buildings, it is vast enough to impress them, it makes them feel small in the presence of a greater thing, you know.

Q. So the architect has done his job well then?

Yes, it is effective.

Q. That is another thing, I mean today we can build massive sports stadiums and skyscrapers, why is this building such a new thing, when they can see massive buildings everyday?

I think because it is made of stone. I think the fact that it is a church, and I don't think they, they wouldn't connect the size of this with the size of a shopping centre. I mean you could have a shopping mall which could be vast, and they would accept that, but the fact that this is a church it has a certain power. And the austerity of it as well. There is so much space, so much light, so much stone. Strangely enough, for me myself, I don't actually find it very spiritual at all. I mean I find it very uplifting, and very monumental, but it doesn't make me feel rested.

Q. So it is more of an architectural phenomenon?

For me yes. I mean I stand here, and I find myself so engulfed by the size of it. I find myself thinking more about the architecture, and I wouldn't say it gave me the sort of rested feeling of tranquillity. Strangely enough, I find the Catholic Cathedral far more spiritual.

Q. In what way?

I think it is the effect of the light at different times of the day.

Q. So when you go to other cathedrals, do you feel that sense of calm that you were talking about?

Yes, at York. York has a calming effect. Erm, Wells Cathedral. But here, it is more the monumental size that impresses me. Maybe, as well, I mean I am from Liverpool, I have been here a lot because I was a choir boy here, so maybe it has lost its novelty for me. (Laughs) But these are my students. But yes, I only live on the Wirral, and I must confess, I do come here about twice a week and about half the time it is to use the cafeteria.

Q. Well a lot of people say that, and I would say, 'well why come to the cathedral, there are plenty of places to eat in Liverpool, why here?'

Well the parking is easier (laughs).

Q. Oh well that is honesty. (Students move out of door). Ok, I won't keep you any longer then. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) from Worcester.

Date: 28th August 1998

(Interviewed male).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because we happen to be in Liverpool for a couple of days.

Q. So are you tourists?

Yes, we have come on a sort of reconnaissance visit, for a more in-depth visit later on. We are teachers so we are looking for things of interest in the Cathedral for the children.

Q. And why come to this Cathedral, what do you feel is the attraction for them?

Well we were just cycling past and we thought we would like to visit it.

Q. So it was very sort of off the mark visit then?

Yes, and my wife is a church warden as well, so she has an interest in places like this?

Q. What from a religious point of view?

Of course.

Q. And what have you actually experienced here today?

(Pause) It is a good question, because we actually only came in for about 5 minutes, we have just been to the shop you see.

Q. So it is a purely commercial sort of visit today then?

Well yes, virtually. (Wife: And we did stand in the nave for a little while as well). Oh yes, we stood in the nave.

Q. Is this the first time you have been here?

No (laughs). We are in and out of here all of the time. (Wife: And we didn't JUST come in here to shop, we just weren't in the mood today, if that is the right word, because we actually want to go onto the ferry today and we don't really have time. But today we just wanted to see it, even if it was just to walk into it, rather than just pass it by and not go into it.) We are always constantly comparing the inside with Coventry. I mean we come from Worcester you see, so we have our Cathedral, but we are constantly comparing this with Coventry because that is a modern cathedral as well you see. The difference in context to older cathedrals means that you can't compare them. But here, the windows seem to lack definition in comparison, so you see it is really an architectural thing. I mean I am not saying that they are not wonderful.

Q. They are just different.

Well, yes all cathedrals are different. (Wife: I think it is just a surprise to find a cathedral of the old style which has only just been finished. I mean when you think that Worcester was only finished 10 years after the Plague, I mean the speed of building now is amazing.

Q. Well isn't that because we have the tools now, which are so much more advanced than theirs?

(Wife: Well they did have tools). Well they didn't have power cranes and stone cutting machines, I think that is what she is saying.

Q. Well it has been very interesting talking to you, you have given me a lot of food for thought.

(Wife: We didn't give you much to go on [laughs])

Q. No, I am interested in anything that you have to tell, however inane you think it is.

(At this point interview proper ended as couple asked me about Ph.D. and where I was studying).

Group Composition: Group of younger to middle aged adults (aged between 30-40) from all over UK.
Date: 28th August 1998.

(Interviewed middle aged female.)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the cathedral today?

Erm (laughs). Because it is a focus for touring around. We have been down to Truro, and we have been to Exeter, and Lancaster, Durham, Newcastle, Carlisle. So we are here today, and we are going to go on the Catholic Cathedral now, and later we are going to go to Chester.

Q. And it is a game that you all play which is the main motivation?

Well it started off kind of as a joke, but it is also a nice way to get around and see the country as well, and we used the cathedrals as the prominence.

Q. Because they are the focal point to a city, so it is easy to find them?

That's right yes.

Q. And this game is called Canasta?

That's right yes.

Q. And what has your experience been like in this Cathedral today.

Oh, it has been absolutely breath-taking. It really is. It is, I would say up to now, it is the best.

Q. Even in comparison to the really old, famous, Medieval cathedrals?

Yes. In some of them I was quite astounded that they weren't as, well I mean, I am astounded that this is as new as it is. But the architecture is just superb, and the stained glass windows and everything. Erm, the only thing, which we were all just saying, is that there is not the bosses that you would find in the old cathedrals.

Q. Yes. So there have been some changes to the old style.

There have, but it is kind of, it is not out of keeping. There is a serenity here, whereas we went to, I can't think which one it was now, but there was no atmosphere there at all, it was very kind of stark and bleak and just erm...

Q. And that was an old cathedral?

Yes.

(Pause)

Q. Do you know if somebody says to you "English Cathedral" do you think of an old or a new building?

An old building.

Q. So this is quite a surprise for you?

Yes, this is just stunning. Like I said, I certainly thought it was far older than it is.

Q. Yes, a lot of people say that.

Yes, I was surprised because some of the things that we have seen in here, if they have gone modern, what you would perhaps call modern, they have spoilt it. The modern things are too modern.

Q. What sort of things are they?

Like those modern paintings, they are not really my cup of tea I have to say. But that is because I do like traditional things more. More like that reredos behind the main altar, it is just breathtaking. And even inside the Lady Chapel, it is just beautiful, and the windows, they are different as well because the stained glass is much smaller, it is more like a mosaic rather than a stained glass window. And from a distance, they are I don't know, just breath-taking really.

Q. Having come here, do you think your idea of modern architecture has changed?

Er, if it was all on this line, then certainly. I don't like all this modern stuff.

Q. I see, are you going to the Roman Catholic Cathedral?

Yes.

Q. Have you seen it?

Yes, from the outside, but there was a funeral there just as we were coming up the road, so we decided to come here first because of that. But we are on our way now.

Q. Well you have picked a good day, the light inside is spectacular on days like this.

Is it? That's another thing, I think because it is so new as well, it is just very different - so it will be an experience.

(Visitor begins to walk off).

Q. Ok, thank you.

Group Composition: Locals - Younger Couple (40s). Tourists - Older Couple (60s) from Canada.
Date: 28th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Local Male: Well we came to show these people from Canada).

Q. I see, are you relatives or friends?

(Local Male: Relatives.)

Q. Do you normally bring your visitors to the Cathedral?

(Local Male: Yes, generally.)

Q. And what is it that you think would attract your visitors to the Cathedral?

(Local Male: Well it is just such an impressive building.)

Q. So is it from an architectural point of view that you bring them?

(Local Male: Yes.) (Tourist Female: Well your sculptures and stained glass windows are also very impressive.)

Q. So it was a visit to look at the physical aspects of the building?

(Tourist Female: Yes).

Q. Did you learn anything about the Cathedral while you were here?

(Tourist Female: Well we are reading the facts as we go out now [shows leaflet] more than inside.)

Q. Really? Do you prefer to learn that way?

(Tourist Female: Yes.)

Q. So do you generally walk around, take it all in, and then read about the facts later?

(Tourist: Yes. Always).

Q. Would you bring children to this cathedral?

(Tourist Female: Very young ones, I don't know. Probably not, very young children I don't think would be that impressed and they might get bored.)

Q. I see. What did you think of the outside of the building when you first saw it?

(Tourist Female: I was very impressed. It looks very old, and she [pointing to local] told me that it is actually only about a hundred years old. But it looks like something that has been here for hundreds of years.)

Q. So on first impression did you think it was a Medieval cathedral?

(Tourist Female: Yes.)

Q. When you found out that it was newer, how did you feel? Were you disappointed?

(Tourist Female: No, no. Not disappointed. To me, the artwork that they have still managed to retain what they were able to do 300 and 400 years ago, and they have brought it back here. It is nice to know that the artwork, they have lost it, you know? The art of doing things like that.) (Local Male: The craftsmanship.)

Q. So you are glad the craftsmanship still exists?

(Tourist Female: Yes.)

Q. Before you came here, did you think that that sort of craftsmanship and skill had died out?

(Tourist Female: Well the thing is, like in Canada, there is not that much of this sort of thing: Canada being that much younger, they have lost that sense of retaining the skills, you know which gives you a lot more feeling of a church, you know? I mean you don't want to go into a church and it is just stark, like a lot of the churches back home. You know, the piety, or whatever, is gone from the church when it is stark.)

Q. That is very interesting. Have you been to the Catholic Cathedral?

(Tourist Female: Yes. I was too erm, it was different, but it's not some place like here. I mean I am a Catholic and I don't really appreciate the modern aspect of it. And like we were talking about the Stations of the Cross, like to me, I think they would scare young children.)

Q. Really? Why is that?

(Tourist Female: They are very stark and brutal looking. So I wasn't too impressed with that. I mean the idea of them is good, but I don't think they add to the piety of the church.) (Local Male: But the contrast between the two Cathedrals is very good). (Tourist Female: It is very interesting, but here it has still retained your sense of the Lord and piety. And you don't want to laugh and make loud noise in here, because it has that piety.)

Q. So the old architecture gives or adds to that feeling of piety?

(Tourist Female: Yes.)

Q. If there had been an admission charge, would you have paid it to come in?

(Tourist Female: Probably).

Q. Would you? What do you think about admission charges in cathedrals in general?

(Tourist Female: Well I am not really favourable of that. But if you want to bring back something of what you have seen of a country that you have visited, you are more willing to pay. Whereas at home, you are more apt not to do it.)

Q. Because you are more used to the ones at home, and you don't have that need to take back something of those?

(Tourist Female: Yes.)

Q. You know when you go home, will it give you a feeling of pride to say to people, that you have visited Liverpool Cathedral?

(Tourist: Yes, oh yes.) [Group begin to fidget.]

Q. Ok, well thank you, that's it.

Group Composition: Two older ladies. Local (60s). Tourist (60s) from Midlands.
Date: 28th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because I have always wanted to see it. (Local: You've not been able to come here in the past have you?) I have been to Liverpool once or twice, but this is the first time I have managed to get in here.

Q. And where are you from?

The Midlands, Kings Winford.

Q. And did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came in here?

No, no idea.

Q. But you knew there was a Cathedral in Liverpool.

Oh yes, yes.

Q. What has your experience been like in here today?

It has been wonderful, I have thoroughly enjoyed it.

Q. In what way?

Oh the architecture.

Q. So it was predominantly an architectural visit?

Yes, and because it is a church as well.

Q. So there was a religious side to your visit as well.

Yes.

Q. Do you feel different leaving now, than when you came in?

I am thrilled that I have been in and seen it. Because I have wanted to see it for a long long time.

Q. How did you hear about the cathedral? What made you want to see it?

Well I have always known it has been here. And having been to Liverpool two or three times and not being able to come, I made the effort today.

(Local moves off, tourist follows).

Q. Ok, that's fine thank you.

Group Composition: Group of four women (40s-50s) from North of England.
Date: 28th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Tourist 1: We are on a long weekend break in Liverpool, and we wanted to see both the Catholic and Anglican Cathedrals.)

Q. Really? From a religious point of view?

(Tourist 1: No no, well my friend here [pointing to Tourist 2] is interested in architecture and stained glass windows.)

Q. Really? Are you an expert?

(Tourist 2: Oh no, I just like that sort of thing. [laughs]) (Tourist 1: And erm, we also want to see the Albert Dock and that, but we wanted to see the Cathedrals first.)

Q. So are you doing a touristy type of visit to Liverpool?

(Tourist 1: As much as anything yes.)

Q. [To Tourist 2] What is it that fascinates you about stained glass windows?

(Tourist 2: The colours.)

Q. That's interesting, someone has said this before. But then I thought: 'well there is colour all around us, what is so special about the colours in stained glass windows?')

(Tourist 3: The colours outside are not the same.) (Tourist 2: The lights).

Q. The lights?

(Tourist 4: Well we were saying before, it is like when you were a child and you had one of those old fashioned kaleidoscope toys. The colours are just so bright.)

Q. So it is a fascination with their colours?

(Tourists: Yes.)

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

(Tourist 1: Well I was taken aback by how young the church was really. I thought it was a lot older than that.)

Q. Did you? When you first saw it did you think it was Medieval?

(Tourist: I wouldn't have said Medieval, no perhaps Medieval yes.)

Q. And how did you find out its real age?

(Tourist 1: Well we got it off one of those leaflets, and it has got the details about it.)

Q. Did you feel disappointed when you found out that it was so young?

(Tourist 1: No. Just surprised, because I felt that they have made it look like it is a lot older. I mean it is quite a stark contrast with the Catholic Cathedral. And you feel that, you know when you look at this, and you think, I mean I don't know whether there is any restoration fund that is involved with this, but there is an awful lot of work that needs to be done with the Catholic one isn't there?)

Q. Yes. Where you surprised that we still have the skills to create something like this in the old style?

(Tourist 1: Yes. I tend to feel that some of the skills have died out, but erm Pauline [Tourist 2] was particularly interested in the tools that they were using. [laughs])

Q. Were you? Did you see the tool exhibition?

(Tourist 2: Yes. I would never have thought that those were the tools that they used to build something like this.). (Tourist 1: Yes, we said they can't be the tools that they used - never! [laughs])

Q. Because they seem so small?

(Tourist 2: Yes, so fragile looking.)

Q. If there had been an admission charge to come in, would you have paid it?

(Tourists 1 and 2: Yes.)

Q. Do you agree with admission charges for cathedrals?

(Tourist 1: Well when you think of it, with a lot of exhibitions and museums and that, you have to pay to get in.) (Tourist 2: I don't think in the Catholic one they stated how much did they? They said £2.) (Tourist 1: Yes, they said they would like £2). (Tourist 3: But then it says that here, if you would make a donation, put in £2. Well I didn't put £2 in because I thought I am only going to give what I want to give. But there is a thing about whether people should pay. I know some people may not want to pay or can't afford to pay, so therefore it is a restriction, and I don't think that that should happen. But going back nearly 40 years nearly, I went to Holland and we had to pay to go in the churches there. I went with the Catholic nuns and we had to pay to go in the churches).

Q. Just the churches or the cathedrals as well?

(Tourist 3: Oh the cathedrals as well).

Q. Would you bring young children to this Cathedral?

(Tourist 1: Yes definitely).

Q. You don't think they would be bored or frightened by it?

(Tourist 1: No.)

Q. If you brought them, and they started to create a fuss, would you take them out?

(Tourist 1: Well I have got grand-children, and they go to church every Sunday anyway. And the churches attitude should be particularly, I mean when you look at the cathedral over there and it says "suffer little

children come unto me" I think you have got to say 'yes, how are children ever going to get these experiences unless they are brought to these places at an early age'. So you know, I think if they make a noise, they make a noise.)

Q. So you don't have the idea that the staff are going to frown on you?

(Tourist 1: I doubt it. [laughs])

Q. What would you like to learn about cathedrals when you visit them? Or first of all do you like to learn about cathedrals when you visit them?

(Tourist 2: Oh yes.)

Q. And what is it that you would like to learn about them?

(Tourist 2: Well I would like to know why they made them so high. Why are they so huge? You know and things like that.) (Tourist 3: Yes, I would like to know why there are so many different rooms all over it. Do they use them, you know?) (Tourist 1: Well you were saying weren't you, you said "do they still have services here", and I said well of course they do, it is a church first and foremost isn't it? They have ordinary services everyday, or every week just like any other church.)

Q. If you saw a priest in here would you be surprised?

(Tourist 1: Oh no.)

Q. So you do expect to see clergy walking around when you go to a cathedral?

(Tourist 1: Oh yes. The organist was playing in the Catholic one when we were there just this morning.)

Q. What was that like?

(Tourist 2: Oh it was lovely.)

Q. Did it enhance your visit?

(Tourists: Oh yes, definitely.) (Tourist 1: Music would help.)

Q. So if the organ was playing or -

(Tourist 1: If the choir was rehearsing, it adds to it doesn't it?).

Q. Would it make it feel more like a holy building or an architectural phenomenon?

(Tourist 1: It would make it feel like a holy building, yes. I am not so sure whether I like that [pointing to art exhibition])

Q. The art exhibition?

(Tourist 1: No. I tend to feel that perhaps should be in a separate room somewhere, you know, like the shop is.)

Q. Why don't you like it?

(Tourist 1: Well it is bringing something into the church on a commercial basis isn't it?)

Q. I see?

(Tourist 1: It doesn't belong. But I know that it is a priest that did it. [the paintings])

Q. Yes, that's right.

(Tourist 1: Do they use that part as a gallery all the time?)

Q. Erm, not all the time, they have concerts there as well.

(Tourist 1: Right I see, well I am surprised at that.)

Q. Have you not seen that in a cathedral before?

(Tourist 1: No.).

Q. Well don't let me keep you any longer. Thank you.

Group Composition: Older male (50s) from Isle of Wight.
Date: 28th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because of the organs. I have an interest in pipe organs, not electric organs.

Q. Oh so you came to the Cathedral specifically for the organs?

Yes, I understand that this is the biggest organ that they have got in Liverpool, and I understand that it was built in Liverpool itself. I think it was down the road somewhere that they have got the factory?

Q. Oh, the Willis factory?

Yes.

Q. Are you an organist?

I started to play the organ four weeks ago before I came away, and my neighbours are not happy [laughs].

Q. Where are you from?

The Isle of Wight.

Q. And did you come to the Cathedral to specifically see this organ?

I came up here to find out specifically to see when they had the organ concerts and I also wanted to have a look from the top of the tower and I was too late, it was closed.

Q. Oh what a shame. Well what has your experience been like here anyway?

I came up here last time two years ago, and I am still amazed at how big the place is, I think it is a fantastic place. I like walking around, looking at the building itself, structurally basically.

Q. So it is an architectural visit as well as for the organ?

Yes.

Q. Did you learn anything about the Cathedral while you were here?

I bought some books on it last time, but I haven't been able to get them translated for me yet [presume visitor had special needs] I will sort out one day when I can get someone to do that for me.

Q. So do you prefer to take information away with you when you visit cathedrals and read it then?

Well I have got a job to read [laughs]. But I am easier if somebody takes me around I am easier. And of course guided tours are what I go for when I am in places like this.

Q. Did you go on a guided tour today?

No. It is a bit of a rush job today

Q. I see, well I won't keep you much longer. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

I do sometimes. I am quite amazed that I do, but I do actually visit quite a few sometimes.

Q. And what is the attraction then?

I don't know.

Q. It is a difficult one isn't it?

I think with a lot of them I look with interest to see if they have modernised the place. Because I am rather strongly of the opinion that they shouldn't be modernised them with gas central heating and stuff like that, and also of course with the organs themselves.

Q. Really? A lot of organs are electric or are powered by electric generators. Why don't you like the idea of modernisation?

I have always liked the old stuff.

Q. Is old better?

I think it is more reliable. I mean if the electric generator breaks down you have no organ. I like wind type bellows.

Q. That is interesting because at Chester Cathedral, the floor of the nave had been there since the 1700's and it had to be taken up because it was becoming very dangerous, you know, very pitted and so last year they got rid of it and put in under-floor heating, and put down a new floor. Would you have been opposed to that?

Well I would have put the original floor back as it was.

Q. Really, so you prefer?

To keep things as original as possible.

Q. What did you think of the shop here, because that is an additional part to the Cathedral?

Well, it is in the Cathedral itself and it is in keeping with the Cathedral. If you go down to Truro, they have added on to the Cathedral itself, they have added on a very large souvenir shop, which I don't think is right.

Q. Is it a modern building?

It is a modern building, and it sticks out like a sore thumb.

[Visitor begins to walk off)

Q. Ok, that's been very interesting, thank you.

LIVERPOOL METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL.

Interview Code: LM1

Group Composition: Two older women Local - older lady (60's). Tourist - older lady (60s) from London.

Date: 24th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well I am visiting Liverpool for virtually the first time properly, so I wanted to see the two Cathedrals.

Q. I see. Where are you from?

London.

Q. And so you wanted to visit the Cathedrals?

Yes.

Q. Had you heard about the Cathedrals before you came to Liverpool?

Yes.

Q. Did you know what they looked like before you came?

Vaguely yes. I mean I recognised them as soon as I saw them.

Q. And that was the main motivation for you to come here, as they were part of Liverpool?

Yes.

Q. And what has your experience been like while you have been in here?

Well, I thought this one is beautiful. It is very modern - completely different to what I am used to. But having made that sort of adjustment, I think it is lovely. And I was just saying, I think it must be very inspiring to worship here with a huge congregation. I think it's the lighting and the colour, and the circle shape, so that you are very much more of a family. I think that is the modern sort of leaning that the church is having now isn't it. Trying to get that sort of atmosphere of togetherness and everyone being equal.

Q. Is your perception of English cathedral's one of old building?

Yes, I suppose so. Yes.

Q. So is that why the adjustment had to be made when you came here?

Well not really, because I already knew that it was going to be very modern. And I have been in other modern churches, and we have just modernised part of our own church, so I am very happy about that. You know, sometimes it is easy to mix the two together in one building, sometimes it isn't. But both styles have their place. With the old ones you have got a real atmosphere of prayer and worship down the centuries, and here it is sort of vibrant and alive.

Q. Do you think that is something to do with the lack of tombs and graves in there, which you get at older cathedrals?

Yes, I am not at all interested in reading tombs. I mean I look at it as a place of worship primarily.

Q. Rather than just an historic tourist attraction?

Exactly.

Q. So has it been a positive experience?

Yes, very.

Q. Thank you for stopping.

Group Composition: Two couples. Locals (60s). Tourists (60s) from Sussex.
Date: 24th August 1998.

(Interviewed both males).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Tourist: Well having seen, as I consider it, the main city Cathedral, I thought well now I am here, I may as well see the more modern one. And I must admit, I'm sorry, but it doesn't get me at all.)

Q. So it doesn't do anything for you?

(Tourist: Nothing whatsoever.)

Q. So do you think your visit to the Anglican Cathedral could have jaded you in a way?

(Tourist: Well possibly. Because one likes to see a... as I would associate churches and places of worship in stone more than, concrete. It is too modern for me.)

Q. Is your perception of English cathedrals one of old buildings?

(Tourist: Yes, I think I do. Yes.) (Local: My sentiments exactly.)

Q. So you would have preferred it if it had been an old style cathedral then?

(Tourist: They should have tried to build a replica, of something that is old you know?)

Q. Really? So even if it is a modern building, if it is built in the old style, that's ok?

(Tourist: Yes.)

Q. Because some people who go to the Anglican Cathedral, actually think it is hundreds of years old and they are so disappointed when they find it is new. So you wouldn't be disappointed?

(Tourist: No, not at all. I mean looking at this one from the outside, it's atrocious. (Local: Terrible. I mean I know there is a lot of building going on, but it just looks awful.) (Tourist: It hasn't weathered at all well.)

Q. So it hasn't been a positive experience today then?

(Local: Not at this one.) (Tourist: Not this one no. No it is rather disappointing to think that something like this is so adjacent to something like that [pointing to the Anglican]. But then again, it is not the same for everyone.)

Q. Well that is true. The lady I interviewed before you thought that it was wonderful. She thought it was a reflection of the modern era.

(Tourist: Well I suppose because religion goes way way back, you don't associate something like this with the birth of Christ.)

Q. I see, what do you feel about modern architecture in general?

(Tourist: Again I am not all that struck with modern architecture, it has got to be really, you know, it has really got to take one's eye to appreciate it.) (Local: Well we pointed that out, we were on the river about two days ago, and you have got those beautiful three buildings of Liverpool. You know the Liver Building, the Custom House and the Cunard Building and then just over on the left there is that absolutely atrocious building, its modern and it's just all squares).

Q. Oh yes, I know the one you mean. But then a lot of the docks were destroyed during the War, and they had to rebuild very quickly.

(Tourist: But wouldn't you think, I mean the chap that designed that Cathedral over there, he knocked part of it down because he wasn't happy with it. Why didn't they do the same with this? (laughs). I mean surely someone must have stood back and said 'it just doesn't go'.)

Q. So it doesn't feel like 'a cathedral' to you?

(Tourist: No. No it doesn't.)

Q. So are you here as tourists?

(Tourist: I personally am. I am from Sussex.) (Local: and I am from Ellesmere Port).

Q. (To local). And do you normally bring people to the two Cathedrals when they visit you?

(Local: Normally yes. But actually this is the first time that we have brought anyone to this Cathedral. We always go to the Anglican. But we nearly didn't get here this time, we went around three times looking for somewhere to park, because my wife is disabled so we wanted somewhere close by. So it is not very well sign posted. The sign posts on the road were ok getting here, but parking was terrible. And actually we went in the wrong entrance at first, and walked in on a service!)

(Party start to move off.)

Q. Ok that's fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Two couples. Locals (50s). Tourists (50's) from United States.
Date: 24th August 1998.

(Interviewed tourist female).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because we are touring Liverpool.

Q. So it is part of what being a tourist in Liverpool is about?

Yes, we will try to visit all the major buildings.

Q. So it is an interest in buildings?

Basically, yes.

Q. And what have you experienced today while you have been in the Cathedral?

Erm. (laughs) Just interesting architecture.

Q. Really?

And the light. The use of the light and the colours are very clever.

Q. So has it been a positive experience?

Yes.

Q. Do you perceive cathedrals as old buildings?

No. I mean coming from the States, we do not have that many old buildings and cathedrals.

Q. And have you been to the Anglican Cathedral?

Yes.

Q. And how has your visit there compared with here?

Quite a contrast.

Q. Has it been the same type of experience.

Pretty much yes. I find them both fascinating.

Q. Really?

(Pause: could see visitor was unwilling.)

Q. Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Younger couple (20s) from London.

Date: 24th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because I am visiting Liverpool and I wanted to see the two Cathedrals.

Q. So you are visiting Liverpool and this is one of the places you visit as a tourist here?

That's right, yes.

Q. And what have you experienced while you have been in the Cathedral today?

I think I am in awe really. The colours are spectacular. The colours of the windows. I am surprised that it is a modern cathedral. I wasn't expecting that.

Q. Really? Have you been to the Anglican cathedral?

Yes.

Q. And what was your experience like there compared to this?

It was the same really.

Q. Has your visit here been a positive experience?

Yes. But I think I am a bit frightened by this place actually.

Q. What was it that made you frightened?

I don't know really. You feel that you have to surrender to it somehow.

(Could see visitor was uneasy)

Ok. That's fine. Thank you.

Group Composition: Two couples. Locals (60s). Tourists (60s) from Canada.
Date: 24th August 1998.

(Interviewed male tourist)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we are staying with relatives and they thought that this would be a thing for us to see.

Q. So it was one of the attractions in Liverpool that they thought you should see?

So I understand.

Q. I wonder what they thought you would like about it?

I think it was the unique architecture, because Liverpool is very proud of it, as well as being proud of the sandstone Cathedral. And this we have heard spoken affectionately of over the past couple of days and so we wanted to see it.

Q. I see. Did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came here?

Well I had heard it was described as 'Paddy's Wigwam'. Again with affection... and we had seen it too, looking down from the tower of the other Cathedral.

Q. And what have you actually experienced while you have been in the Cathedral today?

Oh, a huge sense of space and colour. Erm, we could see that the time of day would have a big effect on the feeling of the Cathedral. I was surprised, even though we knew that it was round, by the fact that the altar was in the middle. And then watched as we went around, we watched, particularly as the red colour on the far side where the sun was, and how it was starting to flood into the Cathedral.

Q. So was it interesting from an architectural point of view then?

Yes, and we puzzled why there are sixteen sections for instance. We wondered what was of Christian significance about the sixteen sections, and think maybe it has something to do with all the points of the compass.

Q. Probably.

And interest in the organ. I haven't seen many organs with such a large horn section. And it must be really exciting when the horns begin to play.

Q. Oh yes, the sound is very unusual.

Yes, I can imagine it is quite a challenge for any musical performance in here.

Q. Yes. What is your perception of an English cathedral? What sort of image springs to mind when you hear the term?

Oh I think of the cathedrals that we have seen.

Q. Really Have you seen many?

Oh not many. We have seen Canterbury, and we have seen quite a few in Europe. But more as historical rather than religious connotations.

Q. So you visit them as an historical tourist, rather than say, as a pilgrim?

Yeah, but I think that every one of them effects you in some way.

Q. Oh that's interesting. So did you feel a sense of God's presence in the Cathedral today?

Erm, well more from the reaction of the people coming and kneeling and presenting themselves, rather than the structure itself. The structure is more of a curiosity.

Q. So the behaviour of the people in here made it feel like a religious building?

Yes.

Q. A positive or negative experience?

Oh positive. I mean I just sat there to try to absorb it, and I haven't absorbed it yet. I think because it's changing all the time. It's dynamic isn't it? And it changes with the position of the sun. So you glance at it one minute, and then when you look again, it has changed. So yes, it is really quite alive.

Q. Yes. So when you go home, if somebody says to you "Liverpool Roman Catholic Cathedral", what sort of images will you bring up?

Oh I guess the shape from outside, and the sense of light on the inside.

Q. What a good summary! That's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) from South of England.

Date: 24th August 1998

(Interviewed male).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we are on holiday in the area, on the Wirral. We have known for a long time that there are two Cathedrals in Liverpool, so we are just comparing the two. And the difference between the two Cathedrals is quite amazing.

Q. Yes, they are at opposite ends of the scale aren't they?

Yes. Well you have got the Protestant one, which is looking its age. This is modern, it is different, it is a new concept in architecture this, for a church. I think it is quite impressive. The other one looks like it needs a good clean to be honest.

Q. So you think it is looking sooty?

Yes inside and out. I don't know if that is the natural colour.

Q. I think the sandstone ages that way. Did you know what this Cathedral looked like before you came here?

Yes.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

I am impressed with it. It's different.

Q. Really?

Yes, it is moving away from my concept of what a church or cathedral should be, but it is different. I mean a modern concept - why not? I can take it on board.

Q. So do you have a perception of cathedrals as being old buildings?

Yes, I think you do. I mean everybody does. I mean you have got York Minster and places like that which are quite fascinating, but I find this one equally so. I mean I just thought I had got round it, and then I realised I still had half of it to go. I was fascinated by the crucifixes on the wall.

Q. Oh the Stations of the Cross?

Yes.

Q. What did you think of them?

I was quite impressed with them really. They tell the story well.

Q. When you go home and somebody says to you 'Liverpool Roman Catholic Cathedral', what sort of images will you bring up?

Paddy's Wigwam! The affectionate name I think I will use for it, there is nothing wrong with that. I think it is just about right, it sums it up.

Q. So has it been a positive experience?

Yes, I quite enjoyed it.

Q. Has it changed your perception of modern architecture?

No. Modern architecture leaves a lot to be desired still. But then again, this might not be my cup of tea, but I accept that it is a new concept and people have different ideas, so fair enough let them have them.

Q. Ok, that's it. Thank you for stopping.

Group Composition: Local male (40s). Tourist female (40s) from West Midlands.
Date: 24th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Local: Well I am a native, and I have never been in this Cathedral. And Jean is a colleague of mine and she is from the Midlands, and she suggested that we go and have a look at the Cathedral, and I thought that it was a good idea, because we have got some time to kill).

Q. I see, and are you visiting just this Cathedral?

(Tourist: Just this one because I have been to the other one before)

Q. And what was the attraction about this Cathedral today?

(Tourists: That we were parked just outside really [laughs]) (Local: And we hadn't been in it). (Tourist: And I wanted to see it, I have seen it on the telly from the outside.)

Q. I was about to say, did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came here?

(Tourist: Yes, we were just talking about Hillsborough and all that.)

Q. I see, and what have you experienced while you have been in the Cathedral?

(Tourist: It is very nice, very round. Beautiful. Very different from what I expected. I liked the sculptures, the sculptures were beautiful). (Local: Yes, I was just going to say, I like the sculptures).

Q. The Stations of the Cross sculptures?

Yes.

Q. Has your visit been a positive experience then?

(Both: Yes).

Q. When somebody says the term "English Cathedral" to you, what sort of image do you bring up?

(Tourist: Not like this. An old building.) (Local: Gothic, and stuff like that).

Q. That is different. So did you mind that this was a modern cathedral, different to your perception?

(Tourist: No, not at all. Its refreshing because it is so different. But I have been to quite a lot of Catholic churches that are modern, so it doesn't worry too much really.)

Q. When you go home, and somebody says to you "Liverpool Roman Catholic Cathedral", what sort of images do you think you will bring up?

(Tourist: Lots of windows, lots of light, beautiful. Better looking inside than outside.)

Q. Yes, so many people say that.

(Tourist: Yes, I think this entrance bit is a bit concrete. I don't like this, it is a bit like a library isn't it?)

Q. Do you feel different coming out than when you came in?

(Tourist: Yes, I feel refreshed, a lot lighter? Do you?) (Local: I feel a bit more guilty!) (Tourist: I just feel lighter, I thought it was good, I am glad I have done it).

Q. Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: 3 older ladies (nuns). Locals (50s). Tourist (40s) from Peru.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Local: Well we have come here today to bring one of our sisters who is from Peru).

Q. So is there a religious side to your visit then?

(Local: Yes we are sisters).

Q. From what order?

(Local: Sisters of Notre Dame).

Q. And what has your visitor's experience been like here today, If you can ask her for me?

(Tourist: Beautiful. Different. She is please with the great welcome that those who were around gave.)

Q. Can you ask her why here experience was different. Is coming to a modern cathedral different for her?

(Tourist: Not really because in Peru as well they have many modern churches and ancient churches.)

Q. I see. And are you going to any other cathedrals in England?

(Tourist: To the Anglican Cathedral).

Q. So has it been a positive experience?

(Tourist: Yes, it has been a good experience).

Q. Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Single male (30s). Ex-patriot from Hong Kong.
Date: 24th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Erm, well I am just visiting Liverpool, and just killing time, walking around. And I know of this place, so I thought I would just come and have a look. I am not interested in the church, but I am interested in buildings.

Q. So it is primarily an architectural visit?

Yes. And I have never been inside it.

Q. Did you know what it looked like before you came here?

Well when I visited Liverpool last time, I've walked past here but have never been inside. But now I have got a day in Liverpool I just thought I would come and take a look and see what it is like from the inside.

Q. I see, and have you been to the Anglican Cathedral as well?

No I haven't, but I might do that actually. It looks nice from the outside.

Q. Yes, it is quite a contrast.

Yes, I like those old buildings.

Q. Really? Does this Cathedral fit with your idea of an English cathedral?

Erm, that sort of thing doesn't mean a lot to me. I mean as a building, I think it is a good idea. I like the pieces of glass work, but I have no religion so it doesn't mean anything to me. It looks very scruffy from the outside, but I think they are cleaning it up now. It is probably a lot to do with traffic pollution.

Q. Yes. What has your experience been like in there today?

Well I was only in there for about two minutes, but... nothing. I mean I don't really have any religion. I mean it is not sort of awe-inspiring. I mean if you had religion, and you were a Christian, you might think that your God is near you, but to me it is just a pile of concrete.

Q. So it did nothing for you then?

No, no. It is nice to walk in a big space, and the colours are quite nice you know. It was just a good feeling, because that general feeling of having soft light coming through is nice anyway.

Q. Yes, the light is pretty. So has it been a positive experience?

Well, I am not really bothered either way.

Q. Neutral?

Yes, it is just a place. I mean I could walk into a chip shop and say 'oh well this is quite nice' so it would be all the same for me. But erm, yes it is all right. Mind you, I tell you where I have been, that was quite moving, the Blue Mosque in Istanbul. That was just breath-taking.

Q. I see, and that was an architectural experience?

Yes.

Q. Do you think you were comparing that to this?

Only in the sense that it is a great big enormous space with religious connotations and a high roof you know. But as I say, when you have no religion at all, it is not the same. I mean the Blue Mosque, it is just absolutely fabulous just from the craftsmanship point of view. I mean I am a craftsman, I am a carpenter. So when I can someone has done gilt which is like a hundred feet high, I think, 'how did they do that?' I mean its like that Cathedral over there. It is all stone carvings, and they had no machinery, no cranes and no jack hammers.

Q. So do you feel that that craftsmanship still exists today?

Yes, if you can find someone willing to pay for it. I mean there are people doing stained glass, but obviously pre-cast concrete is easier than carving gargoyles that take ten years to do or something. But yes, I think that you have to come to somewhere like England to see that. I mean I live in Hong Kong where it is all like this [pointing to interior] you see? It is all chrome and glass, so that's probably why this place never did anything for me, because I see things like it back at home all the time.

Q. Oh yes I see.

Yes, this would be a coal house or something like that (laughs). Which is why when I come to England, I go the other way. I mean I see old stone buildings with big timbers and I knock them to see if they are real, and I think, 'God that is fabulous, its real'.

Q. Because it is so different from what you are used to?

Yes, I think there are still good tradesmen over here. I mean nothing is made of brick in Hong Kong, everything is cast concrete. But here, when you walk around, even if it is a telephone exchange or something, the brick work is really spot on.

Q. Even with the modern buildings?

Oh yes, it is really sharp, you know the tradesmen are good. Mind you in here you can see it has been done cheaply, I mean those aluminium doors there, they make the place look like a supermarket.

Q. Yes, a lady I have just interviewed said it was like walking into a library.

Yes, and a bit of a museum, you know, with the recesses around there. And then there is the sort of, well you can see that you are living in the present day because they have to have security guards on the door. You know you walk in and there are guys in uniform, and there is a nice little alcove over there with a massive iron grill across the front.

(Pause)

Well I suppose it has some secrets. I mean I have no religion, I always thought it was a con, you know people have always been awe-inspired by things like these places and gilt bibles. You know, a hundred years ago if you waved a gilt bible in people's faces they were awe-inspired, but if it had been written like a comic,

it wouldn't have had the same effect. It is like all the Gothic stuff from the Middle Ages, that was the same sort of thing. But here, it is actually quite good because it feels like the people's place, they haven't tried to frighten people, it could be a library.

Q. That's very interesting.

Anyway, is that all right?

Q. Yes, that is fine. Thank you.

Group Composition: 3 younger women. Locals (20s). Tourist (20s) from Spain.
Date: 24th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Local: Well we are bringing our Spanish friend to visit).

Q. So is the Cathedral part of being a tourist in Liverpool.

(Locals: Yes).

Q. And are you going to the Anglican as well?

(Local: We have already been there as well).

Q. (To tourist) And what has your experience been like here today?

(Tourist: That Cathedral [pointing to Anglican] was very cold.)

Q. Is it? And what about this Cathedral today?

(Tourist: Very modern.)

Q. So it is modern?

(Tourist: Yes, very different from Spanish ones.)

Q. Are there are any cathedrals in Spain that are modern?

(Tourist: I think there are more churches that are modern than cathedrals.)

Q. Was it a positive experience?

(Tourist: Yes, of course.)

Q. Did you feel a sense of God's presence or spirituality?

(Yes, it was religious.)

Q. And how about the Cathedral across there, you said it was cold?

(Tourist: Yes we went to the top of the tower, it was very windy and cold. But inside it is cold for me, I don't know why, maybe because my religious beliefs are Catholic. I think it is too big).

Q. So it feels too big, so it is just a like a massive building?

(Tourist: Yes, but it is better inside than outside. The outside is very cold and plain). (Local: Yes, you couldn't identify what style it was could you? You wanted to know what style it was). (Tourist: Yes, I did not recognise the style).

(At this point security guard joined in and interview ended).

Group Composition: Older couple (70s) from Northern Ireland.
Date: 27th August 1998.

(Interviewed Male.)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because I have often seen it on TV and I am not a Roman, I am an Anglican. So I have come here out of curiosity more than anything.

Q. Oh I see, where are you from?

I am on holiday, I am from Londonderry.

Q. Are you going to visit both Cathedrals today then?

Yes.

Q. And what was the attraction of this Cathedral for you?

I just wanted to see the inside of it, you know? After seeing it so many times on the telly.

Q. So you wanted to see its architecture?

Yes, that was the main reason.

Q. I see, and what have you experienced in here today?

I just walked around, you know? And looked at it. I haven't really experienced anything. I think it is because I am a traditionalist, I like churches and cathedrals built in the old way.

Q. So your idea of a cathedral is something more like that? (pointing to the Anglican)

Yes. These modern designs you know, they don't really appeal to me. But I thought I would just come along to this one and have a look.

Q. So this didn't fit with your idea of what a cathedral should look like?

No.

Q. Did it feel like a religious place?

Oh yes it does. Any building that is used for worship, when you go into them, you do feel a certain something.

Q. Can you describe it?

Erm, just a quietness, a silence, you know? A peaceful atmosphere.

Q. So did you feel peaceful in there?

Yes, oh yes

Q. And do you feel different going out now, than you did when you came in?

No.

Q. So it didn't have a very significant effect on you then?

No.

Q. When you go back to Londonderry, if somebody says to you, "Liverpool Catholic Cathedral", what sort of images will you bring up?

It depends who is saying it, you know? Being an Anglican, I belong to an Anglican church back home, and if I said that I had been to Liverpool Catholic Cathedral, some might say I shouldn't have been going in there.

Q. Is that because of the problems that they are having over there?

Yes.

Q. I see, so how about if you just hear the name of this Cathedral, will any images spring to mind?

Erm. Catholics. I mean I am not a biased person, but some people back home will not agree with me being here today. But I just wanted to come in here, because I have seen it on TV, and I wanted to see the inside of it as a building.

Q. Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Younger couple (20's) from Switzerland.

Date: 27th August 1998.

(Interviewed female).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we are Catholics, and we heard about the round shape of this Cathedral.

Q. I see, so you heard about the shape of the Cathedral and wanted to come and see it?

Yes.

Q. Is a round cathedral an unusual thing for you?

Yes it is. I was also wondering about the lights, because I also heard about them. I was here about a month ago, and it was raining so it was dark, and I wanted to see it now, on a bright sunny day like today.

Q. Oh the stained glass windows?

Yes.

Q. Yes, the weather does make such a difference.

Yes.

Q. So was it just for the Cathedral's architecture and glass, or was there a religious side to your visit?

Well, I think both. It is nice to see the architecture, but it is also nice to have a few minutes break and feel the religious atmosphere.

Q. Yes, where are you from?

Switzerland.

Q. So are you on holiday here?

Well I am staying in Chester for 3 months to improve my English, and he is just on holiday (laughs).

Q. And Chester has got a Cathedral hasn't it, have you been into that?

Yes.

Q. I see. And what have you experienced while you have been in the Cathedral today?

Well we were very impressed to see so many people there were inside. Actually, I would like to see inside when all the people are worshipping here. It must be nice.

Q. Did you feel a sense of God's presence today?

Erm. I think it is the first time we have been in there and it looked quite strange, and I don't know how you call it, the lights in the middle, the material they were made from looked a bit hard and cold and sharp.

Q. Oh the crown over the altar?

Yes.

Q. And you thought it looked harsh and cold?

Yes.

Q. So for you it didn't feel like a sense of God's presence?

Yes, and also, well we are used to churches which are older and have little golden things, like ornaments. I mean I like it in here, it is more modern, but very different. And I think you have to get used to it first, before it can feel the same as a normal church.

Q. Is your idea of an English cathedral, one of an old building?

Yes. Absolutely. Because we always think of them like as the castles, everything is old, so we expect the same with churches.

Q. Have you been to this Cathedral? (pointing to the Anglican).

Yes, I have. And I would like to show him the other Cathedral.

Q. And does that fit more with your idea of what a cathedral should look like?

Yes.

Q. Ok, that is very interesting. Thank you.

Group Composition: Younger couple (30's) from Germany.
Date: 27th August 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

I like visiting cathedrals.

Q. Do you? So do you visit cathedrals all the time or just when you are on holiday?

On holiday mostly, I am on holiday now.

Q. Really? And what is the attraction of cathedrals for you?

I don't know. I have been raised a Catholic, so I am quite interested in the architecture really and the spirit that is in it, and that's about it really.

Q. So there is architecture and the religious side of things as well?

Yes.

Q. The architecture of this Cathedral is very modern -

I like it.

Q. Do you? Because when I ask people about when they think of the word cathedral, they say they always think of an old building.

Oh no. That is why I came here. I mean it is the second time I have been. I was here about ten years ago, and I was going to show it to my friend, because he likes cathedrals, he is used to seeing old ones, so I thought I would bring him here to show him something completely different. And the school I went to, we had quite a modern styled chapel and I really liked it. I like the lights, the play with the lights in it.

Q. Yes, it is very clever isn't it? What has your experience been like in there today, was it as good as the last time?

No, not as good, because I was not as surprised this time. I knew what was coming. Last time when I came it was brilliant, because all of a sudden you got these lights from all sides, and so this time I knew that would happen, and I was prepared for it.

Q. And how about your friend?

He liked it. The only thing he didn't like was the windows which are red stripes going down like that. He said they looked like neon lights and he didn't like those. But he liked the rest. We both liked the way of, how do you call it, the forty stations?

Q. Oh the Stations of the Cross.

Yes, I think they expressed the suffering quite well.

Q. Did you feel a sense of God's presence in there today?

Not really, because I was more interested in looking at the things around, the architecture. So not today no.

Q. So you were more interested in just looking at it?

Yes.

Q. Are you going to go to the other Cathedral?

Yes, I have been there and now I am taking my friend. Last time I went there first and then to this one, maybe that is why I felt such a difference with this one, because I had seen that one first.

Q. And does that fit more with your idea of what an English cathedral looks like?

Yes, it does.

(Visitors begin to walk away).

Q. Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Two older couples. Locals (60s). Tourists (70s) from Scotland.

Date: 27th August 1998.

(Interviewed female tourist).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we came here today because it is a new cathedral, and we have visited a great number of the older, others like York Minster, Exeter, Salisbury, and because this was a new cathedral, we just wanted to see what it was like.

Q. Yes it is so different isn't it?

Yes, the only other new one that we have been to of course, is Coventry. And that time we didn't have anything else to compare it with because a modern cathedral was such a new thing. And Truro Cathedral, is another which is comparatively new, but compared to Exeter and such, no.

Q. So did you compare this Cathedral with Coventry at all today?

Yes. Well, as I say they are so different from the other cathedrals. I think the wall hangings are beautiful. Erm. I don't know that I would like to worship here. We are Catholics, but I don't know. Cathedrals are different from ordinary churches.

Q. In what way?

Well in our little church near Glasgow, we have a vibrant congregations, but a not to big congregation, and you are always sitting next to somebody that you know. But I could imagine that in a cathedral, very often that doesn't happen. Well the only one that I can compare it with, not so much for the building, but in Bruges Cathedral. I was there a few years ago, and I went to mass, and it was mainly tourists, and it didn't have the same feeling. I can imagine that to be the same here.

Q. So do you feel that cathedrals are attended by tourists during times of worship?

Erm, well one's in big cities yes.

(At this point, batteries in tape recorder ran out).

Group Composition: Local (60s) and Tourists (Teens) from France.
Date: 27th August 1998.

(Tourists could not speak English - interviewed local).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

I have come here because I bringing and educating four French students to speak English as a foreign language. So part of their cultural experience is to visit places of cultural interest.

Q. I see and the Cathedrals are part of that?

Yes. To look at the architecture. He (pointing to one student) wants to be an architect, and although they may not be practising Catholics, for them it is an experience to see a place of cultural experience.

Q. And what do you think they have experienced today?

(Translated: We like the Anglican Cathedral, especially the architecture.)

Q Can you ask them why they prefer the architecture of that one?

(Translated: This is modern and they prefer the more traditional. I myself prefer the interior of this, it's quite nice, but the exterior I don't like at all, all concrete. And you can see in the designs of the buildings... that was built a hundred and fifty years ago they started, this was only built in the 1950's and already they are having to carry out major repairs, that is doesn't say much about modern buildings does it?)

Q. That is interesting, do you think that modern buildings are not as valuable as old in terms of the way that they were built and the attitude which they were built with?

Well I think that is difficult for contemporaries to comment on that, in the sense that, when you live at the time a place is built, it is difficult to make a forecast of what people will think in 200 years time. I think that in 200 years time (pointing to the Anglican) that will still look very similar, they will have to carry out a lot of repairs on this building - if it is still standing.

Q. I see, can you ask your students if it has been a good experience at this Cathedral?

(Translated: It was different)

Q. Ok, that's fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60's) from Gateshead.

Date: 27th August 1998.

(Interviewed husband).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we came on a visit last time from Gateshead, and we didn't get near to the Cathedrals, we got no further than the docks. So this time I made sure that the tour was coming to the Cathedrals, and I wanted to see them of course. First the Anglican Cathedral, because it is the biggest in the country. And I was friendly with one of the former Deans, Edward Paytee, because he was Youth Chaplain for Durham many years ago. And I asked them if he was still in Liverpool, and they said they didn't know. But I have always wanted to see the Cathedrals.

Q. I see, did you know what they looked like before you came here?

This one from the outside yes, from photographs.

Q. So you knew this was very modern?

Yes, I knew this one was modern (pointing to Anglican), but not too modern. And I knew that this was very modern. And there is a very old lady aged ninety four who lives near me, and when I said I was coming, I said I want to see both Cathedrals this time. She says well go to see the Metropolitan one definitely, because she says when the sun shines through the windows, the lights are marvellous. And she wasn't wrong. I think it is terrific.

Q. When you first saw it from the street, what did you think?

I thought it was terrible (laughs) I like it better from the inside. But when I first saw it I thought 'oh it is another concrete jungle', but inside it is beautiful.

Q. What is it about the inside that is so beautiful?

Erm, the light shining through. The colours. I don't know what it is like in the winter when you've got no sunshine through the windows, but with the light shining through... well. As we came in, there was a shaft of green down this side, a shaft of red down this side, and I thought 'oh this is heaven'.

(Wife suggests that they have to go and catch their bus at this point).

Q. Please don't let me keep you. Has it been a positive experience?

Yes, oh yes. Well it is the only time you could get me in a place like this (laughs). Well of all the cathedrals that I have been to, this is the most different.

Q. Ok, thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50's) from Bristol.
Date: 27th August 1998.

(Interviewed husband).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

To the Cathedral? Partly, I suppose I have been here about twenty years ago and it is just next door to the place I am being interviewed for a job in. And I wanted to see it because I know it is a dramatic building to go into.

Q. Are you staying in Liverpool?

Yes, for tonight.

Q. I see, so is it an architectural visit mostly?

Yes, not religious definitely.

Q. So there is not spiritual side to your motives?

No, not really.

Q. So what have you experienced while you have been in here today then?

(Wife: Satisfaction). Wonder... awe... erm. I think it is a wonderful example of modern art and architecture.
(Wife: Yes it is a lovely building).

Q. What do you think about modern architecture in general?

Erm. (Wife: Some of it is nice.) Yes, I have got an open mind, I think. I mean some of it is better than others. I think everything you look at is in hindsight, and I think that sometimes people, I don't know the right word, I think people sometimes design provocative or shocking architecture for the sake of it.

Q. I see. Is your perception of an English Cathedral one of old, Gothic buildings?

To be honest, yes.

Q. So this is completely different to your previous perceptions?

Yes. [To wife] What did you say before? It wasn't holy or something? (Wife: Yes, I said it was a beautiful building but it is not holy).

Q. I see, whereas an older cathedral is holy?

(Wife: Yes, you don't get that same sort of hushed feeling here as you get as soon as you come through the door of the older ones).

Q. So does it not feel like a sacred place then?

(Wife: No.)

Q. Does it feel like an architectural phenomenon?

(Wife: Yes. I mean you can still appreciate the beauty of it. But you don't get that sense of awe do you?) In a way I think it is better that you are not awed by it quite so much, because you are not distracted from looking at the architecture. And as I say, it is a wonderful building and it would be a wonderful building if it was a cathedral, or a stock exchange building or a shopping mall. (Wife: Yes, that's it.) And I suppose the stained glass makes it more akin to a church, I suppose a stock exchange would not have stained glass windows, just ordinary windows, and it would be an extravagance to have stained glass. But I suppose the stained glass makes it a church.

Q. I see, so the stained glass makes this otherwise architectural phenomena into a church?

Yes. But then the way it is designed it is so effective. Whether it was deliberate I don't know.

Q. Oh yes, it was.

(Visitors start to fidget).

Q. Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Mother (50s) and daughter (20s) from Norwich.
Date: 27th August 1998.

(Interviewed mother).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Yes, because it is part of... it is something that you have to see when you come to Liverpool.

Q. I see, so are you a tourist here today?

Yes.

Q. And have you been to the Anglican?

Yes.

Q. Did you know what this Cathedral looked like before you came to Liverpool?

Yes, I did, from the outside.

Q. Had you seen it on the television?

Well, I suppose over the years, on the television, the newspaper and whatever.

Q. I see. And you knew it was modern?

Yes.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

Erm. It is difficult to say. I think you can only really find that out when you have gone away and you have thought about it. Erm, I am not impressed.

Q. You are not impressed. When you think of an English Cathedral, do you think of an old building, like that (pointing to the Anglican Cathedral).

Yes, I do yes.

Q. And is that why you are not impressed?

Yes. I think the glass work in here is beautiful. I think the stained glass is superb, and I think the idea was superb. But I think it is the choice of the materials, the concrete.

Q. You don't like the concrete?

No.

Q. Why?

Well for a start, as soon as you walk in, you can smell it. (Laughs). Yes, it is damp.

Q. So you are not impressed with the materials used to build it?

I am with the stained glass. I think that is beautiful. And I think the idea of the way that the light is, you know, I can see what they were trying to achieve with it. With the light coming through and it is achieved isn't it in certain places? But I can't believe, well yes I can because it was the '60s, and they were doing that sort of thing then. I mean look at Norwich University where my daughter went. I mean it looks it appalling.

Q. Like a concrete jungle?

Yes. But I think the glass is beautiful. (Daughter: And the tapestries). And I can see what they tried to achieve, but say if you were here for a service and you look ahead, what would be normally the focal point of a stained glass window, they have got the two red pieces going down, and then it is that concrete block in the middle. I don't think much of that at all. But I can see, you know, the lights coming through there. But that hasn't always worked in every place. I mean in some of those side chapels, where they have got those stained glass windows on the side, presumably the idea was that they would illuminate those chapels and they don't, because there just isn't the light.

Q. You give me the idea that you have actually looked at the cathedral in detail as you have wandered around.

Yes, I think we have haven't we? (Daughter: Yes)

Q. So do you prefer the Anglican Cathedral?

In a word, yes. Do most people?

Q. Erm, yes. But I have found that a lot of people actually like this, but in a different way.

Well it was like I was saying as we were walking around, it is interesting that both of these have been built in the same century. Well that (pointing to Anglican) at first sight you would think that is an old cathedral. And I think that that is just superb.

Q. Even though it is a modern building?

Yes.

Q. Even though it new but it looks old, you don't think it is a bit of a con?

No. I mean the wood carving is superb. Absolutely. (Daughter: The stained glass is lovely). Yes the stained glass, it has got everything.

Q. So is that your idea of what an English cathedral should look like?

Yes, absolutely. I couldn't imagine sitting in there (pointing to interior) at a service, because the priest must have his back to some people. I don't like that. But it has been interesting, and I am glad that we have come. We have taken a later train so that we could see it, because we really wanted to go.

Q. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

If I am visiting somewhere that had a cathedral, I would visit it yes.

Q. But you wouldn't make a special journey. Like you wouldn't say 'right, tomorrow I am going to London because I want to see St. Paul's Cathedral?

No. But they are part of the city aren't they? I mean we have been to The Cavern today, and then to the Albert Dock.

Q. Oh the true tourist! Do you have a ticklist of the things that you want to see?

Yes, we do (laughs). So is that enough information for you?

Q. Yes, that is fine. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) with daughter (late teens).

Date: 2nd September 1998.

(Interviewed male).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

My daughter is having a day at the University and unfortunately there was not a place for me to join her in the lectures, because the places are limited. She is hoping to be a physiotherapist, so I have got 4 or 5 hours to spend. I used to work, a few years ago, in Stockport and I used to come across to Liverpool. The last time I was here was in 1976, so I just took the opportunity to come again and have a look at the place.

Q. So you have been here before?

Yes.

Q. Did your past experience of the Cathedral influence your decision to visit today?

Erm yes. But what I was very very shocked to find this time was the deterioration of the fabric of the Cathedral. I couldn't believe how bad it is. I mean in historical terms, it is a very short span of time.

Q. Do you mean compared to other cathedrals?

Oh yes.

Q. What do you feel has happened?

Well I feel it is a lack of understanding of the life of modern materials. I mean the Cathedral is constructed mainly from synthetic materials. If you look at other cathedrals, they have taken natural stone, which has proved to be much longer lasting. But it really, really shocked me to see the deterioration here in such a relatively short space of time.

Q. I see. Did that effect your perception of modern building techniques?

Well, I am sort of professional involved in that field, and we rushed madly in, in the 60's and 70's, to try to find alternatives to natural materials, because if you may recall, at that period of time, there was very grave concern about the rate at which we were using natural materials, like wood and stone. So there was a headlong battle to find alternatives.

Q. I see, so it wasn't just poor building skills?

No, not at all. I think there was a genuine desire to find materials other than natural ones, so we didn't eat into natural resources. And unfortunately, when you make that decision to change you haven't got a hundred years of test results to tell you if it is the right material or not. So no, I don't believe it was laziness, I think it is one of those unfortunate things that happen in life, that you have to take a decision, at the time, and unfortunately hindsight can give you a nasty kick (laughs).

Q. Do you have an affinity for this building then?

Oh yes, I mean I don't think you can single out the building as such. I think what you have to say is that it represents something you believe. So I think it doesn't matter where you are if you accept what it stands

for. It is a representation of God's house and you come here to pay your respects and to find some peace. So I don't think the symbolism in terms of looking at the place outside of a religious perspective is something sometimes people confuse. So there are two things, you can look at it aesthetically, away from how you view your own religion, but once inside, then you take the peace that it offers. So I think it is a two structured thing.

Q. So there was a religious side to your visit today?

Oh very much so.

Q. And you are not just here to look at the building?

No. It is not a case of just saying, 'oh look at that stained glass window', and it is not about being able to go back home and say, 'oh I went to Liverpool Cathedral'. It is not that at all, but everybody has different perceptions. I go to cathedrals on my travels with two things in mind. One to actually look at what has been created and secondly just to enjoy the peace of what the building is intending to be. It is only a protection of what you believe and that is all.

Q. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

If I get the opportunity, yes. I mean I have travelled all over the world and when I have some time I go to look at all sorts of things. I mean it is a great opportunity to do that. And it is also, if you take the second strand, in modern, high-speed life, even if it is for a quarter of an hour, the peace and tranquillity you can get from stopping and putting all the rush to one side is wonderful.

Q. You see the cathedrals as a sort of haven from the outside world?

Yes. And a chance to come to terms to what you believe. I mean, we never ever devote enough time to what we believe, we are always rushing about. So this is just a time, it has been only half an hour, but it has been a really pleasant half hour. I spent half an hour talking to that security man there, I spent twenty minutes talking to the chap around the corner [Welcomer], and it is nice, and there is a friendliness, and a willingness for people to share their own experiences with you if you are interested as well. So I have been here for about an hour, and it has been rather nice.

Q. So did you find that even the people were different in here. In that, did you find that you wouldn't have the same conversation outside as you have had with someone in here?

No. I mean a lot of people, people fall into two categories I believe that come into the cathedral. Those that genuinely want to just share the experience of being in God's house, and those that look at cathedrals as just being another one of these tourist things, they like saying things like 'we've done it, we've done London, we've done Paris and so on'. And you can tell those people that are at ease with the time that they spend in a place like this will actually talk to you freely. Whereas other people, if you just sit and watch, you will notice those people who are just dragging themselves around so that they can say, 'well I have done that, now what is next on the list'.

Q. Oh I think that is true, people do have ticklists of things that they want to see. I have watched people in here and the most time they will spend is about 10 minutes, then they will pick up a leaflet and go. Probably because they have got a lot of things that they want to see

Oh yes, and then when they are at home, they will pull the leaflet out of the drawer, and say 'look we went there'. But I sat, I was sitting down here for about 10 minutes, and I watched about 5 or 6 small groups of people, and I don't believe that they read a word on any of the plaques on any of the little chapels all the way around.

(Wife and daughter approach)

(Wife: We are just going in to say a quick prayer) Yes, my daughter has just spent a week at a cathedral camp in Winchester.

Q. Really? What were you doing there?

(Daughter: I was doing things like creosoting, and cleaning. It is part of my Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award.) Yes, last week we were in Manchester, so that she could have a look at a school there, and while she was there we had a look in the Cathedral then (laughs).

Q. I see, so when you get the opportunity you will visit a cathedral?

Yes.

Q. Did you learn anything while you were in the Cathedral?

Yes, a lot about what has been happening to the structure of the building and listening about the court case over the roof and all that sort of thing.

Q. Did you learn that from the Welcomer around the corner there?

Yes, and from the exhibit they have over there. I was quite shocked at the daily cost of the place, it seems very high to me, £1000 per day. It seems quite high to me compared to other places.

Q. If it was a very old cathedral would you understand that high cost a bit more?

Yes I would. I think what surprised me is that I am relating it to the relative newness of the Cathedral. I mean I wouldn't have been surprised to have found that price at somewhere like York Minster, but I don't think it is as much as that at York. I mean that is £365,000 per year. I don't what the sum is actually made up of, whether it includes all the bursaries to the priests and stuff like.

(Pause)

Q. Did you read any leaflets or anything like that?

Well, not quite. I was just going to have a cup of tea and then I would read the leaflet.

Q. Is that because you would end up looking at the leaflet rather than the building?

Yes, that is why I saved this until I had a chance to sit down. That sort of thing doesn't really bother me, I think you can get too distracted if you try to read leaflets. I think you need to just take in what is there and reading about it afterwards makes a lot more sense. I have got to say, sometimes I do it the other way around. Sometimes I grab the leaflets, and then go and have a cup of tea, read them, and then go and look at the building.

Q. To recharge the batteries?

Yes. There is something else, if your study is going to be used by the cathedral, it would be better if there were some of the leaflets outside of the tea room and then you would actually I think get people who would say 'oh that's good, tea room, I'll go and have a drink then have a look' and they might understand more then.

Q. Well they are always interested in anything that people have to suggest. What did you think of the outside of the building as you were coming up the street?

Erm, the setting is nice. It is a bit false at the moment with all the scaffolding and so on. Because the last time I came in, I came in the other way, from the University entrance, and everything is blocked off now. So I had to walk around and it is a bit deceptive, you can't really tell. But from this point here, the panorama is nice. I mean it will be better when you will be able to walk all the way around, with it being so much higher than the rest of the city. You get a better vista. It is a little bit difficult to put it into context.

Q. What did you enjoy most about the Cathedral?

Well everything is always about the peace of the place like this. My comments are dominated about what I feel about the building's purpose, rather than the building itself. Rather in a way the building is just a shell for what you want to share the time with. But it is nice, it is different, different from the normal cathedral that you see around the world because of its changing design and its materials.

Q. When you go home, if somebody says to you "Liverpool Cathedral", what images will you bring up?

Two really, that I always get a bit of a buzz from the spiritual side, but it will be a talking point about how amazed I was about the deterioration of the building. It really has shocked me quite a bit, that something that is so relatively new in the history of time could have failed so quickly. You go around the country and look at some of the Church of England parish churches that have been up for 300 odd years, some of them, there is hardly a mark on them, and here and you look at something which is supposed to reflect the best of design at the time, and it is erm... But again it is hindsight isn't it?

Q. Do you feel different going out now than you did when you first came in?

Oh I always, spirituality, I always get my batteries recharged. Yes, very much so.

(Wife and daughter approach).

Q. Please don't let me keep you any longer. Thank you.

Group Composition: Local couple (50s). Tourist (50s) from Australia.
Date: 2nd September 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the cathedral today?

(Local female: Erm we have got a visitor from Australia, but I come here often anyway because both of my boys were at St Edward's, and one was in the choir. There is an affinity here anyway and I just like to show people the contrast anyway. And this is my third visitor in a fortnight [laughs], but I mean I come down here anyway.)

Q. So you are a Roman Catholic and this is your Cathedral?

(Local Female: Yes. And I feel more comfortable in this one).

Q. Do you? Why is that?

(Local Female: I don't know, well I have spent more time here. I mean the Anglican one is beautiful, I don't get the same spiritual feeling in that one as I do here, that is not because I am biased, that is just me. I just feel comfortable in this one).

Q. So does the Anglican feel more like an architectural phenomenon?

(Local female: Yes, to me yes. There is a spiritual feeling in this one that I have, because I have been coming here for years and years now.)

Q. And how about your motivations as a visitor?

(Tourist: It is just a building, I prefer that one over there [laughs]) (Local: And my husband just lives in Liverpool and knows the way here, he has got no akin to any of them, he is waiting for the roof to fall in on this one).

Q. Yes, people either love it or feel nothing for it. It's the same with the Anglican.

(Tourist: Really? I think they are just different that's all. I mean this is a famous building so you come and look at it. It is a modern basilica).

Q. So did you come here because you are a tourist in Liverpool and this is one of the attractions?

(Local female: She had no choice really, I brought her here [laughs]) (Tourist: Well we have looked at the Anglican, but I wanted to see this one because I know her boys went here).

Q. I see, have you visited a lot of English cathedrals while you have been here?

(Tourist: Not this time. I'm English anyway, but I have visited a lot of them when I have been over here on other holidays.)

Q. You know when you think of the term English cathedral, do you think of an old or a new building?

(Local: She likes the traditional, whereas I accepted this from the word go).

Q. Did you?

(Local: Well I mean I like the traditional as well but this is different.) (Tourist: Well the thing is, if you are going to build a cathedral in the era that you are in you should build it to that architecture).

Q. So you accept the idea of a modern cathedral because it was built in a modern age, even though you prefer the traditional?

(Tourist: Oh yes. I wouldn't like to see somebody build an old architecture building in the modern age).

Q. I see. So what do you think of the Anglican Cathedral, because that is a Gothic design but built in this century. Does that bother you at all?

(Tourist: Not really, it is too old.)

Q. Yes, I suppose ninety years is old in Australia's terms.

(Tourist: That's right).

Q. What has your experience been like in there [pointing to interior] today?

(Tourist: Interesting).

Q. Really, in what way?

(Tourist: Mainly because, I mean knew Eileen's husband, and I know he used to come here and he is in the Remembrance Book there.) (Local: And my boys were in the choir when the Pope came in '82, and it was quite stunning to see the Pope here. It is like the queen visiting isn't it, you are in kind of awe.)

Q. So do you think that because the Pope has been here it makes it more special for you?

(Local: To me yes, because I was here when he was here. I remember the day, I just didn't want it to end. And then I went home and watched it on television, and I thought, I was there. I just when we were in both of them, I suppose it isn't cost effective now, but I just wish they had had the choir singing, because you do when you go to Westminster Cathedral).

Q. Really? So do you find that music enhances your experience of the building?

(Local: It does). (Tourist: Oh yes).

Q. Does it make it feel like a holy place or just a more splendid building?

(Local: Well it feels like a holy place anyway to me. But I would just love to hear the choir.)

Q. So if a choir had been singing in there today, would it have made your experience even better?

(Local: Oh yes. It is not just a piece of stone masonry, it is better.) (Tourist: Yes. Well I mean you could be in a tin shed, but put the music in there and the associations...). (Local: Yes you associate music with these places don't you?)

Q. Yes. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

(Local: If we are somewhere where there is one. I mean I travel around England a lot anyway, I've done Salisbury, I have done quite a few.)

Q. So if you are in a new town, you will visit its cathedral as a matter of course?

(Local: Yes.)

Q. Do you visit cathedrals when you are in a new city, because you know what you are getting? What I mean is, you know what cathedrals are like, and what they offer, even if it is a completely new city, will you go to its cathedral because you know what to expect?

(Local: Yes. And with some I will walk in and feel nothing. I mean I was down in London, just after Charles and Diana got married, and the very next day, I was running up the stairs of St. Paul's with the two boys. And we went up the Whispering Towers and they were doing all the inside. That sort of cathedral is where I get... well its the sense of history is what I am getting. I mean it's actually being somewhere so famous.)

Q. I see, so you want to experience these significant places yourself?

(Local: Yes, that's right. I mean we would have gone to St Paul's Cathedral but it had more to it because they had just got married there. I mean I have been around London's Cathedrals so many times. I mean Westminster Abbey was incredible but I still went to Westminster Cathedral. And at the same time as the Pope was here I was down there. And I thought it was so amusing that a McDonald's was right by it and the cathedral was sort of tucked away in a little street. I know this is, but these are set out. Westminster Cathedral is slotted away and you could be walking past and say "I say, what's that". I can still see him up on the balcony and all the people underneath. And I was just amused that they had a modern McDonald's slap bang along side Westminster Cathedral.)

Q. Did that bother you?

(Local: It did, it did. The blend was wrong. I mean there were all the papers from McDonald's and they were sitting around outside, eating their hamburgers, and I thought it just isn't right.)

Q. Does the presence of tourists bother you in the Cathedrals?

(Local: No, because I have been in there when the services have been on, and people don't tend to walk around anyway, people do respect it. You never see anyone getting their camera out in the middle of a service. But I just wish you were here when there was a mass on because it is quite special. I mean I was at a wedding here a couple of months back, it was a mixed marriage, you know, Catholic and Protestant, so they had the wedding here and then they drove along to the Anglican and had a blessing and reception there, which I thought was nice. They didn't have their photographs taken outside of here, because I think it was a bit concretey, and I think they thought it was better along there [pointing to Anglican]. But then different people, different things. I mean those people that say that this place is horrible, usually view it from afar. Because it doesn't look that pleasant driving along Hope Street, because (to Tourist) like you said, it looked like a sputnik. Now we call it 'The Wigwam', so we have got two of everything.)

Q. That's true. How do you feel about admission charges in cathedrals?

(Local: I don't mind offerings, yes, that is choices. But to force you to pay, no.)

Q. How about the argument that cathedrals are in very bad financial crisis?

(Local: Yes but they can draw it in other ways.)

Q. So what do you think about that sign there at the entrance?

(Local: Oh that is all right over there, but to get actually into the cathedral, one has to pay, I wouldn't pay it.)

Q. So you think it is wrong?

(Local: In cathedrals yes. I don't think it should be done. Numbers are dropping away as it is. You are driving people away when you do that. I would say that 70% of the people are tourists. If you are trying to inspire people to do go church, if you are charging them at the door, you are not going to do it. I mean I object at having to pay to get into cathedral car parks, I mean it is all commercial now though isn't it, and that is the way that I don't want these to go. I know they need to get money to run them, but I am sorry, we have got a lot of money, maybe we should just release it, you know?)

Q. I think a lot of the churches' wealth is in land though isn't it? Should they sell it off?

(Tourist: Well they could, but one day it will all be sold off won't it, and then what do they do?) (Local: Well I think that they have got a hell of a lot to sell, and not just here but around the world haven't they? You are talking billions.)

Q. What do you think you should do then?

(Local: In what respect?)

Q. In that if a cathedral is falling down, and it desperately needs the money, and they are not getting the money from the offerings of worshippers?).

(Local: Well you won't cover it in the offerings anyway. It's like trying to run the country just on the taxes we pay, you have to get it from other sources. Erm, the people who attend the church should do more. I mean we are not getting the priest intake that we used to. I mean I won't be around to see it, but what is it going to be like in the year 2040?)

Q. Do you think that the church is threatened in that way?

(Local: Yes. Yes. There is a lack of interest, without a doubt. And it is all the parents' fault. The interest isn't there. I don't think people, I won't say my grandchildren, but their children, I don't think they will be having mass in school, they are stopping it now). (Tourist: Are they? They are bringing it back in Australia.)

Q. Why was that?

(Tourists: I think there was a concern for the lack of religious awareness. They stopped it years and years ago, but its coming back). (Local: They are very multi-cultural over there anyway aren't they? I mean we are seeing it here now, there are all nations here, it is so cosmopolitan, you can not just have one church.) (Tourist: What they are aiming for over there is just one church).

Q. Oh really, like a United Church of Australia?

(Tourist: There is a United Church, there is Baptist, there's Catholic, and they are aiming for just one church, and I guess it will be called the Church of Australia. My grandson was Christened just before I came over here, and the Reverend said "we don't mind whatever church you go in, there is one God and we are heading for just one church". I mean it all started with just one church didn't it. The Greeks, the Orthodox, and it is going to go back to that.) (Local: Well I hope you enjoy the rest of your Ph.D.

Q. Ok thank you for stopping.

Group Composition: Local older male (50's). Tourist younger female (20's) from Italy.
Date: 2nd September 1998.

(Tourist could not speak English, interviewed local).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

I am just showing her around Liverpool. She is visiting from Milan. She does speak English, but you need to go slowly. (Tourist: No, no I don't).

Q. Oh well, if you have anything you want to say I would be glad to hear it. (To local) Why did you bring your visitor to the Cathedral, what did you think would interest her here?

Well I just wanted to show her the sights in general. We have been along to the other Cathedral.

Q. And do you often do that, when you have visitors come to see you?

Not really, I am on holiday, somebody else usually shows them around. It was a late booking, she just turned up, no warning and so I am the only one off.

Q. I see, so you brought her to the Cathedral because it is one of the sights in Liverpool.

Yes. Because when we go to Milan, we have to go to their Cathedral.

Q. Of course. (To tourist) Is this Cathedral different to the others that you have seen?

(Tourist: Yes. It is very modern, our Cathedral is Gothic.)

Q. What have you experienced while you have been in the Cathedral today.

(Pause).

(Tourist: My experience?)

Q. Yes, can you tell me about your visit? Did you learn about the Cathedral when you were in there?

No, we didn't because it was just a quick five minute visit.

Q. I see, so it was a quick walk around?

Yes.

Q. (To tourist) Did it feel like a cathedral?

(Tourist: Yes).

Q. What do you feel about its modern architecture?

(Tourist: I like it).

Q. So it doesn't matter about a cathedral built in a modern style?

(Tourist: No).

Q. What did you like most about the Cathedral?

(Tourist: The windows, the window glasses, they were very beautiful).

Q. Yes, they are.

Now we have got on with the serious part - shopping. (Laughs).

Q. Ok, well don't let me keep you. Thank you.

Group Composition: Local female (50s). Tourists middle aged couples (60s) from United States.
Date: 2nd September 1998

Q. So can you tell me why you have come here today?

(Local: Me. [laughs] We have been to see the Anglican Cathedral, so we have come here now).

Q. I see, so they are part of seeing the sights of Liverpool?

(Local: Yes. Well really the Cathedrals, because they have been to Liverpool several times. But never to the Cathedrals). (Tourist: Yes, never to the Cathedrals, so this time we made a point of it to come to both.)

Q. And this time, if you hadn't have visited the Cathedrals would your visit to Liverpool have been incomplete?

(Tourist: Oh yes. We've missed them again).

Q. And what was it that drew you to the Cathedral in particular?

(Tourist: I had just heard to much about it).

Q. What types of thing had you heard?

(Tourist: Well about the architecture). [Did not like being pressed].

Q. I see, and what have you experienced while you have been in there today?

(Tourist: Well it is different from a normal like York Cathedral, or Chester, it is very different.)

Q. Do you have a perception of English cathedrals as being old and gothic.

(Tourist: Yes, yes.).

Q. So this is quite different to what you would expect isn't it?

(Tourist: Yes, oh yes).

Q. What did you think of the Cathedral when you first saw it from the outside?

(Local: Well it looks horrible from the outside.) (Tourist: Yes.) (Local: Yes, it is a lot nicer inside, outside it is not impressive at all).

Q. What is so nice about the inside of it?

(Tourist: Well I like the shape, and the colours).

Q. The stained glass?

(Tourist: Yes).

Q. A lot of people talk about the colours in the stained glass, and I was thinking, well we can see colour all around us, what makes the colour in here so special?

(Tourist: Because it is so blue, and you don't expect to see the blue, that is what it is. And the blue is all around you.)

Q. Oh I understand now. Do you feel different now, than when you came in?

(Tourist: Yes. I am really quite impressed with the inside).

Q. Would you come back?

(Tourist: Yes, next year.)

Q. Did you learn anything about the Cathedral when you were in there?

(Tourist: No. I don't know when it was built or anything about it. I hope I have got that information in the guide that I picked up in the box there).

Q. So you will take that home and read it?

(Tourist: Yes.). (Local: We are on a car parking limit so we will have to go).

Q. Ok that's fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (60s) from Lincoln
Date: 7th September 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Male: We try to visit cathedrals in whatever town they are situated in.)

Q So when you visit a new town, you will visit its cathedral?

(Both. Yes) (Female: And I think you had heard about it hadn't you?). (Male: Yes, that it was very beautiful) (Female: Yes, but now we are not sure whether they meant this one or the other one.) (Male: Well, no. This one I wanted to see because it was very futurist, and as such it is a 'no no' as far as I am concerned.) (Female: Yes, it's too much like a big theatre). (Male: It's a theatre.)

Q. Rather than a cathedral?

(Both: Yes).

Q Do you have a perception of English cathedral as being Gothic and old?

(Female: Yes.).

Q So this is quite a difference then?

(Male: Yes, oh yes, very much)

Q Did you know what this Cathedral looked like before you came here?

(Female: No) (Male: Yes, I did).

Q And when you were coming towards it and it was very different to what you are used to, or to that picture you have of an English cathedral, what did you think?

(Female: Erm, I don't know whether I had any pre-conceived ideas. I am always willing to reserve judgement until I have seen it all).

Q. I see. And what have your experiences been like while you have been in the Cathedral?

(Female: A big theatre, that is what struck me more than it being a cathedral.) (Male: The colours, spaciousness) (Female: I loved the coloured windows).

Q. So it is like a massive theatrical building?

(Female: Yes, like a big arena).

Q. Really?

(Female. Yes, it isn't a traditional one, so you can't expect it to be. But no, I first thought, and I said to you didn't I? (to husband) It is like a big arena

Q. So is it like an architectural phenomenon more than a house of God?

(Female: Yes.) (Male: I didn't get any feeling of that whatsoever.)

Q. Really? No sense of spirituality?

(Male: None whatsoever. Not the slightest trace of it.)

Q. Do you feel spirituality in other cathedrals?

(Both: Yes).

Q. Is it just the visual thing, or does it not have the spirituality?

(Male: That is a very difficult one. I mean when you come to this cathedral, you just get this feeling of theatrical. I mean the impact is terrific, and architecturally - which I am also interested in - the impacts on the eye, yes it is fantastic. Ten out of ten. But from a religious point of view, zero. Absolutely zero.

Q. So is it a visual extravaganza?

(Both: Yes).

Q. Did you learn anything about the Cathedral when you were in there today?

(Pause)

Q. Did you use any of the leaflets or guides?

(Female: No, we just literally had a stroll around.)

Q. How long do you think you spent in there?

(Male: 10 minutes).

Q. Was that enough?

(Male: Oh yes, and yet we have spent over two hours in other cathedrals. I mean the thing is, I didn't come in here and say to myself 'look at the skill of the craftsman making that'. I mean, fair enough, it is a huge amphitheatre with a roof on it. I mean, I know from a construction point of view this building is a fantastic piece of engineering, there is no argument to that. I mean the ring at the top, supported on the fan supports, terrific. But I mean with modern scaffolding and modern technology and all the rest of it, its not a big deal).

Q. This is very interesting, a lot of people are saying that when they go to cathedrals they are admiring the skills of the builders.

(Male: Yes, that's absolutely right).

Q. So you don't get that same sense of admiration when you come here?

(Male: No, not in the slightest.)

Q. I see, so we are getting to the nitty gritty now, in that you feel admiration for the Medieval builders when you visit a cathedral?

(Male: Correct).

Q. That's very interesting.

(Female: I mean apart from the coloured glass. .) (Male: It's a no-no).

Q. So if the coloured glass hadn't been in the Cathedral?

(Male: I would just think it was a pile of concrete. Its disappointing. I mean, all right, the colours are quite impressive. I mean I haven't seen Coventry Cathedral, now my wife has.) (Female: Yes it was lovely, but don't ask me too much about it because it was a long time ago, and I have kind of forgotten. But I mean I do remember the stained glass in there, they were fabulous. And it was more of a cathedral atmosphere than here). (Male: Conversely, Koln Cathedral the biggest pile of coldness we have ever been in, but it was a very impressive cathedral, I mean the geodetic towers were just out-of-this-world. But again, it has that skill).

Q. So again it is all to do with the skill of the people who built the Medieval cathedrals?

(Both: Yes).

Q. So do you think that today, those types of skills are not valued?

(Male: Well we live in a world where money is our God, there is no argument about that. Having spent my whole life in the construction industry, money and time are, you can't separate them.)

Q. So is that completely different from the attitude that the old cathedrals were built with?

(Male: Yes. Well we used to talk about quality). (Female: Well is this anything to do with the cathedral?) (Male: Oh it is all part of what I am saying).

Q. Oh I am interested in anything you have to say, because it is all relevant.)

(Male: If we based our whole business on quality, people would turn around and say "yes we want good quality, but at the end of the day, we have got a price that is 5% cheaper, we want you to do it, but we want 5% off". And I would say "well you can't have it both ways". But at the end of the day, my survival depends on me taking that 5% off. And I think that is what you didn't have in the old days.)

Q. Do you think that the old building skills have died out?

(Male: No, no I don't).

Q. So they are still around?

(Male: Well Windsor Castle is a good example.) (Female: Yes, that's true). (Male: The skill is there if someone is willing to pay for it).

Q. So people today are not willing to pay for a cathedral built by craftsmen?

(Male: Well they haven't got the money).

Q. So it is not just a case of inertia?

(Male: No, I mean an architect nowadays is told "there is your budget".)

Q. So is that why architects design such plain buildings now?

(Male: Well it is back to money. Because an architect is given a price per square foot that he has to work to. I mean somebody turns around to me and says "I want a building to be consecrated to God" or however you want to put it, money is no object, that is different, it is quite different.)

Q. And so is it an architectural experience when you go to cathedrals or is there something else?

(Male: No. Well there is a bit of both). (Female: Well there is a bit of both, but you are always very interested in the architectural side). (Male: Well it is my life [laughs]). (Female: Well you are always impressed by the way it is done really.) (Male: Well I do model engineering as a hobby, which is a skill, and I look at the tradesmen of old I just think... "my God". Actually there is a young Dutchman who did the stonework on the pulpit at Exeter Cathedral. Now, if you ever go there, you can turn the pages of the stone bible, it is so fantastic. But that was one of those things that. I mean one of the stewards came up to me and he said "I can't help notice that you have been back here this six times", and I said "well I am just looking at it, I am just looking at the skill. I could fabricate that in metal but I could not do it in stone". But that young man came from Denmark to do this one project, and he is still at that cathedral.)

Q. How lovely. If he had cut that pulpit with a machine, would you have valued it as much?

(Male: Oh I am sure bits of machinery would be used nowadays.)

Q. Have you been to the Anglican Cathedral yet?

(Female: No). (Male: Is there a coffee shop in it?)

Q. Oh yes.

(Male: Now that's an important question you see, for your research).

Q. Actually it is.

(Male: This is a Catholic building, do you find that that influences people?)

Q. No not really. Many different denominations come in here.

(Male: I mean I view the lectern, is it that you call it over the altar?)

Q. Oh the lantern.

(Male: Yes the lantern, I view that as the crown, as I see it. I can see a lot of what the architect has tried to set out and do, things like that. But no, it is a no-no as far as I am concerned, sorry [laughs] Do you have any more questions? We talk too much I know.)

Q. Oh that's all right. Erm, a lot of people talk about the colours of the stained glass in here. And I think, well we see colour all around us, so why are the colours in here so special?

(Female: Well they are vibrant). (Male: Vibrant yes, oh there is no argument about that.) (Female: They hit you, don't they).

Q. I see, so the colour in here is different to what you would see outside?

(Female: Yes) (Male: Yes, nature's colours are more muted. At least that is how I view it. The colours are vibrant, they hit you between the eyes. Any more questions?).

Q. No that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Two females. Local (40s). Tourist (40s) from the United States.
Date: 7th September 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Local: Well I have brought a guest who is visiting the city. I live here, so I have brought a guest who is visiting).

Q. (To tourist) Where are you from?

(Tourist: From the United States).

Q. (To local) So you thought she would like to see this Cathedral?

(Local: Well we have already been to the Anglican one, so I thought she should see this Cathedral as well, so that she could see the contrast between the older style and the more modern.)

Q. So is it part of being a tourist in Liverpool, seeing the two Cathedrals?

(Local: Yes. Well they are major landmarks aren't they?)

Q. I see, so are you taking your friend to see other things like the Albert Dock and the Maritime Museum?

(Local: We did those yesterday [laughs])

Q. So have you got a list of things that you want to see?

(Local: Oh no, we are just working our way around, trying to see what we can see).

Q. So is it mainly for architectural reasons that you have brought your visitor here today?

(Local: Yes.)

Q. (To tourist). What has your experience been like here today?

(Tourist: It is nice, but personally I prefer the older style. It is very modern, very colourful).

Q. Do you think of English cathedrals as being old, Gothic buildings?

(Tourist: Yes, yes I do).

Q. Is that because in the United States you don't have old buildings?

(Tourist: No we don't have too many of them). (Local: And you were saying it was the sandstone you were looking for didn't you? You wanted to see big sandstone buildings). (Tourist: Yes, I wanted to see the big blocks of rock, I just like that old stuff [laughs]).

Q. Do you not have old sandstone buildings in the States?

(Tourist: Not really)

Q. Do you have modern cathedrals like this in the States?

(Tourist: Yes, but not quite as Modernistic.)

Q. Really? I am surprised.

(Tourist: But they are not as nice as this. It is very beautiful).

Q. What struck you most about this Cathedral?

(Tourist: I think I kind of liked the colours and that round shape).

Q. Did you learn anything about the Cathedral while you were in there?

(Tourist: No we were just on our way to the car, and we decided to cut through here just to have a look).

Q. So did you just wander around?

(Tourist: Yes, but I did pick up some leaflets.)

Q. So will you read them when you go home?

(Tourist: Yes. And what I would like to know is, why do they have so much blue in the windows?).

Q. I think it is a symbol of sanctity, and the green and yellows in those windows over there denote maternal love. Would you have liked to have known what the colours and shapes mean?

(Tourist: Yes.) (Local: There you go, you have learned something after all). [Tourists begin to move off].

Q. Ok, that's fine. Thank you.

Group Composition: 3 females. Local (50s). Tourists (50s) from the United States.

Date: 7th September 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Local: Well we have come to say a prayer, and light a candle, because it is the anniversary of somebody's birthday. Plus they are visitors here from America, and I wanted to show them both of the Cathedrals of Liverpool).

Q. I see so are they part of being a visitor in Liverpool?

(Local: Yes, and it is my parish church).

Q. So there is a religious side to your visit as well?

(Local: Oh yes.)

Q. What did you think would interest your visitors about these Cathedrals?

(Local: Everything). (Tourist 1: They are beautiful, this is just beautiful).

Q. Really?

(Tourist 1: Oh yes, and I think it encourages meditation. And I mean I didn't just want to see this Cathedral 'because it is here', I wanted to see this Cathedral).

Q. I see, did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came to Liverpool?

(Tourist 1: Not this one, but different cathedrals in the world yes. I mean this one is just beautiful, it is the most beautiful that I have seen so far).

Q. In what way, why is it so beautiful?

(Tourist 2: It is different. I loved the stained glass, and the way the light shines through it. This is awesome.)

Q. Have you been to the Anglican Cathedral yet?

(Local: No that is next on the list) [laughs] (Tourist 2: I bet it couldn't be as beautiful as this one.)

Q. I know that you have cathedrals in the States which are modern, how does this compare to any of them?

(Tourist 1: No.) (Tourist 2: No, no comparison. A lot of them are cold, they have modern walls and modern pillars. But this is warm, this is very warm).

Q. Really? Even though this is also concrete and glass?

(Tourist 2: That is not really the way I saw it).

Q. Do you think the lighting in there may have affected it?

(Tourist 2: Yes, it is very artistic, it is all around you)

Q. Did you learn anything about the Cathedral while you were in there?

(Tourist 2: Well we read some of the things you know).

Q. Oh the leaflets. Did you take a guided tour?

(Tourist 2: No, we guided ourselves along [laughs]. (Tourist 1: Actually, I am going to go into the shop to see if I can buy any picture cards of the windows, because our cameras just can't pick them out.) (Tourist 1: I want some pictures of Liverpool too. I like it here.)

Q. Is it the first time that you have been to Liverpool?

(Tourist 2: It is the first time that we have been to England [laughs])

Q. Is it different to what you thought it would be?

(Tourist 2: I had no ideas about it before I came. I had no preconceived ideas. But I am very impressed.)

(Visitors begin to move off).

Q. Ok that is fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Local middle aged (50s) couple, accompanied by middle aged (50s) female tourist from London.

Date: 7th September 1998.

(Interviewed tourist).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the cathedral today?

Well I have never ever been before. This is my very first visit and I just love churches and cathedrals. So wherever I am, I will always try to visit a church or a cathedral.

Q. When you are on holiday or even if you are just somewhere on business?

No, even if I am just walking up Victoria Street I will go into Westminster Abbey or Westminster Cathedral, if I pass a church and it is open, I will go in.

Q. What is it that you like so much about churches and cathedrals?

Because I like the architecture, and just like the calmness of churches and cathedrals. And even if I just go in for ten minutes, light a candle and just sit, because I am not one that goes to church to be regimented, just to sit and sing hymns. I like to go in and speak to God on my own level.

Q. So do you get in touch with your own personal God when you are in cathedrals?

Yes, I suppose you could call it that, yes.

Q. You were saying that you liked the atmosphere in cathedrals?

I just love churches.

Q. Can you describe that atmosphere to me?

It is just such a calming feeling. It is a calming feeling, you can't explain it. There is just something when you just walk into a church. Some churches more than others that you can walk into, and there is just this calming feeling. And as I say, I have never been to this one before. It is somewhere I have always wanted to come and see, because I have seen it on television, and it is just fabulous. I haven't got time to take picture with the camera, because we have got to get back. But this is my very first visit to Liverpool.

Q. Really? And you knew what the Cathedral looked like before you came here?

Yes, vaguely. But to actually go in it and see it... it is just stunning.

Q. What is it about the place which is so stunning for you?

It is just the whole, the way it has been set out. You look around and you see something different every time. I was wandering around and I saw these things of Christ on the wall and I suddenly realised I was looking at the Stations of the Cross.

Q. Are you a Catholic?

No. My sister is, and I sometimes feel that I might as well be. I love going into Catholic churches.

Q. Really, why is that?

How can I put it? It is like an affinity. There is just something. I prefer to walk into a Catholic church because I find it so calming. I can't explain it. But I mean I just love churches. I just love architecture. I have wandered around Liverpool today and have pictured everything.

Q. Have you been to the Anglican Cathedral?

No I don't think we have got time because we have got to get back to Wigan now, we want to miss the rush hour. But I mean I have got a church that I go into in Covent Garden, I was just passing and I found it purely by chance, and I just go in there and sit down, and light a candle. And I say to God, "I am here and I am going to talk to you". Actually I have just done that in there. And I find that far more beneficial than going to church at 10.30 on a Sunday morning. Perhaps that sounds dreadful?

Q. No not at all.

Yes, I just have my own way of doing things. But saying that, I would come to a service here. I went to Bristol Cathedral a couple of years ago, and I went to morning mass there, and it had me in tears. I had just lost a very close family relative and when it came to the Lord's Prayer, all the children went up and stood around the altar, and I just dissolved, I couldn't cope with it.

Q. Cathedrals do have that sort of affect on people. Not in a sad way, but because it is so intense.

Well I sometimes wonder if God exists because of the life that I have had.

Q. Do you have a stressful life?

Yes, I do have a very stressful life. I have not had a easy life. If I just tell you that I was a battered wife, I think you will understand. I mean, do I have to say anymore?

Q. And has visiting cathedrals, and experiencing their calmness, helped you?

Yes, you have to pick yourself up. I mean my husband died last year, and I even went into a church and light a candle for him. But we have to go now, we have to miss the rush hour.

Q. Ok, that's fine. Thank you.

Group Composition: Two older ladies. Day-tripper (60s) from Newton-le-Willows. Tourist (60s) from Bournemouth.

Date: 10th September 1998.

Q. Are you locals?

(Day-tripper: No, I am from Newton, and my friend is from near Bournemouth).

Q. I see, so are you a tourist today?

(Tourist: A belated one yes. I mean I left Liverpool thirty years ago, so I am coming to do the tourist bit now.)

Q. So you are back as a tourist, how interesting?

(Tourist: Yes it is interesting, I can't believe the changes that Liverpool has gone through. We have been at the Liver Building, and we have been for a sail). [laughs]

Q. Really, have you been on a ferry across the Mersey?

(Both: Yes.)

Q. Really, so do you have a list of things that you want to see?

(Day-tripper: Well we have seen down at the Docks, and now we are looking for somewhere to eat before we go home).

Q. I see. What made you want to visit the Cathedral today?

(Tourist: Well, I haven't been before. I mean in my youth, only the Crypt was here. And I have seen it on television all lit up at night. I think it was curiosity more than anything else.)

Q. Was it? Have you been to the Anglican?

(Day-tripper: Yes, we went there just before.)

Q. And you knew what this Cathedral looked like before you came here?

Yes.

Q. And what was the thing that attracted your curiosity?

(Pause)

Q. Was it the architecture or the religion of the site?

(Tourist: Well I suppose I have got a religious background, but I am not what you would call religious, no. I think I just wanted to see what it was like, because you hear varying reports about it [laughs]. In actual fact, my granddaughter, came up here with her other granny from Bournemouth the other week, and she had been and didn't like it. I didn't ask her why, but she sort of dismissed it altogether.) (Day-tripper: Well I didn't like it at first, but I think it grows on you).

Q. Does it?

(Tourist: When you first walk you think, hmmm. But after just wandering around and seeing the carvings, as you say, it begins to grow on you.)

Q. I see, so when you first saw it, it was a bit of a shock?

(Tourist: Yes, I mean when you are used to more traditional churches as I am.)

Q. Do you have a perception of English cathedrals as being old and Gothic?

(Both: Yes.) (Day-tripper: Yes, like Liverpool Cathedral which is beautiful, I like that one.) (Tourist: I suppose the older you get the more traditional you become [laughs])

Q. I see, so when you first saw it, it was a bit of a shock?

(Tourist: Yes, it does take you back.)

Q. But as you walked around?

(Day-tripper: It does grow on you, yes).

Q. And what was it that caused it to grow on you?

(Pause)

Q. Was it the architecture or the stained glass?

(Tourist: Well I don't think you are getting the full beauty of that at the moment are you? With all the building work going on?) (Day-tripper: Yes, I have been in here before when the sun has been on the stained glass and it has been absolutely beautiful). (Tourist: I just looked in the bookshop, I mean I am not a Roman Catholic, and I have just said to my friend now, "I thought there were twelve Stations of the Cross, but in here there appears to be sixteen" [laughs]. I was looking for something in a way, to explain to me what they all meant).

Q. I always thought there were twelve.

(Tourist: Yes, I thought it would have been nice to have something that would explain to the non-Catholics what each one meant. I mean I would have been interested to know what they all meant.)

Q. Would you have liked a little plaque under each one saying things like "Jesus falls a third time", and "Pilot washes his hands of Jesus", and thing like that?

(Tourist: Yes, to explain to the uninitiated I suppose, because I have no idea what they are. I mean I have heard of them. I don't know, is it Good Friday that you stand at each one?)

Q. Yes, you stand at each one and say the Rosary.

(Tourist: Yes, that's right. I have heard of it, but I have never had it explained. Obviously).

Q. So would you like to have that explained?

(Tourist: Yes, yes I would. I mean the statues, the bronzes are lovely. But it would have been nice for me to have known what they mean.)

Q. I see, the Cathedral would probably be very interested to hear about that. So has your visit been a positive experience?

(Tourist: It has to me.) (Day-tripper: Yes.) (Tourist: It has been a surprise, because I have heard negative comments about it to be honest. But no, I think. I would like to come to a service or a concert here, just to get a better atmosphere.)

Q. That's interesting. Did you hear the organ playing when you were in there?

(Tourist: It had just started when we were leaving, yes).

Q. Does music enhance your visit to cathedrals?

(Day-tripper: Oh it does for me, yes.)

Q. Does it make them feel more like sacred sites?

(Day-tripper: No, just more friendly. The music is friendly to me).

(Pause. Consulted questions)

Q. Were you surprised that modern architecture could look so beautiful?

(Tourist: Well I am not so sure about the architecture being beautiful. I mean I prefer the statues really. And as I say, I don't think that we have got the best of it, presumably that is all because of the work that is going on up there, the scaffolding, on the windows). (Day-tripper: Yes, I will bring her again when that is all gone and it is sunny [laughs]).

Q. That is fine. Thank you for stopping.

Group Composition: Local male (50s). Tourist female (50s) from Canada.
Date: 10th September 1998.

(Interviewed tourist).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because we thought it looked so magnificent from the outside.

Q. Really?

Yes.

Q. So where you just walking past, saw it, and decided to come in?

No, our friend told us about it.

Q. So you knew that the Cathedral existed before you came here?

Yes, and we travel we generally do seek out the cathedrals.

Q. Do you? What is the attraction for you?

Christ. [laughs]

Q. So there is a religious element to your visit predominantly?

Oh of course there is, as well as the artistic.

Q. Oh I see, so there is a mixture of the religious and the artistic.

Well religions have always patronised the arts, that is how they have existed through the centuries.

Q. Did you know what this Cathedral looked like before you came here?

Did you Desmond? (Male: I did). You did, I didn't.

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

Awesome.

Q. Really? In what way.

We found it very moving, and the use of colour is extraordinary. And a very good concept and control of what is inside the Cathedral.

Q. Yes, the architect has thought about it a lot?

Yes.

Q. Can you describe your experience to me?

I was very moved and very impressed As an organist from a Presbyterian church in Canada, I was very impressed with this Cathedral. [laughs]

Q. Is your perception of English cathedrals one of an old Gothic building?

Not necessarily.

Q. So you do know that there are modern cathedrals in England?

Yes, yes. But we would like to hear some of the music that our friend tells us about occur in the Cathedral. And we are delighted that the Cathedral sponsors as much music as it does.

Q. Yes, they do have a lot of concerts. Is music an important part of your experience when you come to a cathedral?

Exceptional so [laughs]. Yes.

Q. Does it make it feel more of a religious building?

Yes, definitely. Music is the closest expression we have to God. Any God, not just Christ.

Q. Yes. Did you learn anything about the Cathedral when you were in there?

Well, we learned about the use of colour. We liked the Stations of the Cross. (Male: Yes, are those stations by Sean Rice or not?).

Q. I am not sure, but the name does sound familiar.

(Male: There is a big statue by Sean Rice in there.) But the Stations of the Cross really caught my eye, and they may be in this pamphlet that we will read now.

Q. So you've taken the pamphlet and you will read it after you have visited. Is that the way you prefer to do it?

Yes [laughs]. (Male: The last cathedral we saw was Guildford, which is also modern).

Q. Yes. What did you think of that?

(Male: I liked the inside of it).

Q. Yes, somebody else said they preferred the inside to the outside.

(Male: Well it is like the outside of that one isn't it. [pointing to Anglican] That's not exceptional either.)

Q. Do you not think so?

(Male: No I don't. Mind you we haven't really seen it yet. But this is absolutely stunning.) It is one of the most beautiful cathedrals I have seen.

Q. Really? People prefer the inside of this one more.

(Male: Oh the outside of this is fabulous.) Oh yes. Well we saw it from the train, didn't we, and I said 'what is that?'. I just think it is wonderful. (Male: Yes, we thought we should visit as soon as we saw it. This is our first visit to Liverpool.)

Q. Is it really? So are you going to visit both Cathedrals today?

(Male: Yes, we hope to). (Visitors start to move off).

Q. Ok that's fine thank you.

Group Composition: Two males. Local (20s). Tourist (20s) from Germany.
Date: 10th September 1998.
(Interviewed local).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Because I am showing my German friend around Liverpool.

Q. I see, so are you seeing him the major sites of Liverpool?

Yes.

Q. Is the Cathedral one of those sites?

Well I thought it would be a good a idea to show him around it. I have never been in here before myself either.

Q. Oh I see, you are not a local are you?

No, I am a student here.

Q. So are you going to take him to the Anglican Cathedral?

Erm, no.

Q. So what was the attraction of this Cathedral then?

Well it was on our way into the town.

Q. So it was convenient?

Yes, and it is quite impressive as well.

Q. Do you think so?

Yes, we are very impressed.

Q. I was about to say what was your experience like when you were in there? What have you impressions been?

Just the size of it really. I didn't realise it was that big inside.

Q. Did you learn about the cathedral when you were in there?

Well I learned about how much it was going to cost for it to be restored. Something like £5million.

Q. Yes I know. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

No.

Q. Ok, that's fine. Thank you.

Group Composition: 3 females. Local (60s). Tourists (60s) from North of England.

Date: 10th September 1998

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Local: Well I, for my sins, am paying my first visit, and I have lived in Liverpool all of my life. Well no, that is not altogether true. I was here when I was a tiny tot, when the foundation stone was laid, but that was before the War, and things have changed. But mainly today, we have come down to bring Mrs Davis and a friend.)

Q. So you have some visitors and you are bringing them to the Cathedral?

(Local: Yes).

Q. Is it like one of the attractions in Liverpool that your visitors should see do you think?

(Local: Not everybody enjoys it. I mean we do, we do enjoy looking at cathedrals.)

Q. Do you?

(Local: Yes, but whether everybody else does I have no idea). (Tourist 1: Well it is not always something that people think of, until somebody mentions that they have done something and they have got something out of it, and then you think, 'oh well why didn't we think of doing that'. But it is a matter of taste really.)

Q. Yes it is. Do you think of English cathedrals as old gothic buildings?

(Tourist 1: Well not necessarily because of the War, there were so many that were damaged weren't there? I mean obviously the cathedrals were started years ago, but they are being built as an on-going thing aren't they?) (Tourist 2: I think more of the beauty of them, I do.)

Q. So you don't think of them as something from a by-gone age?

(Tourist 1: Well we were just saying that here you have got the distinct difference between the two. I mean you go into the Anglican one, and it takes you an age to go around there because there is so much more to it. But then, years ago there was so much more to a building wasn't there?) (Tourist 2: Yes, I mean there is so much beauty there. These two are just so totally different.) (Tourist 1: Yes, it is a complete contrast isn't it? It makes you realise that you can get the same thing into a modern one.) (Tourist 2: Yes, but you still get the same feeling don't you?)

Q. Really?

(Tourist 2: Oh Yes. Going round around the wonderful huge building that we have just come from. It is vast, and yet there is a whole aura of peace. And then you come in here, and there is just so much blue, I don't know, it seems to really enhance that feeling.) (Local: The peace of the place.)

Q. Yes, the blue is very important isn't it? So it was interesting what you were saying about the peaceful atmosphere. Do you find that in all cathedrals then?

(Tourist 1: Oh yes, definitely.)

Q. And is that what the atmosphere in here is like?

(Tourist 1: Oh yes.) (Local: Yes, I think if you are troubled in mind, I think if people come into a cathedral and just sit and let the peace go over them, I think they feel better.)

Q. Yes, so they are comforting?

(Local: Yes, I have to agree with you on that one).

Q. It was interesting what you were saying about them being beautiful, do you think of English cathedrals as places of beauty?

(Tourist 1: I do, I really do) (Local: Well it doesn't really matter if you go into any cathedral, whether it is English or any other place, you get the same sort of atmosphere and reverence when you go in don't you? Every building has something of an aura don't they?) (Tourist 1: But isn't it though that our little churches, I mean I am from Wales, and our churches are mostly very little places, but you still get that feeling.)

Q. So is it something about the atmosphere of churches which is quite unique?

(All: Oh yes.)

Q. Would you find that atmosphere in any other type of building?

(All: Oh no.)

Q. That's interesting. And so do you visit cathedrals because they are beautiful?

(Tourist 1: Yes, whenever come to a new place we will look at them.) (Local: I think it is a case of interest really isn't it, not just beauty. To see what is around you when you go to a new place.) (Tourist 2: Yes, you want to know more about the place and that sort of thing. I mean we came here about three months ago, and I wrote to my sister-in-law here, she comes from Melton Mowbray, and I said that we must go to the Cathedral when you next visit, which is what we have done today.) (Tourist 1: Yes, I come from a part of the country where there are very few new churches, they are all old churches. I mean you might find them in the big towns, but definitely not in the country, not around the villages. The churches in the villages, some of them go back about four and five hundred years. And so the whole ambience is quite different.)

Q. So visiting a modern church is quite a novelty for you?

(Tourist 1: Yes it is.)

Q. So was that the attraction of coming here today?

(Tourist: Yes. Well I don't know because I love churches anyway. But I have been very impressed with what I have seen in the other church, the Anglican Cathedral.) (Local: Yes, and then coming in here you didn't know what to expect did you?) (Tourist: No I didn't. I mean I am not a Roman Catholic, I am a Protestant, and I had to ask my friend to explain one or two things to me, like the Stations of the Cross. And I am just interested in that. In fact I am quite interested in a lot of religions, because I have a granddaughter who is married to a Muslim, an Arab, but no pressure on her to become Muslim. So to find out about their religion, I have a copy of the Holy Koran. Because you see, this is the only way to get to learn about the culture of other people, and because there is only one God, for everyone.) (Tourist 2: Actually there is a question which I have for you which we were talking about when we were in the Cathedral. Years ago you could go into a church and ask for sanctuary. Does it happen today?)

Q. No, it was a law which was repealed in the 1600's. I think it was because so many people were taking advantage of it.

(Local: Yes, I think a lot of it was up to the discretion of the priests. Were did you learn about that?)

Q. At Durham Cathedral.

(Tourist 1: Oh I have been to Durham Cathedral.)

Q. Have you? Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

(Tourist 1: Not a lot. I haven't been to as many as I would like to see. But I've been to Wells and Oxford. I haven't done, although I live near, Chester Cathedral. I haven't even done St. Asaph which is nearer. But they are things that we can do on our days out.)

Q. So if you go to visit a new town, will you visit its cathedral?

(Tourist 1: Oh probably.) (Tourist 2: Yes, I think nine times out of ten I would.) (Local: Yes, I always do anyway. Well last time we were on a guided trip of Liverpool, we were at the Albert Dock, and we left the coach trip and we came up here. We were in the Anglican and here for about three hours weren't we? And when we got back people said "where have you been? we haven't seen you for ages." Invariably if you are on a trip in a town you will come across someone in your tour group won't you? But we had gone up to the cathedrals so we didn't see anyone. So we came up to the Anglican Cathedral didn't we? And then we got a taxi across here. I mean, Ok, it is not very far to walk and I knew where we were going, but Dorothy is not in very good health. Anyway we came across here. And as I say we spent about three hours over there, and we had to be back at the Albert Dock for about four, so we had to scarper, and everybody said "where have you been?". And we said "well we have only been up to the cathedral", and do you know they all said "why didn't you tell us we would have come with you, we would have loved to have seen them?" But you see, people have the impression that there is a lot to see at the Albert Dock. Ok there are things to see, but we didn't really miss out on anything coming up here.) (Tourist 1: No we didn't). (Local: Because, ok, there are shops down there, and it is on the sea, but there is nothing, it wasn't what we wanted you know? There wasn't any holding interest like there is at the two Cathedrals. We could have done the whole of the Albert Dock before lunch time. So for the whole day we did only two things, and then it was a case of 'well it is a must to come back and do them both again'. Well we have our car parked on a timer. It is not so bad if you have got your car parked in the right place, but we have only got two hours. Mind you, two hours is ample, because you don't take as much time in this one as you do in the other Cathedral.)

Q. So did you spend longer in the other Cathedral?

(Local: Well we got there at a quarter past ten this morning, we had our lunch there and then we walked around, and we have only come from there to here in the car. It was twenty five past one when we got here, and what time is it now, quarter past two. So we have been nearly an hour here haven't we? So it is a case of what you find of interest isn't it? And there is more in the other Cathedral. I mean when we were in the other one for those three hours last time, we still hadn't seen all of it had we?)

Q. Did you go up the tower?

(Local: No because of the steps and Dorothy isn't well. Anyway is that all right?)

Q. That's fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from Hastings. (Coach Tourists).
Date: 10th September 1998.

(Interviewed wife).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we have come on a National Trust holiday from Hastings.

Q. I see, is it a coach tour around Britain?

Well we are staying just outside Chester, and we have got a days' tour of Liverpool by the Blue Badge guide.

Q. I see and is she taking you to see both of the Cathedrals?

Yes, we have been to the other one yes.

Q. And was there any attraction towards this Cathedral before you came here?

We had never even heard of it!

Q. Really? So it was a case of the guide leading you here?

Yes.

Q. And what has your experience been like today?

It's lovely.

Q. Really?

And I don't like modern things. But I just think that it has got a nice feel to it. And the light as you come in, it sort of hits you.

Q. I see, so you don't normally like modern architecture?

No.

Q. Do you prefer the old styles?

Oh yes.

Q. So you think it was the light in there today which was the most striking for you?

Yes.

Q. Did it feel like a religious building?

Yes.

Q. Did you learn anything about the Cathedral when you were in there?

No.

Q. Really? Even though you had a guide?

No, we just wanted to walk around.

Q. So it was just the experience of the place that you wanted?

Yes.

Q. And what was your experience like in the Anglican?

Vast. [laughs] Vast. And we only had a lightening tour. About half an hour in there and half an hour in here. But I am very impressed with this. Our tour is leaving now, so we will have to go.

Q. Ok that's fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Local female (60s). Tourists - older couple (60s) from Cornwall.
Date: 10th September 1998

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Female Tourist: Well it is my home town, and we are visiting some friends visiting, and they decided that this is where we should go. I have never been in this Cathedral before.)

Q. Really, and you live here?

(Female Tourist: Well no, this is where I was born, but I have lived in Cornwall now for fifty something years.)

Q. I see, so you are all visiting Liverpool today yes?

(Local: No I live here.)

Q. I see. So are you all a kind of tourist-in-Liverpool today? Are you visiting other tourist attractions?

(Local: No, just here.)

Q. Really, so what was the attraction about this Cathedral for you?

(Male Tourist: Well we are comparing them both). (Local: Yes, we have been to the other Cathedral as well.)

Q. Oh I see, to compare the two completely different buildings?

(All: Yes).

Q. And what has your experience been like here today?

(Female Tourist: Oh you don't want to know... [to husband] you answer that one.) (Local: Well I love it, because I love it. But come on, you tell her what you think.) (Female Tourist: Well I think it looks like a disco.)

Q. Really?

(Female Tourist: Yes, I think it looks like a disco.) (Male Tourist: I thought it was quite serene.) (Female Tourist: No I didn't get any feeling.) (Male Tourist: I think the other one was very beautiful.) (Female Tourist: Yes, I think the stonework in that is beautiful. I mean the stonework that people have put into cathedrals... wherever you go around Europe or any of the churches around the world, the mosques or anything like that, you get this loving thing that men have put into it with their hands.)

Q. So that stonework that someone has put all of their energy into like you see in other cathedrals you don't have here?

No.

Q. So for that reason it is not 'a cathedral'?

(Female Tourist: The tapestries are lovely They fill in all of the blank walls around the Stations of the Cross. I mean they are very well done aren't they? It is just a modern cathedral that's all.) (Local: It's the first modern one I have been to.)

Q. Is it? So was it a surprise?

(Male Tourist: Well we have been in a lot of churches in Germany that have been rebuilt since the War, but they have been rebuilt in the old style.) (Female Tourist: Yes, they have been copied from the old style, whereas this is just a straight modern place.) (Male Tourist: Be careful what you say though, they will probably prosecute you [laughs].)

Q. Oh no please don't worry about that, please tell me what you honestly think.

(Female Tourist: Well yes, it is better than us going outside and saying "I wish I had said such and such a thing".)

Q. Well exactly. But that is interesting what you were saying. Do you perceive English cathedrals then as old Gothic buildings?

(Female Tourist: Not in as much of thinking of cathedrals, but I think of all churches. I mean where we used to live in Hampshire, they had beautiful modern churches, but they always looked... I mean they seemed to be some offering that people had done, that people had made, you know lovely carved seats and such, there was always something. But here...)

Q. It felt like a disco? Why is that?

(Male tourist: It is very colourful).

Q. I see, so is it because of the lights in there?

(Male tourist: Yes, the multicoloured effect.) (Female tourist: Yes, you think of before the War when the organ things used to come up out of the floor in cinemas and all the lights. I am sorry we haven't said anything that we should have we?)

Q. No, I have found that people either love this Cathedral, or it leaves them cold. So I don't mind honesty. So does the Cathedral feel like a sacred site to you?

(Female tourist: That is what it doesn't feel like.)

Q. Really?

(Pause)

Q. Did you learn about the Cathedral when you were in there? Even if it was just facts and figures.

(Female Tourist: Well no, because over the years we have certainly watched it growing, and we noticed when they put the top on, so we knew roughly about dates and such.)

Q. I see, so did you just wander around?

(Female Tourist: Yes. I am not saying the right things at all I am sorry.)

Q. That is all right, I think it is very interesting. I think it was interesting what you were saying before about the intricate carving on other cathedrals, and how people put their lives into it, and it is not in existence in here. Does that make the Cathedral less valuable to you?

(Female Tourist: I doesn't seem to me as if anybody has put the - oh God this is going to sound trite - the offering to God in here. It doesn't say "this is what I have done". It does with the lovely tapestries. Now somebody has worked on those and they were an offering... and with the silverware. I mean when somebody was actually doing those, they knew why. But when somebody put all of the concrete blocks one on top of the other, I am not sure they knew what they were doing at all, let alone why they were doing it. [laughs])

Q. Really? Do you think it was thrown together?

(Female Tourist: Yes, I do. And the fact that they didn't use very good materials. Especially when you look outside and you see all of that black staining. Is it a concrete cancer that's doing that?)

Q. I think they just didn't have the hindsight that we have now that concrete doesn't weather very well.

(Female Tourist: Yes, we are seeing a lot of that down in Cornwall. A lot of the houses down there that were made of concrete have suffered from that sort of thing, because they were put up in the '60s like this. And people down there are having terrible trouble with it, people can't sell their homes. They are all made of concrete blocks, and this looks the same from the outside. I mean when you look at that over there [pointing to Anglican] the sandstone, which to me is Liverpool, Liverpool is sandstone, pink and soft.)

Q. So was your experience much better in that one?

(Female Tourist: Oh yes.)

Q. Was that the first time that you have visited it?

(Female Tourist: No, oh no. I remember my father taking me to it, just after the War, about 1946. You know, there was quite a lot of damage done to it, because a bomb hit it, although I don't think that it went off. Yes I remember that well.)

Q. So you have a lot of nice personal memories about the Anglican?

(Female Tourist: Yes. Yes I do. But I am sorry I didn't have anything nicer to say.)

Q. No honestly, the more honest people are the better, because I am getting a proper picture of what is going on.

(Female Tourist: Anyway, we have got to go.)

Q. Ok that is fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from Sunderland.
Date: 10th September 1998.

(Interviewed wife).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well just to have a look at it because, you know, I have always wanted to see it since I first saw it being built. And I had sent donations when various members of the family died, I sent donations for the Remembrance Book, and I wanted to see it. And I thought that the Cathedral looked like something different.

Q. I see, a lot of different reasons. Is this the first time that you have been to the Cathedral?

Yes.

Q. And where are you from?

Sunderland.

Q. And did you know what the Cathedral looked like before you came here?

Yes, oh yes, because I had seen it on television.

Q. I see, and what has your experience been like here today?

Well it is very impressive, it is certainly different.

Q. Different from other cathedrals?

Oh yes.

Q. Because most cathedrals are very old?

Yes, and I think of the sun had been shining on that stained glass, it would have been really lovely.

Q. Why, have you been here on a sunny day before?

No no. This is our first visit.

Q. What did you like the most about the Cathedral?

Well, I liked the way that you can see the altar from wherever you go, you can still see the altar without any restricted area. (Husband: I don't think it looks as nice as the old cathedrals.)

Q. Really?

(Husband: Definitely not.)

Q. In what way?

(Husband: Well the old buildings have real character, and this is nothing but concrete. And concrete that is splitting). Yes I think it is a pity it hasn't been better built. You know, I think it is somebody's mistake isn't it? But I think that they couldn't get enough money raised to build an old style cathedral, and they had just to build what they had with the money. But it is still very impressive. (Husband: Yes, it is an impressive design.) Yes it is still very impressive and it is lovely.

Q. Have you been to the Anglican Cathedral yet?

No. I don't think so, I think the time is getting on. (Husband: No, we have got to go and get the train now.)

(Felt visitor wanted to move on).

Q. Ok, that is fine.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from Winchester.

Date: 10th September 1998.

(Interviewed wife).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we Christians, and we are from Winchester Cathedral, a very ancient Cathedral, so naturally we have come to visit. We are staying on the Wirral at a conference, and we have the afternoon off, and so we rushed over here to see the Cathedrals.

Q. So did you come to Liverpool to specifically see the Cathedrals?

(Husband: Yes, we came here especially to see them and then we are going straight back.)

Q. So you are very specific just coming to see the Cathedrals.

(Husband: Well we were here yesterday, and we went around the Albert Dock on a coach tour. We had always wanted to see both Cathedrals, and Beryl has been here before and has seen the Anglican Cathedral.

Q. Oh I see, so you knew there were two Cathedrals in Liverpool before you visited?

Yes, I worked here about forty years ago and I had been up to the other Cathedral then. But, so really I wanted to come back, and I know Gordon wanted to see them as well. This is specifically and particularly impressive. (Husband: Impressive.) Yes, it is the art, the artistic work that is here.

Q. Really?

(Husband: I am really impressed with this one.)

Q. Just from the artistic point of view?

Well the design of it, and the erm, it is the artistic work that is here. The sculptures and the embroidery, everything here, to me, it is wonderful to see a church take up the modern idiom, so to speak.

Q. So you accept the modernity of the place?

Yes. (Husband: And I have just commented that the tapestries remind me of the tapestries in Coventry, very much. We particularly like the one on that side [pointing to bishop tapestry] even though we are of the older generation.) We live near a church, which is our church, which is only 30 years old, so I mean ours is a bit stark as well, but we like that.

Q. So you are used to that?

(Both: Yes.)

Q. And did you learn anything about the Cathedral when you were in there today?

(Pause)

Q. Did you use any of the leaflets or speak to the guides?

Yes, today we were in Ormskirk and some friends sat behind me on the bus gave me a leaflet so I read that before we came in.

Q. I see, so you tried to learn something before you came in?

Yes.

Q. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

(Husband: Yes we do. And we visit churches as well.) Yes, when we are out and about yes. We went to Chester Cathedral a couple of days ago.

Q. So what is the attraction about cathedrals for you?

Well I suppose when you live, as we have for most of our lives, in Winchester which is our home city, we have the most spectacular Cathedral. I mean that of course attracts you to visit other cathedrals. (Husband: Yes, we like to compare it to our own one). Sometimes they are a disappointment. I mean Salisbury is beautiful outside, but it is quite a disappointment inside.

Q. Really?

(Husband: The other thing is, that you learn a lot about the history of the area you are going to, in the cathedral that you are visiting.)

Q. I see. So it is not just the visual side but you learn about local history as well?

Yes, and also you learn about how the church in other places is erm trying to spread the Gospel. I mean you often get ideas and think, yes this might work at home, you know? (Husband: Yes, I think whenever we visit a new church or cathedral, we always pick up a copy of the parish magazine, take it back and give it to our own priest.)

Q. Oh it sounds like a very pro-active sort of visit?

Oh yes. I mean I think here, anyone who would not come and see this from a purely artistic point of view, that to me, even if you are not interested in the church, I would have this is something that should not be missed, you know, to me.

Q. Would you have felt disappointed if you had missed your visit today?

(Both: Yes). Well, when we came from the Anglican we thought, oh dear we will just have to pay the extra on the train fare, it can't be helped, but we can't miss it. (Husband: Oh we were determined not to miss it yes).

Q. So your visit to Liverpool is complete now?

(Husband: Yes). Well when we were down at the Albert Dock we only saw the Museum of Liverpool Life, we didn't have time to go to the other museums.

Q. Has Liverpool changed a lot since you been here?

Oh yes. But then yesterday, if we had visited the Anglican Cathedral, I would have been able to find my way to it from the Albert Dock. Because I worked on Lime Street. But when we came up from Central Station I was a bit lost. The city has changed a lot, and they have done a lot to it.

Q. Well thank you for stopping.

Group Composition: Younger couple (30s) from Australia.
Date: 11th September 1998.

(Interviewed male).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Erm, we have seen a lot of other cathedrals in England since we have been here, so we thought we would just drop in on this one, to see what this one was like. Also there are not many Catholic ones around, so we thought we had better visit the Catholic one.

Q. Where are you from?

Australia.

Q. And are you here on holiday?

Yes.

Q. And what specifically attracted you to this Cathedral?

Just that it was here.

Q. And what have you experienced today?

In most of the cathedrals I have seen, it somehow says that they were built to the glory of God, but this one, I can't help but think this was built to the glory of the architect and the Archbishop at the time.

Q. Really? Does it feel like a religious site?

No.

Q. Does it feel like an architectural phenomenon?

Hmm. Yes.

Q. Did you get the same experience here as you have had at other cathedrals?

No, different. But just more of the same.

Q. So when you go home, if somebody says to you Liverpool Catholic Cathedral, what sort of images do you think you will bring up?

Erm, it reminded me a little bit of Russian architecture at the same time.

Q. Really? In what way?

Well it is very stark... and the concrete.

Q. And have you been to the other Cathedral?

No, not yet.

Q. Are you going to visit it?

I think so yes.

Q. Ok that's it. Thank you.

[After interviewees had left Cathedral, female partner came back and asked to add her comments to the interview. As follows:)

Can I just say that I think that it is important architecturally because it is the only post-Vatican Cathedral that I even know about. I mean that we don't have anything in Australia that is post-Vatican too, erm. So yes, I just wanted to mention that. And I did find it a holy place. And I was most impressed by, is it Normal Cresswall? Was he the Bishop? And how the people got the money together, because this is a very working class area, and it is very grand, and it must have taken an awful lot of penny raffles and things.

Q. Yes, it was all built by public donations. So it felt like a holy place?

Yes.

Q. What was it that made it feel like a holy place?

I don't know. I mean I walked around the perimeter of it. And yes, when I first walked in I thought 'no, it is like a stadium'. But no, just as I was walking around, I did get a sense of a spirit.

Q. Do you feel different coming out, from when you came in?

Hmm. No I didn't feel very uplifted no. But then it is sort of busy, and so. I would have liked to have sat and mediated for a little while and then maybe I would have felt different.

Q. Could you not mediate because it was busy.

Well we are pushed for time more than anything.

Q. That is interesting, in the different experiences which you both had. Well I am glad you came back and told me about your experience.

Q. Ok that's it. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) from Nottingham.
Date: 11th September 1998.

(Interviewed male).

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well we have come to see the structure and the interior of the Cathedral... and because it is different.

Q. Different in what way?

(Wife: Because it is modern).

Q. I see. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

Every time we have the chance yes. (Wife: Yes).

Q. So say you go to a new town?

It would be a trip to the local church or cathedral yes.

Q. And when do you go to the town, will the cathedral or church be the first thing on your agenda?

Well, maybe, but it will be part of the itinerary for the day.

Q. I see. So what is the attraction of cathedrals for you?

Well I am interested because I have been in the building trade for 46 years. So I am interested in buildings.

Q. I see, a vested interest?

(Wife: Well, he always wants to look at the construction you know?)

Q. And so what has your experience been like here today?

Very modern. And full of the usual problems that they have got with modern buildings, modern techniques. Modern ordinary forms of building create these sorts of problems. There is too much hurry, and not enough love gone into the building and the construction of the thing.

Q. So is that in contrast to the way that older cathedrals were built?

Yes. Well they have more... they are built to last. I mean this was built to last, but at the same time, you can see it is breaking down. Now whether that is architectural fault through design, or whether it is workmanship. I reckon it is a bit of both, this is my opinion. The trouble with a place like this, with it being so modern, you feel like you are entering a cinema, an ABC cinema. As soon as I walked in there I thought 'this is an ABC cinema'.

Q. Really?

The colours, the lighting, and the surroundings. But then, you know, we have got to be modern, we have got to change with the times. This is for the future. You know, in a hundred years time, this will be seen as

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) from Nottingham.

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"by gum, they were modern" and will be put down that the 20th century was a bit archaic and cold and heavy (Wife: But it has still got some atmosphere about it.). But it is fairly light, and it is modern

Q So it still has an atmosphere?

(Wife: It still has an atmosphere)

Q A spiritual atmosphere?

(Wife: Yes.) Yes, spiritual, I am not too much of a religious person, I mean I don't feel it

Q So did you visit the Cathedral as an architectural phenomenon rather than a religious place?

Regrettably yes, sorry about that. [laughs]

Q No, please be honest Many people who visit are not religious, they are coming to look at the architecture. When you think of an English cathedral do you think of something old and Gothic?

(Both: Oh yes)

Q. So is this a novelty?

Yes, that's right, it is a novelty, and I think that is one of the main reasons to visit. But it is still very nice.

Q. So even though it is falling apart?

Well it is not falling apart, but it does have fabric problems. But erm, the open space is magnificent. It is better from an open space point of view than 90% of the churches. Because again Margaret is right, you sit in a place like this and you focus around the guy in the middle, so there are only a few at the back that aren't going to see at all. So you are going to get something like a minimum of two thirds of the people there who will see his face and the movement of lip. In old churches you get stuck behind columns and the guy at the front is there trying to speak to people that are so far at the back. This is why you have got microphones of course, but you don't see movement of the face. So it does help to be around the altar and part of it.

Q. I see. Do you think that we still have the old building skills that old cathedrals were made by?

I do yes.

Q. They still exist?

They exist, but in the minority. Everything is money orientated now, and the guys that were skilled unfortunately have been passed over, grown and unfortunately passed on without handing on their skills

Q Is that because people are not interested in the old skills or they are not willing to pay for them?

They are not prepared to pay for them, and they haven't got the patience today This is my opinion.

Q But we can do a lot with machines now can't we?

That's true, but they probably did that in the old days with a treadle. But still, we don't, the majority of people today are in a hurry, they are more interested in things for leisure and more leisure (Wife: Well it is a fast world anyway isn't it? There is less thought about religion.) Yes, to get down to the nitty gritty and do the little bit that is the sculptor's and the clever bits, it is down to a minority now

Q And that is down to money?

It is down to the cost factor.

Q When you build something today it is down to how much will it cost per square foot?

Absolutely yes. This has been built with modern techniques and in a bit of a hurry. It had to be built quickly at a low budget, and unfortunately it is the lowest tenderer that gets the job. But I am not decrying it. It is a very nice building. (Wife: Yes it is very impressive)

Q When you go home, if somebody says to you "Liverpool Catholic Cathedral" what sort of images do you think will spring to mind?

Modern. (Wife: Very modern. I mean even the sculptures are modern.) I hope the people inside are modern as well. You know, just diversify. If they are modern, then the whole place will be fine.

Q Did you learn anything about the Cathedral when you were in there?

(Pause)

Q. Did you use the guides or the leaflets?

We didn't ask the guide, we were worried that she might have taken us down to the pits. (Wife: Oh don't put that in your tape!)

Q Oh don't worry it is all confidential. Well it was very interesting speaking with you. Are you off anywhere else now?

Well we are rushing for time now aren't we? But we have had a look at the Cunard Building, and the Liver Building and the Custom House.

Q. I see, more architectural things then?

Yes.

Q. Ok that's fine, thank you.

Group Composition: Two young males Local (20s) Tourist - young male (20s) from Greece
Date: 11th September 1998.

(Interviewed local)

Q So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Local. Well my friend is visiting Liverpool, and Ok, you could see it as a tourist attraction but it is an experience that modern people don't encounter nowadays, walking inside a huge sacred place like a cathedral. And especially inside the Anglican, it is quite a unique experience. I mean this one, just to contrast it with that, it is so different as well. So I wanted to show him what it was like to be inside one of these places. They are just so different from what you normally encounter in a modern city.

Q. So in modern cities we don't have massive buildings, with huge spaces inside?

Yes, well we do, but not like this with the space and the feeling and the atmosphere. I mean it is just so quiet compared to the hustle and bustle outside

Q. So is it a haven?

Well it is more of a curiosity thing really. Also it is the opposite to the sort of Pepsi Max high isn't it? It is like a Pepsi Max low. It is a huge modern chill-out zone for adolescents [laughs]

Q. I was going to say, what has your experience been like in there today?

Well, we didn't spend long, we just had a quick look you know? I mean you can ask him. I mean I have been in the Cathedral many times, but I have been in the other one even more times as well. But it is the first time that my friend has been in here.

Q. Really? [To tourist] So what did you think of your visit today?

(Tourist: I enjoyed it. It was quite an unusual experience for me because I am used to the Orthodox, so it is quite different. So it is different, yes).

Q. Where are you from?

(Tourist Greece. So it is quite different)

Q Yes, because Greek Orthodox is very ornate isn't it?

(Tourist: Yes. They are not that impressive outside, but inside there is a lot of ornaments So this is quite different)

Q. Did you like the difference?

(Tourist: Yes, I liked it. The modern architecture is the thing that impresses me so much. In my country they would not make a cathedral so modern)

Q Did you learn anything about the Cathedral when you were in there?

No not really, because we had to make a very very quick visit, because our car is parked in a restricted zone. But I was just saying to him, although they have used modern architecture here, you still have that holy feeling. I mean you don't think of cathedrals looking like this. I mean it still feels like a cathedral even though they use such modern designs. I think it is really clever.

Q. I see, so when you think of the term English cathedral, do you think of an old Gothic building?

Well I think of Chester Cathedral and places like that. But the size normally isn't as big as these two here. I mean other cathedrals around the country, they just feel like churches to me, compared to the Cathedrals in Liverpool anyway.

Q. So after the Cathedrals in Liverpool, others are not as impressive.

Yes, definitely.

Q. Do you always bring your visitors here when they come to stay with you?

Yes. Obviously when I have got friends coming to Liverpool I will always take them to the Cathedrals. Even if they are not religious. I mean it is not something that we would normally do, we would just go clubbing and drinking, but it is an unusual experience just to see what is inside.

Q. So do you feel that you can guarantee that your visitors will get something from their visit, no matter who they are, or what sort of thing they like?

I think so, definitely.

Q. Ok, please don't let me keep you any longer.

Group Composition: Single female (30s) from South of England

Date: 11th September 1998

Q So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well, I have just started a tropical medicine course, so I am actually just discovering Liverpool, and this is part of it.

Q And what was the attraction about this Cathedral in particular?

I think because of its unusual structural qualities from the outside. I thought I have got to have a look inside. I walk past everyday anyway. I have only been here for three days, and today on my way back, I thought I will go in today.

Q. And what have you experienced while you have been in here?

Erm, I think like a lot of cathedrals, just the peacefulness, which was rather nice at the end of a busy day
Erm, I just wanted to look at all of the chapels and the stained glass, which is rather beautiful

Q. Really?

It was lovely.

Q So it was an aesthetic experience?

Exactly yes.

Q. It is interesting what you were saying about it being unusual. Do you mean unusual from other cathedrals?

Yes

Q. Is that in terms of architecture?

Yes, I mean other cathedrals are generally older. I mean I have never seen anything quite like this in Britain anyway.

Q. Did you learn anything about the Cathedral when you were in there today?

Well, I have taken this leaflet with me, so I will take it home.

Q. Is that what you generally prefer to do? Walk around and take the information home with you?

No. I think actually this is the first of two visits I mean because I was a bit short of time, I thought that I would have a brief look in, feel peaceful in here, go home have a read and then come back again. Because I have got another three months here, so today is just a quickie

Q And did you feel peaceful?

Yes

Q Do you equate cathedrals with peacefulness?

Oh definitely, yes.

Q. Even though there is generally a lot of tourists in them?

Oh yes. I still do, I think there is a certain respect in cathedrals anyway, so you don't get the sort of babble that you would in other tourist places. But I am not a Catholic, but still I enjoy the sense of peace and tranquillity.

Q Does it feel like a sacred site or does it feel like an architectural phenomenon?

At the moment, possibly the latter, but as I say I will return, because I haven't had enough time to absorb it really. I mean that probably sounds very prerogative, but you know, that is just an initial observation.

Q No it doesn't at all.

(Visitor started to fidget).

Q. Ok, that's fine thank you.

Group Composition: Two older ladies Local (60s) Tourist (60s) from Wigan
Date: 11th September 1998.

(Interviewed tourist)

Q So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Tourist: Well I have never been before, I don't live far away, but I haven't been)

Q. I see. Are you a tourist?

No I am just staying with my cousin for the weekend.

Q. I see and you have never been to this Cathedral before?

No.

Q. Had you ever seen it before?

Yes, I had seen the outside of it.

Q. And what was the drawing power of it?

Curiosity [laughs]

Q. I see. And what has your experience been like here today?

Hmm. Well my first reaction was 'I don't like it'. But it probably does grow on you.

Q What didn't you like when you first came in?

The modern architecture. Its very stark.

Q. When you think of an English cathedral, do you think of an old building?

(Pause)

Q. Do you think of an building like that? [pointing to Anglican Cathedral]

Well I have never been there. But, well, I am not terribly modernistic

Q. So you don't like modern architecture?

Not really, no.

Q Did you learn anything about the Cathedral when you were in there?

Well I mean I can see what has gone into it

Q Yes

I think possibly seeing it full, would be different to seeing it totally empty

Q Does it feel like a sacred place?

I don't think so, particularly for me at the moment, it doesn't feel like a sacred place. But then do these things ever, you know, when they are so much reliant upon people wandering around? But again you know you are talking about a place being empty and a place being full, it is being used as it should be used.

Q. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

No

Q. You are not a cathedral visitor then?

No.

Q. So this is quite an unusual thing for you to do then as a tourist?

Yes But as I say, I come from Wigan and a lot of my money goes into this. I mean we have to keep our own parish church going and we also have to fork out for this, and I can see where it is going, its falling to bits. I mean a lot of thought has gone into it, but not in the actual construction of it. I mean you shouldn't start messing around with modern materials, untried and tested, and spending this sort of money on this sort of place, I mean that is the real tragedy of it.

Q. And are you going to go to the Anglican Cathedral?

Possibly yes, if we have got the time.

Q. Ok, that's fine thank you.

Group Composition: Older couple (60s) from Leeds

Date: 11th September 1998.

(Interviewed female)

(N.B. At first couple said they didn't have time, then began talking. They agreed to be recorded after first minute of conversation.)

Q So can you tell me why you visit Cathedrals?

Well, I don't know, I think probably you go to most of these places, where there are old cathedrals, and I don't know whether it is to make comparisons, or whether you just go. I think I just go because I just like going into cathedrals.

Q. You just made the point about old cathedrals, do you visit cathedrals because they are old?

Probably yes, because they are old.

Q. And what is the attraction about something that is old?

I don't know if it is an attraction. I think it is because these places are preserved and I feel that we should preserve them, yes I think they have been built to last. I mean the cathedrals have been built for the honour and glory of God, but even other buildings which are old, I think we should make every effort to preserved them.

Q. Just for their architectural merit?

Yes, for the architectural merit, anything that is worth preserving. That doesn't mean every building should be preserved.

Q I see, so if it is an old hovel or slum, then should it be preserved?

Well no.

Q. What is your attitude towards modern architecture?

Some of the newer modern stuff coming out now, I quite like. I can't think of what, but some of the stuff that was built in the 1960's, all that glass and concrete, was just appalling. But that new building that they have built up the road, what is it? The Cancer Research Centre That has got a lot of glass, but it is quite attractive. It is very modern, but it is quite attractive

Q I see, so now, it is a different sort of modern?

Yes, I think it is becoming more attractive. I think people are beginning to now look and realise that they have got to fit in with everything else. But some of these places, like the hospitals, I think they are monstrosities some of the modern hospitals, and they won't last nearly as long as some of the older ones that are still standing

Q Why do you think that?

Because they are not attractive to look at and they are pulled down I mean what is attractive about a big building, oblong made of concrete or something like that. Aesthetically there is nothing there.

Q I see, we are getting to the nitty gritty now, we are talking about beauty here aren't we?

Q Yes, things that are pleasing to the eye

Q. So what is aesthetically pleasing about old buildings?

Generally they are attractive, generally they are in a nice setting I mean this one to me doesn't look too good outside But I think when it ages a bit and it blends in a bit more, and this is what I think it is, age does soften a lot of buildings Generally they acquire a nice surrounding I mean I am not saying that if the Cathedral was stood stark in the middle of a group of shops, it would lose a lot, but you can see if from a distance.

Q What is your experience when you go to cathedrals? Do you have the same experience in every one?

Well, I don't know. I mean some that you go in and you think right away, well. I mean, I never think of cathedrals as prayer houses, strange as it may seem. I never think of a cathedral as a house of prayer though it is. I mean to me, I would rather go to some little church, with nobody there, or maybe a couple of people praying or who are interested in God. But in any cathedral, most people are just interested in walking around and talking about what they see.

Q Tourists?

Tourists yes. I most people will say that they say just a prayer when they go in, you know. But generally they only go in to look around

Q. Does that affect the spirituality of the site do you feel?

Yes, if I was to go into any church, I would be going in with a different attitude altogether, and I would go in, and I would probably kneel down and say a prayer, even if I was looking around it. But cathedrals to me are generally for tourists, except when there is a service on.

Q I see, so do you equate churches more with worship and cathedrals more with tourism?

Yes, I equate cathedrals as being built for the glory and honour of God, but in this day and age, they are generally for tourists I mean, when I go to a town, yes I will go to the shops, but if there is a cathedral there I will always go into it, and a lot of people will. For what reason, I don't know. But I feel that I must see it Now some of them leave me cold, I mean I have been to a lot of them abroad. Now what is that famous one in France?

Q. Notre Dame, Chartres?

That's the one Now that left me stone cold. I mean it is the epitome of everything that you expect from a cathedral, but I came back and I said "well it left me cold". And people who know me said they couldn't believe it. I said it left me absolutely cold. I thought it was such a cold stark place. When I say stark that is wrong, it was very very decorative, but it wasn't a praying building at all.

Q So was it not in the atmosphere?

No. I mean you can walk around here, but if you go into the church over there into that side chapel, (pointing to Blessed Sacrament) you are immediately in a praying place. I mean go to any of the altars in here.

Q What do you think makes a cathedral, a cathedral Because some people say, 'I am just interested in the building because it is so massive' But I would say, that today, we can build a lot of massive buildings, like skyscrapers and sport stadiums, so why don't you visit them in the same way?

(Husband. Well the thing about cathedrals is, is that they could not build them today, a 16th century cathedral, they couldn't build one) Well they haven't got the labour have they, they haven't got the know-how. They haven't got the craftsmen

Q What about the Anglican Cathedral?

(Husband That is the last of the generation. They won't build anything like that ever again. That is the last of the great cathedrals) Yes, they haven't got the craftsmen (Husband: Not in this country) But even that is not built like the others. I mean that is built of sandstone, local sandstone, huge blocks of sandstone which is mounted up by crane, but when you see some of these buildings abroad, I mean the decoration on the front is just absolutely, it's you know, mind-boggling when you see the decoration on the front of some of these churches. Which they did without the aid of scaffolding and the modern aids and technology and equipment. They had to pull the stuff up by hand and then somebody stood up there and decorated those places, probably chipped and chipped away and all that sort of thing. But one of the nicest cathedrals that I have seen, one that impressed me more, was St. David's Cathedral in Wales. Now I saw that as the light was coming in, like this one when it comes in does But there was a lovely atmosphere, and the flags were a beautiful soft pink colour, and I thought that cathedral was, now that is not a huge cathedral, but that to me was a lovely cathedral.

Q. So what were we saying before about people visiting the cathedrals in the capacity of their being large buildings, why not visit a sky-scraper?

Well, I don't know. I visit cathedrals because I feel that maybe there is something there that I should see. It is like going to London and saying, "I must go and see Buckingham Palace", because why go to London and miss out on going to Buckingham Palace? Why go to Liverpool unless you go to the Cathedrals as well? I mean if there is a cathedral to be seen, I may not like it, but I will go and visit it

Q. So if you know that there is a cathedral in the city that you are visiting, you will visit that cathedral?

Yes.

Q. Even if you hadn't seen it before?

Yes, I would go.

Q. Would you expect it to be an old building?

(Pause) Yes, generally, because I think I know most of the new ones. I think I would expect it to be an old building

Q Do you try to learn anything when you go to these places?

Oh well we go around them, and we have a look at them, and if there is anything, I mean I usually go with a friend, if there is anything that particularly interests us Because I mean in a lot of the old ones you will get a lot of old sarcophaguses and things like that, they don't particularly interest me, but there are often odds and ends which maybe interesting. Then we will go to a guide or a steward, if we haven't got a book or it is not clearly explained Sometimes you go to some of these places, you could be broken buying all these books, and you haven't got time to read them But if they have got simple ones, like here, which you can use as you go around and look at the little side chapels But very often I will use those, or if they don't have that, I

will go and look for a guide or a steward and find out. Or when I go into one, I will often ask whether there is anything of particular note that we ought to see when we are in there

Q. I see Do you try to learn about the religious connotations of the building, or are you more interested in the historic/architectural side of things?

Yes, I think it is just the building Most of the religious connotations here and most of the cathedrals are pre-Reformation buildings, so most are Catholic in the first place So I will know what things mean in terms of religion I often think it is good that most cathedrals are now Anglican, because we don't have to pay for the upkeep of them! (laughs) We are not keeping you are we?

Q. No I am interested in anything that you have to tell me

Well for me, and I think a lot of people feel like me, if I go to a new town, I have got a limited amount of time. Now before I even walk out the door of where I am staying, say a hotel or what have you, I will find out what we ought to see first. So I will either go to a tourist information centre, or get a book and see what there is worth seeing, or what people recommend is worth seeing. It may not be worth seeing in the long run, but generally what people recommend is worth seeing. I mean very often, my friend and I go up little back streets and find all sorts of gems, or something like that. People miss a lot, but at the same time we like to give the others a chance to say "let us go and see this and that". And then what ever time we have got left after that, we will just browse around. You don't want the situation where somebody at home says to you, "did you see such and such a thing while you were in that place", and you have to say "oh no I didn't bother with that".

Q. So if somebody says to you when you get home, "did you see this and this" you don't want to find yourself in the situation of saying "no".

Oh yes, I think you should go and see the places that people reckon are worth looking at, they might not be in hindsight. But when you go there, you can say, well I am not keen on the look of this, but I will give it a quick visit, and you can say "ok it wasn't worth the time but I have been there". But then at least you know how much time you have got to then wander around doing what you want to do, whether it is shopping or what have you.

Q. So will you often go to places on the strength of other people's recommendations?

Well, or by a guide book, yes But yes, people will often say, "if you are going there you must see X, Y and Z, you will really enjoy that". Don't you ever say the same thing? That if you know somebody is going somewhere you will say "you must go to such and such a place?" We all do it.

Q So you are quite purposeful when you are on holiday then You don't just wander around, you set out what you want to see and you find out about it?

Well just to wander around is an awful waste of time

Q. So when you are on holiday you are on a limited schedule

Yes, so I have to see all the things that I want and should be seen, then I can meander around. I mean in this city I would recommend that people go to the business district, to see some of those beautiful buildings on Dale Street, even those with just lovely doorways or windows. I would recommend that.

Q So you are quite a purposeful visitor I would say

Oh thank you (laughs)

Q It was interesting what you were saying before, that you thought that the old cathedral building skills had gone. Why do you think that has happened?

Because there has been no one to pass it on to. I mean it is a craft. I mean stonemasons. The only stonemasons around now are those putting your name on your headstone. There are few stonemasons now, because there are very few buildings that have actually got engraving on them. If there are, they put them on a machine and carve them on.

Q So have these skills gone because there is no demand for them, because machines can do their work now, or is it because nobody is interested in learning these skills?

Oh I think it is both, it is a chicken and egg situation. I mean is the skill gone because there is no demand, or is there no demand because there is no one around to learn? Well from my own point of view, my son is a very good interior decorator, and he wouldn't work at his trade, simply because they won't pay the wage. They are not interested in craftsmanship these days. All they want now is slap-dash, get it up quick. If you want something of quality built you have to pay for it. It takes time, you can't do a good job in a hurry.

Q. So people aren't willing anymore to pay craftsmen, and to wait a long time so that the job is done properly. So the craftsmen are dying out because of that?

Certainly. That is what has happened to day. If the skills are not passed on, in two generations they have died out. Like my son, ended up in Fords for six years. And I would think that generally there are not many buildings to put it on. I mean there are very few buildings that would need a stone mason to work on them. I mean modern buildings are not designed with that sort of intricate carving. You can imagine what it must have been like on the old cathedrals. Those men were up there all year around, probably on very very poor days even. And if you go to the old cathedrals and you look up at the bosses, way way up on the ceiling, you can't even see them because they are so far up. But even then they are carved and painted beautifully. And the craftsmen did them for the glory and honour of God.

Q. So you are saying today, that the craftsmen aren't around because nobody is willing to pay for them, but even in those days they weren't getting paid, so what motivated those craftsmen then?

Well they did it for security, because they knew they would be working on them all their lives didn't they? (Husband, And the alternatives weren't there then for the people who had the skills, so they had to). And don't forget they lived in small villages so they couldn't travel to get to another job, I mean when these buildings were done, and I mean we are going back hundreds of years for most of them. I mean before Coventry, I don't know what the last cathedral to be built was. Oh probably Westminster Cathedral, but even that is built of brick though it is modern. Do you know it? I like that red brick, I think it is ageing well inside, it is softening. I remember seeing it years ago and it was a bit harsh. This one will age well if it lasts long enough.

Q Are you worried that this will eventually get pulled down?

I don't know. It would be an awful waste of money. But it should age with a bit of dignity.

Q I see. So getting back to what we were saying before, when you go to an old cathedral, are you admiring those lost skills?

Oh, they have got to be seen and preserved because they will never come back, we are never going to have those skills again.

Q Do you feel sad that those skills have gone?

Not really, because I think we are living in a different age. I mean we may never need those skills again. I mean we had plastic for a long time, but thankfully that has gone, it didn't last long. But now, I mean, look at the Anglican Cathedral. I like the Anglican Cathedral. I mean I think it is really awesome really. It is so big, it so awesome. It is brown while this is colourful. And anyway, a couple of months ago I was talking to two German girls about the two Cathedrals, and I said to them that I thought the Anglican was a lovely Cathedral, and they said "well we like this one, because that one is a copy of all other cathedrals, this one is honest, it is a cathedral of our time". And I thought 'well fair enough'. I mean you can't compete with the old style, you can't build in the old style, and so this is different and it is quite unique. I think people like it.

Q. I see, if you went to a cathedral, and there was an admission charge to enter, would you pay it?

Yes, depending on whether I thought it was worth it. I mean I have been to quite a few cathedrals that I have been to before, and I have gone in again, or taken somebody with me, and I won't pay to go in then. But maybe if it is the first time I will pay then. I am a bit opposed to it, you know, I don't think it's the right way. I mean cathedrals should be there for people to see.

Q. But say the cathedral is absolutely desperate for money, what do you think is the best way for them to run?

Well then I think then they could make an admission charge, but I think St. Paul's is about £4. Now if you were a man and wife taking your children out for a trip to London, that would be something like £20. Now if they were Christians and they wanted to make sure that the children were aware of their heritage, what would you do? And if you are going into St. Paul's and Westminster, and if you are paying out £20, I think it is a lot. I think it should be a very small charge, like £1 for adults and 50p for children, or children for free. It has to be realistic, otherwise the family would have to say, "we can't go in" and then you have lost them. Because next time they think of going to a cathedral, they will say "well we won't go in, because we might have to pay an entrance fee". So it has to be realistic to encourage people to come.

Q. Well often cathedrals are the only places where some people will actually make contact with the church.

Well, that's absolutely right. It is all right to say that the upkeep is a lot and that they would appreciate a donation of £1, fair enough. I mean you can get into some of them, like St. Paul's at least part of the way, but if you want to go any further you have to pay. And Westminster Cathedral, you don't have to pay in there. Now Westminster Abbey leaves me cold.

Q. Does it?

What do you think about Westminster Abbey Harry? (Husband. Well it is like many of them like Salisbury and Canterbury) Oh yes Salisbury is lovely, the outside of that is just amazing. Then again you see, how did people get up to those spires to build that?

Q. It was interesting what you were saying about paying admission fees and talking about Medieval cathedrals now. In the Medieval era you used to have to pay an admission fee to get into a cathedral, so aren't we really just going back to the original way that they functioned?

I don't know. I still think people with children will be hard done by. I think they should at least let children in free with their parents paying. I know that the argument is that people will pay an enormous amount to get into other places, but very often they go for entertainment and they know what they are going to get. But cathedrals are an unknown quantity and they don't know what they are going to get there, what they are going to get out of it. I mean some people can go into a cathedral and their life can be completely changed by the experience. I know that it happens rarely.

Q. Yes, I interviewed a man who was an atheist, and who said that his cathedral experience made him think about the existence of God for the first time in years, and he had only gone in there for the architecture.

I wonder why atheists go into cathedrals anyway Well I don't know, that's not right because I have been into mosques and Chinese and Indian temples.

Q Really, and for what reason?

Curiosity. To see what was there, what it looked like.

Q. So curiosity?

Yes.

Q Well thank you very much for stopping for so long

Oh that is all right, it is interesting.

(End of interview as then asked about Ph D.)

Group Composition: Two older ladies (60s) from Carlisle

Date: 11th September 1998.

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

(Female 1: Well we have come to the Cathedral today because we wanted to see the two Cathedrals, and because I am a Catholic as well. I have never seen them, so I wanted to see them. But Nan has seen them before, haven't you Nan? So you are really showing me around aren't you?) (Female 2. Yes.)

Q. I see, (to Female 2) so you are going by your past experiences?

(Female 2. Yes. Suzanne has always wanted to see the two Cathedrals. She knew about them before)
(Female 1. Yes, I have never been able to come before, but it has been a wonderful experience.)

Q Really, where are you from?

(Female 1: Oh we are from Carlisle.)

Q. Oh yes, are you on a day trip?

(Female 2: Well we are staying with my son on the Wirral and we are having a wonderful time.) (Female 2. Yes, we have appreciated the completely different architecture and the styles) (Female 1: That's right.)
(Female 2: And they both have something to offer, they are both so beautiful but in different ways)

Q. I was about to say, they are opposites in terms of their physical aspects?

(Both: Oh yes)

Q Do they both feel like houses of God?

(Female 1: Oh of course, both of them. And we have both been very interested in the stained glass windows). (Female 2: Yes there is a huge sense of space in the Anglican Cathedral, when you walk in. And I was just saying that this is like a theatre for an opera, it is very very beautiful.) (Female 1: Yes, yes it is.)

Q. How do you feel about modern architecture in general?

(Female 1: Well I am a traditionalist [laughs] but I must say there is room for it, and I think they have done a good job on this, I really do)

Q So do you feel that modern architecture can be beautiful?

(Female 1 Oh it can be beautiful yes.)

Q What is the thing that struck you most about this Cathedral?

(Female 2: Well many things But I am most impressed with the crown, I think that is very beautiful, and I just love the colours as you walk around They have been chosen so well, they are just perfect.)

Q. Do you visit cathedrals a lot?

(Female 1: Yes, we are kind of regular customers I must admit aren't we? [laughs]) (Female 2: Well we don't do the equivalent of a 'pub crawl', but I mean wherever there is a place of interest to see we will go in. I mean this is the first time that we have actually visited a cathedral together) (Female 1: Yes that is true). (Female 2: I mean the last time I came in here there was a dance drama going on, and that was magical to see.)

Q What do you think when the Cathedral is used for something like that?

(Female 2: Yes, I think that is fine, definitely My husband has actually picked out horses from a racing paper in a cathedral [laughs] and I approve I mean it is important to him, and he loves it, and he is a Christian, and he loves being in the cathedral, and he also prays in the cathedral [laughs] So no, I don't think that they should be closed places to that sort of thing, like they are too special to visit) (Female 1: But I think there should also be a feeling of respect) (Female 2: Yes).

Q. Did you hear the organ playing while you were in there today?

(Both: Yes)

Q. Did that affect your experience?

(Female 1: Yes, oh definitely. I am all for organs and choirs and that sort of thing.)

Q Really? So if one is playing in a cathedral, will that enhance your experience?

(Female 1: Oh yes.). (Female 2: Yes, I love it when they are practising I said earlier when we were over there [pointing to Anglican Cathedral] if you can catch a choir practising or whatever, it is better still. I mean there are times when you want it to be absolutely quiet.) (Female 1: Yes, sometimes you want quiet when you are sitting in the side chapels)

(Visitors begin to fidget).

Q Last question. Did you learn anything about the Cathedral when you were here today?

(Pause)

Q Did you speak to one of the guides, or did you read one of the leaflets?

(Female 1: Well we have got a leaflet haven't we? We didn't really want a guided tour.) (Female 2: Yes, on previous occasions I have been guided around the crypt, but today it was fine just to potter around.)

Q So you just wanted to experience it?

(Female 1: Yes)

Q. Ok, that's fine. Thank you.

Group Composition: Middle aged couple (50s) from Leamington Spa

Date: 7th September 1998.

(Interviewed wife)

Q. So can you tell me why you have come to the Cathedral today?

Well, he asked me if I wanted to see that one there (pointing to the Anglican) and then we came here.

Q. And was it for architectural reasons?

Well, it was just because we were here and I wanted to see it

Q. So is it part of being in Liverpool, of being a tourist?

Well I have never seen it before, I have never been to Liverpool before. I was very surprised by how nice it is

Q. What Liverpool or the Cathedral?

By Liverpool.

Q. Why did you expect a lot of dereliction?

I am surprised it is so clean, and it smells nice, and it was nice to see where John Moores is and the University. I liked the Anglican. And I don't usually like modern things, but this is wonderful.

Q. Really? So before you came here you didn't think much of modern architecture?

Not really no. I have been to the Tate and I don't really like Cubism. But we came in here, and yes...

Q Really? I wonder what it is?

It is warm. It's the light. Although it is much simpler than that (pointing to the Anglican) it is less awe inspiring, and cosy and warmer, I don't know.

Q Even though it is made of concrete and glass and steel?

Yes And of course it is built in a round shape, and it brings the people together, and the light is nice.

Q. Did you get a sense of God's presence in there?

Not when I first came in. But yes, more when you get into it, but not this entrance bit no. But yes it is great, I liked it.

Q. So if when you go home, someone says to you "Liverpool Catholic Cathedral", what sort of images do you think you will bring up?

I would say it was very nice. It wasn't what I thought it would be like Also it is nice because it is up above the city, and it looks down over the city, so it is like a citadel isn't it? Like it is up here, looking over you all I think that is lovely.

Q. I see, is your perception of English cathedrals one of an old Gothic building?

Yes, I think so yes, really.

Q. And so this doesn't fit with your previous perception?

No it doesn't. We have just been to France and that was all old places. But this is different, it is nice, I like it a lot.

Q. Do you think your attitude or your idea of modern architecture has changed because you have been in here?

Yes, I think so. I think I have got an open mind on it now. I like traditional things, but I do like what they have done in here.

Q. You think that they have got it right here?

Yes, and I would like to go around it again because I liked the pictures and all of the little chapels. Yes, very different, very nice ambience, more homely than that other one. Which is unusual, because it is mostly Catholic churches which are 'over the top'. But no, this is nice.

(Visitor begins to walk away)

Q. Ok, that's fine, thank you. Where are you from by the way?

Leamington Spa.

Q. Are you staying in Liverpool?

Yes, we go back tomorrow.

Q. Thank you