Italian Intelligence. The KGB, however, had more important sources within British diplomacy than Constantini. As Whitehall began to discover at the outbreak of the Second World War, it had penetrated the Foreign Office itself. Following evidence from Walter Krivitsky, a Soviet defector to the United States, Major Vivian of SIS and Jasper Harker, head of counter-espionage in MI5, began a joint investigation. Gradually they supplied what Sir Alexander Cadogan, Vansittart's successor as Permanent Under-Secretary, called 'awful relevations of leakage' in the Communications Department at the very heart of the Foreign Office.

Cadogan records in his diary on 25 September 1939 that Vivian and Harker were putting one of the officials, Captain J. H. King, through 'a "Third Degree" examination'. 'Looks pretty black against King.' He added: 'Very disturbing.' Cadogan wrote next day. 'Long talk with Harker and Vivian, who had to jug King last night. I have no doubt he is guilty—curse him—but there is no absolute proof. They are on the track of others.'

King failed to realise the weakness of the case against him, cracked under his 'Third Degree' interrogation, and made a full confession of his work for the KGB. In a secret trial at the Old Bailey on 18 October he was sentenced to ten years in jail—a rather lighter sentence than he would have received nowadays. Security in the Communications Department was found to be so bad that all the other officials had to be either dismissed or moved to other departments.

In January 1940 Krivitsky came to London to be debriefed by MI5 and SIS on Soviet espionage in Britain. At a meeting with Lord Gladwyn, then Cadogan's Private Secretary, Krivitsky claimed that 'a young man in the Foreign Office of good family' was working for the KGB. With the advantage of hindsight Lord Gladwyn believes that the KGB agent referred to may have been Donald Maclean. But, at the time, Krivitsky's clues were vague and the Foreign Office had no shortage of young diplomats 'of good family'.

Krivitsky's further revelations were, in any case, overshadowed by evidence from SIS that on the eve of war, secret Foreign Office documents had been passed to Germany from the Central Department (which dealt with German affairs). Cadogan wrote miserably in his diary on 26 January 1940: 'I can trust *no one*. Must go into the whole thing.'

The outcome of Cadogan's investigation into leaks to Germany is still not known. In 1947, however, the junior Minister at the Foreign Office, Hector McNeil, made a brief and overdue statement to the Commons on the 'unfortunate and inexcusable' leakages from the Rome embassy between the wars, though he did not identify Signor Constantini by name. He went on to assure the House that Foreign Office security was now vastly improved with a security department 'constantly engaged on security supervision'. McNeil's personal assistant, who may well have helped prepare that statement, was, unhappily, Guy Burgess.

Christopher Andrew, who is Fellow and Senior Tutor at Corpus Christi, Cambridge, presented a filmed report on security problems on this week's 'Timewatch' (BBC2).

Colleen Toomey: Phantom ladies—transvestites

'We lead quite ordinary, normal, decent lives'

An attractive 'woman', Ben/Anne frequently gets wolf-whistles

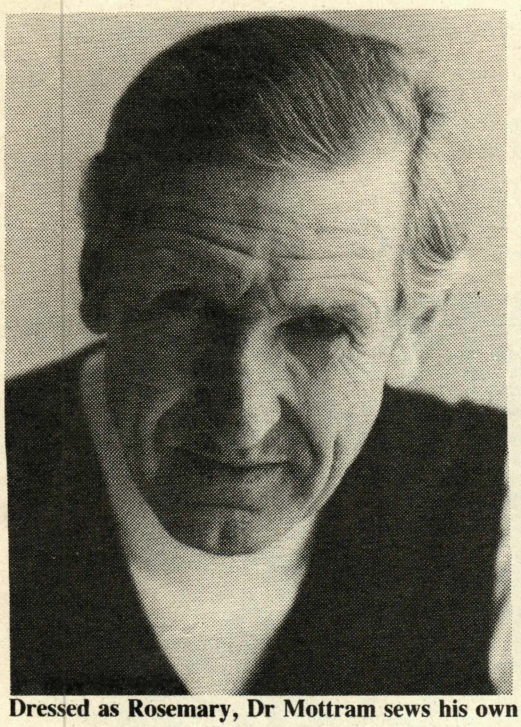
Earlier this week a former naval officer and a university lecturer spoke on BBC1 about their transvestism—their liking for wearing women's clothes. Now Colleen Toomey, who was the assistant producer of the programme, in the new series of *Real Lives*, writes for THE LISTENER about how these two men have dealt with the effects transvestism has had on their lives and those closest to them.

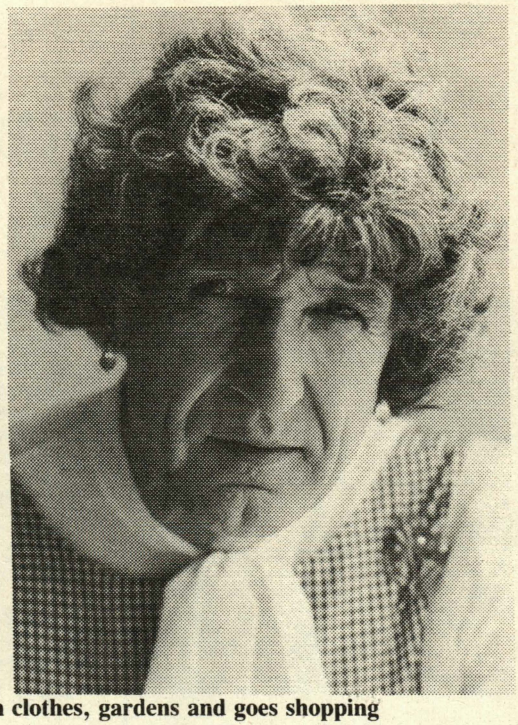
It was late when Ben pulled into a quiet lay-by. There was something he had to do before he returned to his wife and three children after a night at the theatre. At that moment a police car pulled alongside him. It was too late to hide the fact that he'd spent the evening dressed as a woman—he was halfway changed. 'Oh my God! What am I going to do?' Ben panicked. 'It was such a terrifying moment. There was nothing I could do.'

The events of that night, 14 years ago, changed the course of Ben's life. As a lieutenant with the Royal Navy he was responsible for a department of shipwrights and stokers, among whom he had earned the reputation as a 'lower-deck Perry Mason'. Ben knew precisely what the discovery of his compulsion to wear women's clothes meant for him. 'The bottom dropped out of my world. I thought: "I'm going to be left with no job, no wife, no marriage, no family. . ."' For a brief moment he contemplated suicide.

He knew how his wife would react when she learned that his secret life had been exposed so publicly: she had never accepted his desire to cross-dress, regarding him as 'perverted' and 'disgusting'.

He thought he knew, too, how the Navy would react: he would be court-marshalled and ignominous discharge would undoubtedly follow. But, instead, the Navy swiftly packed him off to a services psychiatric hospital. The medical staff there had had little experience of treating cross-dressing and the solution Ben's psychiatrist came up with was aversion therapy, using electric shocks. So, for six months, Ben was made to put on women's clothes. Each time a new garment was added, the shocks became more excruciating. 'I used to finish up at the end of some of the sessions in tears and on the floor because I just couldn't take the shocks; they were so awful.'





Dressed as Rosemary, Dr Mottram sews his own clothes, gardens and goes shopping

Ben still remember the pain, humiliation and the futility of such treatment. Eventually, he feigned a cure, was discharged from the Navy and, soon after, was divorced by his wife.

This chapter in Ben's life is the reason why tens of thousands of men in this country keep secret their desire to cross-dress. They are afraid of discovery, of losing their jobs, their wives and even blackmail. Society feels threatened by this deviation from the norm, regarding men who cross-dress as homosexuals, even perverts, child molesters, and freaks.

In fact, the majority of men who cross-dress are heterosexual. They enjoy sex with women. Many marry, have children and make good fathers. They come from all walks of life and include judges, engineers, London Underground train drivers and plumbers.

Unlike the transsexual, who believes he was born with the wrong body and has an operation to rectify the situation, the transvestite has no desire to become a woman. He merely wishes to adopt the appearance and behaviour of the opposite sex. Cross-dressing, whether it's once or twice a year or every day, gives the transvestite a feeling of happiness, peace and a freedom from tension. Any sexual arousal associated with wearing women's clothes usually disappears during late adolescence. For most of these men it's more important that they have an escape-route from the 'macho', 'domineering' role which they were brought up in and have scant regard for.

These days, Ben lives as a woman, full-time. He is known to everyone, including the DHSS and the passport office, as Anne Downes.

'As you can see, the treatment didn't work,' says Ben, an attractive 'woman' in her early fifties who is frequently wolf-whistled by construction workers on the way to the antiquarian map and print shop he owns. 'I don't want to have any surgery,' says the re-christened Anne. 'I can't have a mind transplant and no matter what they do to my body, it won't alter the way I think. I assume I think as a man because I've been a man all my life. But, I feel more confident as Anne than I ever did as my other self.'

But beneath his sophisticated, feminine exterior is a man who still fancies women, 'which is a bit difficult, as you can imagine!'.

The price of gaining a new life has been worth the anguish, however costly. It meant severing all ties with his family. Says Anne: 'I haven't seen my family for ages. . .I do miss them very much.'

Or, as Dr Roy Mottram, a senior lecturer at the University College at Cardiff who likes to cross-dress as 'Rosemary', put it: 'I feel like quoting what my mother used to say. "Take what thou wilt. Take it and pay for it."'

Dr Mottram, like many transvestites, began cross-dressing secretly as a child. For most of his life that secrecy, he claims, controlled his life. 'For over 20 years I was living with my own transvestism, being continually worried by it, frightened by it, feeling continually alone,' says Dr Mottram. 'I was very afraid, lest anybody discover me.' He was married with four children at the time and he felt as though he were the only person in the world who had a compulsion to cross-dress. Now, in sharp contrast to those years, Roy Mottram has an almost missionary zeal to explode the popular myth surrounding transvestism. As medical adviser to the Beaumont Society, an organisation for heterosexual transvestites which arranges meetings (covert, of course) throughout the country, Roy Mottram is keen to proclaim his message to both his fellow cross-dressers and to society.

'This is the help transvestites can be given . . . to learn to live with their own condition, to keep it within socially acceptable bounds and to accept it as part of their personality which they can no more change than they can change their height or their eye-colour.'

Roy Mottram is one of many who believes that transvestites cannot be cured—because they don't wish to be.

His wife, however, believed that a cure was within the realms of possibility and that her husband was simply refusing to take this option, creating instead another woman: a rival to her. So they were divorced. Roy Mottram now lives alone in his small semi-detached home. But his children still visit him and two of his sons have even taken 'Rosemary' to the pub.

Says Lewis, a 29-year-old composer of modern music: 'Society's prejudices are ridiculous. There's prejudice against transvestites, homosexuals, people with long hair, coloured people, women. They all suffer prejudice. And that includes even the poor and the rich. Each one doesn't like the other. Generally, people don't like anybody who's not just like them.' Lewis thinks his father is far nicer, now that his secret is out.

Dressed as Rosemary, Dr Mottram sews him own clothes, gardens and goes shopping. He has two bikes, one for Rosemary, the other for Roy.

'I cannot conceive of Rosemary standing up in front of 150 medical students and holding that audience.' he says. 'Similarly, when I'm working at home, if circumstances are right, then it's Rosemary that works on, say, book-writing, essay-marking or lecture-preparing.'

What is extraordinary about men like Ben and Roy is the very ordinariness of their daily lives. Their compulsion to wear women's clothes—and the social disapproval attached to that—might be more understandable if the men who cross-dressed were, in some way, outrageous in their everyday lives. But they are almost invariably highly conventional.

'We lead quite ordinary, normal, decent lives, doing very ordinary, boring everyday things,' says Ben, who shares a view common to other transvestites; that as a man he has to be aggressive, unemotional, dominant and macho. This stereotyped image prevents most cross-dressers from revealing the softer, more 'feminine' side of their personalities as men.

Even their perception of the woman they like to dress as is conventional—ranging from the 'twinset-and-pearls' image to the 'tart-with-a-heart' look. They desire to be soft, pretty, vulnerable and set out to be more feminine than their female counterparts. Even if, for some, a successful transition depends on a greater element of self-deception than reality.

It is often with a degree of despair and envy that many of these secret admirers of the feminine world view the changes taking place among the 'fairer sex'. Women have become more assertive, challenging men for jobs that were once exclusively male. Women can walk down the High Street openly wearing men's clothes and be described as fashionable, rather than perverted.

The tender convergence of recent years has been lopsided and unjust, assert the male cross-dressers. They remain, meanwhile, one of Britain's socially unacceptable and secretive minorities.

Says Dr Mottram: 'If you extend the word "perversion" to other aspects of behaviour, then the transvestite is far less socially disruptive than the person who drinks too much, the person who gambles, the person who indulges in violence on the football terraces. They are all much more perverted socially than a transvestite.'