

While researching for this blog, someone had been so kind to upload the film my mother must have read about in the newspaper in 1939. It is called *The City*, from the series *If War Should Come*. The film is a long stretch, but worth viewing: <http://www.baxpress.blogspot.com.br/2012/12/edwin-lutyens-charles-bressey-and-my.html>

My main interest at this moment – and I'm sure it would have been my mother's in the first place – is meeting the man behind the invitation cards. In person, Bressey shows himself not only as a model British well-educated gentleman, but also as a very shy and modest person, hardly looking into the camera at all. His ardent love for his work shows in the way he directs the attention away from himself immediately to the plans, and in the way he moves his fingers over the maps and touches the paper.

Bressey kept his promise. My mother did get her pen friend after all. However, it was no success. There might have been too many cultural differences. Besides, Rotterdam was bombed shortly after, on 14 May 1940. Attention was quickly needed elsewhere. After the war my newly-wed parents emigrated to Canada on the same day that Bressey died.

My mother never forgot Bressey's lines of poetry. She lived her life accordingly and once in a while recited them, moralistically, to us children. Back then, we hadn't the foggiest about the story behind it or who wrote the lines, and she never told us. Now I know they were taken from the war trilogy *Wallensteins Lager* (1797/8), written by the German philosopher Friedrich Schiller.