

ANN HILL RESEARCH

Interview with Margaret Little
(or Davidson)

2nd December 1986

Mrs Davidson, 91, lives with her nephew (?), George Bell in Newpark Crescent (?), Annan. Not so forthcoming as some, possibly because of her age, but helped by Mr Bell (aged 68), who has the strongest Kirkpatrick Fleming accent I've met yet. Her family moved to Flossh when she was 1 year old (1896).

School

Blackie Brown was stoutish 'like you', white haired, very strict. She had to walk one and a half miles to school, so she had to stay for dinner time and liked getting soup from the soup kitchen (an apparent contradiction to Mrs Lorraine). This was between the Hall and Moffats, 1d a bowl. Her other teachers, all O.K., were Misses Christie, Graham and Dunkeld. She remembered going in carts to Springkell for a school picnic, but didn't recollect sports.

Mr Bell was taught while Rae and Hogg were masters. They were all frightened by Mr Hogg. A nice teacher was Miss Jardine, who belonged to Johnstone Bridge. ~~He told me, but asked it not to be printed, of a~~
~~... ..~~
~~... ..~~
He mentioned, without comment - unless the remark that in these days people were normally afraid of teachers - Miss Barclay.

She like Mrs Lorraine, mentioned evening classes.

George Bell remembered trips (but I'm not sure school/Sunday School) in buses to Silloth or Moffat.

Church

Mr David Graham, a nice old man, lived with his sister in the manse. Then came John Walker, very nice, who had 2 boys and 2 girls. Mr Fyffe was a very slow speaker.

The Johnson-Fergusons used to go to Kirkpatrick Fleming Church and sit upstairs.

Lay preachers sometimes came to Hollee.

Her father was an elder at the Church. They showed the appreciation given by Mr Walker when he died. (In, I think, Annandale Observer). Others were Abel Mitchell, John Beattie (Blackyett), Sam Wallace, John Lamont, Mr Little - well-built, not stout (this seems one of her stock defining terms), very decent living, died suddenly. He'd been to a funeral in Edinburgh, came

home, sowed corn, went to bed, died of a heart attack at midnight. George Little. Not a singer. Only 57, leaving (unless one already dead) a family of 8 (sister died aged 4, took fits). Most lived till 80's.

The lay preachers went through the village, had meetings in the hall.

The choir soiree was a great occasion, for which everyone would turn out. In the hall. The beadle's daughter - Miss Turnbull - sang, Jim Mitchell sang (?), Jim Irving (Shawrigg), a great comic, did turns.

She was married by Mr Walker (25.10.1918 - James Davidson, Victoria Terrace (30) and Margaret Little (23), Flish - Manse). Weddings were either at home or in the Manse. John Beattie's daughter was married the same day. It was very quiet after the wedding, for which a typical present was 3 jugs. (There were in fact 3 weddings that day - Tom Kelly and Janet Beattie, Blackyett, in the Church; Davidson - Little; and William Twaddle to Mary Ann Harkness, at Irvington.)

Sport and
Entertainment

She recalled Flower Shows at Mossknow, but George Bell could not. Quite a wee show, with sports.

They played skipping and so on.

Quoiting was, she thought, at the back of the soup kitchen.

Curling - a pond at Calvertsholm, not good (George Bell).

Hunting - Bell-Irvings and Violet Graham hunted.

On winter nights Davie Burnie the cobbler used to keep his shop open, and lads could play dominoes.

Geordie Glendinning, a pal of her father's was a character and a great violinist. Stories are told of him, which were obviously very amusing at the time. One told how he and George Little went to Edinburgh for a week-end, had a grand time - went to the pictures at night, and walking through Edinburgh, Geordie Glendinning suddenly exclaimed 'Aye Geordie - there's Tommy the Tramp.' He was from Broathill. 'Latterly' John Burnie and John Thomson played at dances.

No whist drives till she was older. George Bell played whiles, but was put off by those who couldn't stand a loss.

Soirees mentioned - see Church.

Economic

The main Hollee shop was Miss Johnston's for groceries. For clothes go to Tom Irving (later McIntosh). Then Bell set up grocer's shop. Sam Wallace had a big family and his sons were tailors. His son Bob set up in Fairyraw before going to New Zealand. There were occasional cheapjacks (this not said with confidence).

George Bell recalled Davie Burnie, cobbler and his aunt Bella Burnie, the cobbler. Stout, very nice, quiet. (It must have been he who mentioned the dominoes).

Beattie had the corn mill, went to Australia. His brother was in Dornock. The last miller, Fraser, made pepper and salt dishes, one of which they showed me. It looked, but didn't feel like mottled marble. Perhaps, they thought, bone. He also made walking sticks. Don't know where he came from or where he went to.

Their doctor was Doctor Gilroy, then Doctor Elder. They used to cycle, in Gilroy's time, to Waterbeck for medicine.

awfully!

The flu (?) epidemic was awfu bad in Annan - perhaps not so bad in Kirkpatrick Fleming. People didn't go often to Annan - perhaps they'd cycle there. The roads, of course, weren't tarmac - they used to roll stones with water in to the soil. They used to walk barefeet to school in summer. Davie Davidson was the roadman.

There were a lot of poachers - usually well known. It was said the Broatches were evicted from Grahamshill for shooting a pheasant.

Cove quarry was in full swing. people came from as far as Creca (and from Irvington to Corsehill). Lamb had a big family and went to the Carlisle area.

Farms and Farming

See economic for Broatch.

See, for Broathill and Glendinning, sport and entertainment.

The Littles were tenants at Flosch, which belonged to a Lockerbie solicitor, Riddick. Mixed - feeding cattle, sheep, pigs, arable. There was a pump outside, with paraffin lamps. Over 60 years ago they left for Annan. (But later I have 'left Flosch for Ecclefechan'). Flosch and Broathill were remarkable in that the tenants had

no lease, and could be put out at any time. Most farms had a 15 year lease which could be broken after 5, 10 years or at death. The old house at Flosch had a date on the window (look middle front door, date, 1750, on window to right). They used to burn peat, cast on their own moss. George Bell's grandfather used to cast, and George barrowed it - 5 peats at a time. They had coal too. They allowed the folk at Fairyraw to cast peat free (Maybe they'd do a day at harvest in return).

Her (?) granny used to take butter to Annan by trap (recalled by others, not by her). It was packed at Davie Scaife's. Earlier a 'morganette' (wagon?) left from Langholm on a market day and picked up everyone on the way to Annan.

The Littles eventually left Flosch because there were 3 brothers who couldn't afford to buy the farm, so Halliday (haulage) took it.

They made butter, not cheese. Ducks, geese, turkeys, hens. No regular workers - took people on at harvest.

Other farms - Farish, Newton. Jim married ~~Miss Kerr~~ *from Craigie's auntie. The aunt of Miss Kerr from Craigi*

R T Bell, Broats, - drink problem. Annie left - Longtown, Doad died year since.

The Littles were very friendly with the Mitchells (Nutberry). Jim used to come every Sunday morning, and his grandfather was also a very regular visitor. Abel visited too. If anything went wrong you sent for Abel.

The Listers of Cranberry were mentioned, without comment.

Beattie, Wicketthorn, very kind but hard to get on with. George's mother dressed him for his funeral. They never saw Tom Beattie's wife out except at Church - but nice, quiet (this from George Bell).

Auld George Glendinning - see above - went to Whitespotts, Auldgirth.

The best farm? George Bell thought maybe Kirklands, Broats was good, with more rough ground. Calvertsholm, Wicketthorn were guid.

Lamont took Broathill. Dairyman at Dornocktown, to Howgillside, then Prestonfield, then Broathill. Big family.

Gentry

Fergus Graham had a sister, Gladys. Miss Graham never married. Theresa was the youngest. Violet hunted. Miss Graham was very reserved. Leslie, registrar, worked there. They sold because they were short of money.

Miscellaneous

I have a note which seems to suggest that George Bell had the village shop in Hollee. (See references in other interviews to Bell's shop).

After she left school Margaret Little worked at home, helping her mother.

NB Baptisms: born 12.5.1918 and baptised 2.10.1918, George Little Bell, son of John Bell and Janet Johnstone Little, at Broats Cottage - They were married at the Manse 21.6.1918 - he from Hollee, (aged 38), she from Flosch (aged 32). He had a sister, Mary Jane (born February 1920), Janet (born November 1921).