

ANN HILL RESEARCH

Interview with Milly White (Amelia Halliday)
Irvington

19th February 1987/
13th March 1987

Mrs White lives in a lovely house overlooking the Kirtle at Irvington. She gave me a great deal of information on the clear understanding that nothing is to be used without her permission. The main focus of the interview was on the haulage business but she also was informative about Irvington, and she used to sing in the church choir.

Unusually for Kirkpatrick Fleming, politics were discussed. Until now I'd begun to suspect that the cares of the rest of the world had by-passed Kirkpatrick Fleming.

Items which I suggest ~~missing out of the final version~~ are in double brackets. Numbers in brackets in text refer to Corrigenda & Addenda.

School

She went to Kirkpatrick Fleming and then Gretna schools. She remembered Mr Hogg as being extremely strict. Anna Beattie was in her class. She was grilled in the tables. 'Granny White' (her mother in law) was a teacher at Eaglesfield and taught her own youngest sister. She went back to teach in the war, at Ecclefechan. (1).

Her own teachers were (2), Miss Young, Mr Blades, Miss Davidson (very good, married Scott from Lockerbie, milk lorries), but she never had old Mrs Irving. Hogg taught her brother Tom (~~and had a son who was a teacher at Eaglesfield and was married to a daughter of Betty~~). To get to the school they walked across the bridge, and were often late - for which you got the belt. (~~and she was often late for school~~). She and Jock were taught by Mr Doull, who remarried after his wife died. A great teacher, and a great big smart looking man. Although it was rarely apparent he could have a terrible temper. Her brother Jock was one of his favourites. (3).

Church

Her son has an old map which they got when they purchased Shawrigg, which shows an old church yard at the bottom of the road - in Irvington - someone said in Cove Wood.

She was in the church choir, who used to sit in a lovely seat with railings, like an altar, made from lovely wood. They faced the pulpit, then turned to face the congregation to sing. (~~and she was often late for school~~)

~~.....~~). Her father was never an elder. she used to go to the Duncans to help look after their child, and she worked there during the war. Indeed he wanted her to go to Geneva with them, and she'd have liked to have gone. They still keep up a bit, and he's often asked her to visit. ~~.....~~

Davidson

The Duncan photo shows Tom Beattie, old David Kirkpatrick, various Duncans and Barclays, 28.6.1942.

The choir photo: Jenny Graham - Jim Irving - Annie Mackie - David Johnston - Nan Bell (Hollie ?) - Betty Smith - Milly White - Mr MacKenzie - Mary Johnston (daughter of Johnny Johnston, joiner at Grahamshill) - Margaret Johnston (Eaglesfield).

Another choir photo shows the same people, apparently on a boat, possibly in the Lakes.

She and Bess Graham were Sunday School teachers. I think she probably stopped about the time Mr MacKenzie left, she certainly liked him - quiet and unassuming, and asked me to pass on her good wishes.

~~Jenny Graham was in the choir.~~

Sport and Entertainment

Very little discussed. She had memories of VE night, when, it was said, there were all sorts of goings on at the pub. ~~.....~~

She used to go to the dances, which were jam-packed on Fridays and Saturdays at the Hall. This, I think, would be just after the war. She remarked that she wasn't, or wasn't often, at dances when the Hondurans used to go.

3 She also took part in plays with Annie Mackie, but she couldn't be certain whether they were organised by the W.R.I., the choir or what. She did remember going to rehearsals at Redhouse. (6).

Economic

4 Her grandfather (Sanderson) had a shop (7) in the house which now has blue stone in front. He had worked at the quarry till it folded up. Later on Mrs White and her husband lived in the same house - presumably until they built the present one. (8), (9).

S, b

Mrs Sanderson made jam to sell, and Mr Sanderson got a horse and cart from which he sold groceries. Eventually they moved to Kirtlebridge and her parents

took the house and shop. Then, perhaps in the 1930's, when things were bad, they got a lorry and delivered milk to Edinburgh 7 days a week. ((~~the lorry was a~~
~~very old one and it was very slow~~
~~and they had to stop every 10 miles~~
~~to get milk for the lorry)~~)) The deliveries finally

stopped when the Board began to do it all themselves.
Her brother Tom worked with her father on the milk lorries.

About the start of the war they bought Floss from Little for £1400. Tom was exempt from war service because of the milk delivery, but during the war it didn't go to Edinburgh, but, she thought, to Lockerbie creamery. She remembered Davie Johnstone, the organist, who, lived next door, being very worried at the time of the blitz in case the moonlight striking the milk cans would help the Germans to find their way.

7 (11). Davie Johnstone was an inoffensive man, but was in the ARP. By this time they must have had tipping lorries too, for she remembered them helping to transport stone from Locharbriggs to Langholm, for some military purpose, with soldiers helping. (12).

I don't think she said when the shop closed.

After the war they started on long distance lorries. Jock and Tom would go with a load to London - then a day's journey - and load up with fruit which they would take up to the Glasgow market. But they never went 9 continental. (13).

They hauled - and still haul - a lot of Locharbriggs stone to Glasgow (Annie'sland Cross and elsewhere).

Her father died in 1960, her mother later - aged 76. Tom was then in charge of the business, helped by Alex. Her other brothers, Bill and Jock went into farming, at Bonshawmains and Broathill. Jock died at age of 42; Tom, Alex and Bill all died within the last 6 years - 10 as did her husband. (14).

The milk deliveries lasted, I gather, for about 40 years.

16 years ago Mr and Mrs White bought Shawrigg (At the same time her brothers Tom and Alex bought Kirkpatrick Farm) Last year Connell of Newton sold his farm, and part was bought and added to Shawrigg. Cove Wood and Hollee Wood came up for sale just recently. They didn't manage to get Hollee, but they got Cove Wood.

11 (15).

The wood in her youth belonged to Curries of the shop
(~~Curries of the shop~~). It could do
with thinning, but they've not got round to it yet.

They also own the quarry, which is now fenced off,
being very dangerous. The Department of Environment
are about to carry out a study about using it as a
dump, but there might be the danger of seepage, as well
as problems about satisfactory access. By the quarry
the trees aren't so good, but there are a lot of foxes.
She rather thinks her mother took in lodgers for the
quarry.

Shawrigg has proved an extremely popular holiday home,
very well booked.

Flosh handled the transport of the prisoners of war to
the wood at Twiglees, and, she thinks, to Kielder,
where the dam is in North England. On the whole the
people fraternised well with the Italians and the
Germans, although some were hostile. She remembered
one man who refused to give a prisoner a match (~~but~~
~~we'll miss out the name - and that the~~
~~were generally suspicious of them~~). The prisoners of
war planted trees, the British Hondurans cut trees
down. The British Hondurans impressed her as being
very gentle people. Both groups were probably
transported by Halliday who at that time would be the
only hauliers (as distinct from coal merchants - but
Graham went into haulage later). (~~another good story we'd best not include~~).
The attitude to prisoners of war was very easy-going,
often without anyone supervising them. One prisoner -
12 they called him Robert (17) - was billeted with them
and called to see them a few years ago. He'd been in
the U.S.A. before being in Britain and had been amazed
at all the food which was wasted.

The British Hondurans caused more bother, but livened
the place up, without being fractious, and went to
local dances. She went once with Mr Duncan to work in
their canteen at their camp.

The stone in their rockery came from Victoria Hall.

The German prisoners of war cast peat at the moss by
the camp - the last people she remembers doing so.

Farms

Flosh is a clay dubbing. She thought Broats was too.
It had no horse mill. There was a well in the garden.
she could not remember many field names - just the Big

Field, Moss Field and the Whinny Field. It had a wee dairy - finished years ago. Little didn't. One day her mother saw someone doing something in the garden. It turned out they were scattering the ashes of someone who'd been there before Little.

The Whinny Field because of the whins.

Miscellaneous In World War 2 Tom felt terrible about getting exemption, and actually joined up, but his father got him back out. One bomb fell at Kirtlebridge, on Broadlea/Bonshawmains.

e She was at Gratna School when the Gretna bomb went off. Among the dead was a Gourlay (probably a relation). Jim Currie the blacksmith was injured. The siren had gone off, people came out and car lights were switched on. "people reckoned that otherwise the bomb wouldn't have been dropped.

She has an old uncle still alive, Norman Sanderson, always called Jeck, probably born in Irvington, moved to Bonshawmains.

She mentioned an article in the 'Sunday Express' about Springkell which had suggested the trees there were in some way special.

Her brother Tom was a strong Conservative ((~~conservative~~)). He died just as Mrs Thatcher had taken power, and expected great things of her. Her father was politically aware too, and her two children, Jennifer (in Annan) and David. They always got a daily paper and were great readers.

Among characters she mentioned Joe Ellis, Bob Lamont (Broathill) and Ritchie of Cove.

13 Her brother Tom was in the Home Guard (20) in the war and didn't like it - he used to cycle (without lights) to Annan for it. During the war you weren't supposed to kill pigs for private use ((but people did)).

14 She, like other Irvingtonians, mentioned Jessie Steel, who came from Galloway, looked a bit like a gypsy and was great to listen to. She lived next door to them at Irvington. She was a great collector of Annie Swan stories, gave W.R.I. recitations and so on. (21) (22).

~~(~~conservative~~)~~

Ritchie wore a kilt - the only local to do so - had a ginger beard (23).

Tom and Syd Murray, who lived where Mrs Anderson is now, did get up to a lot of mischief. ((There was a story, I think about Syd, maybe Tom, who'd bought chickens during the war at Dumfries, gave R.A.F. people a lift, who let chickens loose and there were none left when he got home.)).

Her brothers never went to dances. Another story was about Jock who shot a duck at Teddy Brooks' place and stood there pleased with himself, not noticing Teddy Brooks coming up behind him. Teddy Brooks got the police, who phoned their father, who insisted the gun must go.

Mrs Gourlay, who died over 90 in the 1930s was her grandmother, or great grandmother. (16)

((NB She quotes her daughter Jennifer as telling her not to insist on leaving so much out. That, says Jennifer, is how it was, and future generations will never know if it is too heavily censored.))

Corrigenda and Addenda

(These will have to be renumbered, as some have to be left out)

1. Don't ascribe this to her, but Granny White went back to teach at Ecclefechan during the war and thought the same as she did of Hogg - that he was petty.
2. She remembered the infant teacher's name, Miss Guthrie.
- ~~3. (Auntie Mrs))~~
- ~~4. ((... .. Mrs Duncan was a qualified French and German teacher, her father a minister at Mount Florida.))~~
- ~~5. J. W. Currie was the blacksmith at Christiellands.~~
6. Also at rehearsals was Betty Smith, which made her think it must have been in shows put on for the choir. She went only occasionally to the W.R.I., which isn't her sort of thing. Nor did her mother, who was not a mixer.
7. Probably the shop finished in early/middle World War 2. Her mother ran it just before moving to Floss.
8. 3 generations lived - at different times - in the same house.

