

ANN HILL RESEARCH

Interview with Mrs Lindsay (Coltart)
Whithorn

25th November 1986

Recommended by Mr McArthur. She was a bit diffident about having anything much to say, but came on well, told a few stories. She plays bridge at Port William and Monreith Golf Club (?) (ladies only) in winter, Kirkinner in summer - where Russell McClymont always wins.

Judging from experience, she's an excellent baker. She lived in Kirkpatrick Fleming village for only about 10 years - about 1920/21 to 1929/30. She said she was a few months older than Dave Mitchell, and must have been born about 1909/10.

She forms a tie up between the 2 ends of the parish.

Her father got an engineering business in Dumfries, about 1929, later re-married.

School She was at Kirkpatrick Fleming school for only one year, the qualifying class, taught by Mr Rae, and got a bursary for Lockerbie Academy (If you failed the qualifying you either stayed at Kirkpatrick Fleming or paid, as one of her sisters did). She had little recollection of Mr Rae.

One of her contemporaries was Bert Burnett, a bright spark. She remembered him one day in the train (where they often got up to high jinks). Bert had a dead mole, and touched the girls faces with it to provoke alarm. Mrs Lindsay's older sister was made of stern stuff and showed no reaction - so she was then spared. Bert now lives in Annan. His (?) sister was a great friend, died 2/3 years ago at Nutberry. (Agnes Irving, = Robin Irving from Glenzier) Of the teachers she mentioned Misses Brown and Anderson, and their marriages, and a nice young one who came, Miss Jardine. Miss Brown was a singer.

The Coltarts lived for a year or so in the old school when they first came.

Harry Noon also went to Lockerbie Academy - and his sister Feg was a great friend of Mrs Lindsay's sister.

Her younger sister Annie was involved in a tragedy when travelling to Lockerbie Academy. One of the girls opened the door for some reason and fell out (and got killed). Annie tried to catch her but couldn't hold her.

There was a lot of smoking on the train - you could buy 5 Woodbine for 2d in the station slot machine. She

didn't smoke.

She left home about 8.30, got home at 5 p.m. She'd no recollection of great school occasions.

Annie Leslie was in her class.

Church

She was, like Jenny Donaldson, a member of Pincod choir. A great choir - run by Kit Henderson, the organist from Eaglesfield. Later, when Donaldson retired, they went to Chapelknowe, where she was in the same choir as the Mackies. Now she just sings in the body of the church. Her father was an elder, but not perhaps till they left Pincod, or even Chapelknowe. He was a strong United Free man, opposed to the union.

The Pincod choir used to have parties - sometimes at Sarkshields. Then there were soirees for the church in Eaglesfield Public Hall. Her mother had a brass kettle, ornamental really, which she saw in use only once, pouring tea at a soiree.

She couldn't remember who the beadle was.

Latterly the Coltarts went to a church in Buccleugh Street, Dumfries (She didn't think it was Bethany Hall, but it sounded like it).

The choir practiced weekly. She mentioned some of the choir members. Will Henderson (Kit's brother), and Kit's wife, Jean Green - the youngest of the family and Nelus Green, Maggie too (she called him 'Amelia' - would it be Amelius?). Her brother used to imitate the way Maggie Green walked up the aisle in church.

When she joined the church, instead of attending the usual classes, she was allowed to join after going just once to see Mr Donaldson - I think the same day as she joined. Mr Donaldson was quiet. She couldn't remember his wife, but she did recall playing charades at a party in the Manse. George Donaldson went to Rigg and used to do fill-in services after he retired, but didn't live much longer.

I think Johnny Rae was in the choir.

Her family have remained good church goers all their lives - a brother is an elder in Dumbarton (another is in Dalbeattie).

When her father was ill they had to walk all the way to church.

She understood Pincod was on the only land Springkell would allow them to have.

I think she said Annie Mackie was Chapelknowe organist.

David

~~Dr~~ Johnston was Kirkpatrick Fleming organist for many years - worked in jewellers in Annan.

Sport and
Entertainment

A lot of her stories were about unofficial entertainment.

Her father and Mr Burnett were very keen curlers. They used to play on a pond at Raeburnhead (In this connection I have noted 'Andy Burnett, John Mackie, Redhouse, and Johnny Mackie, Hillhead' - presumably curlers). One winter, perhaps 1925 or 1926 they were able to curl on the moss for about 6 weeks from February.

The tennis courts were in the village. John someone, not Finlay, but that name somehow hit her, had a field behind the houses, where they played. Later they moved to Toppinghead. She played with people like Mary and Margaret Elliot, Dave and Jim Mitchell (The Elliot sisters both married Bobby Graham - Margaret who died, then Mary, who died this year at Gretna). This group played in the village as well as Toppinghead.

She didn't know much about quoiting, but thought her father played in the smiddy yard.

She played cards at home with her sisters and brothers. Rummy, whist and so on. Once they started quarelling, so their father threw the cards in the fire. about 15/20 years ago she learned bridge at a beginners class in, I think, Port William (where they had 11 1/2 tables last night). She plays a strong Club and a weak No Trump.

She won first prize at the very first whist drive she went to in Kirkpatrick Fleming.

Molly Mackie used to take dancing teams to the Festival.

She (and her sister ?) went to one dance at Kirkpatrick Fleming, on strict instructions to be home by 12. What a rush to get there by 12.10! I think she went with John Mackie. Farmers and curlers had dances.

Molly used to sing publicly - a soprano. Mrs Lindsay is now a contralto, but may have been soprano.

No recollection of village fetes etc., except a memory of something at Mossknow.

They played badminton in the village hall.

in full

Also in choir - Mark Simpson and wife, Agnes and Jean Sloan (~~W-mains~~), *Wyeby Mains*

Economic

Her father took over the smiddy from Jim Graham. His assistant (also his assistant at Shawhead) was Mark Simpson, who took the business over when Mr Coltart left. Mark Simpson married Miss Gilles, from the Post Office. Her father had been an apprentice with J & R Wallace of Castle Douglas, and had a brother who did the same. The brother became an engineer and worked for Wyllie's, Dumfries for over 40 years. Mrs Lindsay didn't remember a great deal about the business - shoeing horses, making harrows. Her father had a chevrolet car. He left Kirkpatrick Fleming to become an engineer. James Graham left the business to become a farmer at Broadlea. One of his two sisters, Bessy used to cycle to Annan everyday to work in a garage. Jessie was the other. Jim's son, Willie, took a hotel in Skye, and is now separated from his wife.

Connected with Jim Graham was Henry Graham, the coal-merchant, rival of John Davidson, who amused people by saying 'It'll be Friday the morn in Annan'. The Grahams (Jim) left in 1922.

She mentioned - as so many do - Nat Wallace, the tailor. She couldn't think of anything special to say about him, but people wouldn't keep mentioning him unless something made him stand out.

She also mentioned Doodley, where you got your clogs fixed, and the postman, who lived 'in a row of houses'.

Like others she remembered Isa Noon's shop, which seems to have played a big part in the lives of the young.

She could not recollect any tractors.

The road, even then, was quite busy.

No electricity. Paraffin lamps. She remembered an incident when she was playing with Andrew Davidson and Dave Mitchell, and they knocked over, and smashed, a paraffin lamp.

Nor could she recall having the phone.

Tramps used to visit the smiddy to boil billy cans.

Mr Fraser (tall hat) used to make little decorative ornaments out of stuff that looked like marble.

Farms etc.

Mackie - Redhouse - used to visit occasionally. Chick died while she lived in Kirkpatrick Fleming. Also John.

Broadlea - see above (Graham).

Wyseby Mains - Bob Sloan - bought Langshaw, now in cottage. His daughter, Margaret, is a sister in Dumfries Infirmary. - See choir (Agnes, Jean).

She mentioned Davidsons in West Scales.

Davidson - Hayfield. They used to visit. Andrew was a leading light in the parish. John a teacher (and at first she also thought George).

Tom Beattie - Wicketthorn - mean old man (can't really have been old). Once during war they were with people at Nutberry, petrol being rationed, they went to visit and he ran them so far back (to Fairyrow), making them walk the rest. Very dogmatic, unlike his sister Mary. 4 daughters - Anna (?), Sheena, Mary (serious like her father), Jennifer (became a doctor, now Clark, Alnwick, keeps in touch with Mrs Lindsay). All the Beatties were duxes at Lockerbie Academy.

Elliot - Sarkside. The families visited, both ways - but she couldn't think of much to say. See Margaret and Mary, above.

In the Oaks(?) was a widower/bachelor who had a threshing mill which he hired out.

I've also a note about Mrs Tom Beattie, crippled with arthritis, in connection with the Oaks.

Showing. The only farmer she could recall winning at shows was Robin Irving - who was outside the parish. Quite famous for Holsteins.

Gentry

She mentioned Mossknow having a gamekeeper and sawmill. Mary White's father worked on the estate, and Annie Leslie's father (Annie Leslie in her class), in lodge near Redhouse.

She liked the Rae's - Hamish and father (of whom the usual story).

Miscellaneous Her own family - 1 self, 2 Jess, 3 Annie - brothers at Dalbeattie and Helensburgh.

Her father was a pipe smoker (so no cigarette cards).

She and Vi (?) Burnett used to go to cookery class. Dave Mitchell and (her/his ?) father used to wait in the house every week to taste the wares. Dave was always up to devilment. On one occasion Andrew Davidson took Joe Wright for a run in Andrew Davidson's car, leaving Joe Wright's car behind. A gang of them - including Dave Mitchell and Mrs Lindsay - pushed Joe's car round the back of the school, and he couldn't find it. Mrs Lindsay got the blame, perhaps being the oldest. She didn't think it was fair.

On another occasion their own car was stolen. The thieves had lifted the garage door off its hinges. The car was found in Carluke.

Characters? Tom Irving the butcher was a jocular fellow. Another character was 'Wingy', who had only one arm.

The doctor - Christie, rough manner, nice.

Vet - can't remember.

Burnie ? - couldn't remember anyone so called.

Hollie (always Fairyraw) She knew very few there - Mrs Bell, a draper buddy, quite nice. Jim Collinge was in her class, quite clever.

Mr McArthur's brother and her older brother were in the same class at school.

Picnics. Their favorite spot was up the road beyond Irvington.

She mentioned Doctor Carlyle once attending her mother.

She suggested that I should have brought Dave Mitchell along with me to help stimulate her memory.