

Interviewee: Phyllis Harvey (PH)	Interviewer: Robert McQuistan (RM)
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Robert McQuistan (RM)
interviewing
Phyllis Harvey (PH)

RM: Right Robert McQuistan talking to Phyllis...(snickers)

PH: (*whispers*) Harvey.

RM: Harvey! Sorry Phyllis, I had a mental block there.

PH: [*laughs*] So have I, so have I!

RM: Last time we got up to just before you got to school.

PH: No, I got tae being able tae cycle tae the school, that's the bit, and it was the lorries, and the wood-cutting an that. But this it starts before that.

RM: Right.

PH: The reason I was late in going to school was we lived, as I said before two miles oot o' the village and my mother had had a very bad accident, and her younger sister come to look efter us, and, she was able to take my sister on the back of a bike down to the burn's corner which Nancy [Gillan] our farming friend brought her on down then into the village for the school, and she came again to there when Nancy [Gillan] took Doreen up, and she took her home but she couldny bring two, so I didny get started till the Easter after I was five in the October, because my mother had...we had a wash-house, now there was no hot water all ye had was a set pot which was a great big boiler...open boiler, with a fire underneath tae boil water.

RM: Like a big pot really.

PH: Aye huge.

RM: Was it curved at the bottom or...?

PH: A round bottom.

RM: A round bottom. An then it sat on tap o' a...?

PH: And it sat on top o' the fire. And on washing day it was lit, and that was your source o' boiled water, and if it was boiling sheets or these whites, it was boiled up and then ye took them out and ye used the soapy water for the rest o' the washing. Ye'd tae lift it wi' buckets and that's what she was doing, lifting the boiling water out intae the old galvanised washing baths wi' the two handles at each end...the one handle at each end, and it was across...

RM: So she was dipping her bucket intae the set...?

PH: Then carrying it across an pouring it in...

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RM: And then pouring it in.

PH: Yep. And, there was a sway got onto the water in the bath because...with the amount of water just doing that, there was a sway got up and it tipped over ontae her, and she lay there in the boiling water on the floor, and she was burned...scalded, from her foot, her left hand side, right up to her waist and...there had been...I was only five, I was standing with her, when this happened. I was less than five, and when my father come home the man...the single man...

RM: So when did he come home, how many hours later was it?

PH: Well the single man came and he jumped his bike and ran to Carsluith to get my father, my father was then...

RM: Your faither was at Carsluith?

PH: Aye, he took the milk tae Waterloo and a' these places, and he jumped into the car and shot home, called in at the Boag, to Doctor Mains on the way up, grabbed him and went. Now she wasn't even taken to hospital, probably she wouldny gan, and...

RM: So did your father get a car did you say he had a car to get...?

PH: He had a car and he made a...

RM: How did he have a car on his milk round I mean was that...?

PH: Because he made a platform for the back, the carrier o' the car with two milk botes, no churns, churns, churns kirn milk intae butter, to milk. And he went right roond [Creetown] and doon as far as my aunty's, that you know of.

RM: Mm hmm, [?].

PH: And doon tae Waterloo, tae the [Beaumonts], and he come back and it was sorted out well that was why I didny get started till the Easter, till she got back that was nearly a year.

RM: Is that cause you were helping her, was that cause you steyed hame tae help her or what?

PH: I was five!

RM: Just too wee, aye?

PH: Well she had her sister there, the sister that came to look after us, and she went to nursing after that she'd seen so much o' this carry on. And when I got to the Easter and I was going to the school it was the district nurse's sister who was my first teacher Miss Murray. And I would be the

last...

RM: Cause there was a Nurse Murray wasn't there that was the one that...she stayed up at...

PH: [Cuparwell] Her father and mother built that, he was a gardener at [Castle Cary], and he must o' did well wi' that because he...

RM: [?] It's a nice hoose.

00:06:02

PH: Nice. And it was Miss Murray, the nurse's sister, that I went tae, the school. And...there was three classes in the school and...

RM: In the yin room?

PH: In the one room, and there was a great big lovely fireplace, and a guard room it and in the winter time it was snug.

RM: [*laughs*] And that fire'd be lit every morning.

PH: That would be lit by Jean Scott or some o' them that looked after the lot, she cleaned the school. And, as you got older you got moved further back, and I don't ever remember thinking I'm no supposed to be listening to what the big ones are getting, you just closed your ears and got on wi' what you were given.

RM: So how many weans would be in each o' the three classes I mean...twenty twenty twenty or something?

PH: I would say teens in each class, she would have fifty-odd.

RM: In the hale room?

PH: Uh huh.

RM: And she would teach the hale room?

PH: Yes.

RM: They ca' it 'composite classes' nooadays.

PH: And I got on fine, but as I say I think I would be traumatised the first time I saw all these children I'd only had a sister and nobody else!

RM: Quite a shock to the system?

PH: It was, and my father brought us doon to the school when he come wi' the milk roond, and we walked home, fae I was five. And, I canny remember thinking I was ill done tae or anything like that.

RM: No, no. And how many miles would that be?

PH: Two exactly.

RM: It's lang enough.

PH: My mother and father stepped it from Creetown School to the back door at the [Garracher] and it was...

RM: What d'ye mean stepped it what d'ye mean?

00:08:17

PH: (Phyllis seems to do something with her feet) Measured it by step.

RM: Aye. An that gi'en ye the tway miles?

PH: Two miles.

RM: Oh right. And it's a steer brae, it's no an easy walk up that hill, it's gey steep.

PH: I suppose we would go it about as children do, jist...time would pass and of course there was the pond and you were lectured, 'Don't go near it.'

RM: The curling pond?

PH: Mm hmm.

RM: Do you mind curling up there?

PH: I remember, when I was very wee, that would be about this time, about...it must have been a hard winter because I can remember men at the back o' the pond and we would just scuttle on up the road you see, but...

RM: And you can see the ponds noo, is it a wee bit like, kinna...?

PH: It's the size.

RM: It's the richt size aye.

PH: I would say it's the richt size, but it's so neat, this was...it has spoiled the atmosphere but there you are, progress.

RM: But at least they're there noo ye can see the ponds.

PH: Oh yes.

RM: And so ye walked a' the wey hame.

PH: Yup. And then, as you progressed in as I say the infant room, you moved up intae another, and there were stepped, that classroom was steps doon...the big ones sat up the next ones sat one step doon and us wee folk were in the front opposite the fire.

RM: I'm trying this into mind...so everybody faced the fire...

PH: Mm hmm.

RM: And the fire was at the far end...

PH: No, 'twas in the middle.

RM: In the middle...

00:10:18

PH: Looking ontae Chain Terrace.

RM: I ken wha' ye mean. Now, so the wee yins sat at desks were ye at desks?

PH: At the front, at desks, wi' yer slate and yer chalk.

RM: And then the middle sized yins next [?] primary two or whatever...

PH: Up this wee...it was only a wee step like that I can see it yet as plain!

RM: That's amazing. An yet they still had desks and chairs at that higher level?

PH: Oh yes, oh yes.

RM: And you'd have tae...like a lecture hall.

PH: It was like that.

RM: And ye'd climb up and climb up and then the big yins away at the back.

PH: Uh huh. And then they moved on at the summer holidays.

RM: Right, so if there was twenty or fifteen/twenty, was it yin lang row at the front, or wid it be tway rows or...?

PH: Well you see if there was fifteen there would be seven desks, in the auld-fashioned desks, wi the twa sitting, they were wee totty things.

RM: So you [?].

PH: Exactly, it's...

RM: I'm trying tae [imagine], I've got it in ma heid it's a funny...it's a pity there wereny pictures o'

that.

PH: It is a pity, and I'll tell ye, the...prize-giving was done in there, because 'twas the biggest room.

RM: Aye the biggest room. And ye were talking there about slates? This is before pens and...?

PH: Slates yes! You got your slate, and then it progressed tae a blackboard, you got.

RM: In your hand ye mean? A blackboard to hud wi'?

PH: Aye, fae a slate tae a blackboard and it was like thick cardboard, black on both sides an ye still had chalk. And it was aboot fifteen/sixteen inches square this block, that you got.

RM: Gaun back to the slates first of a', were they kinna like slates ye get on the roof wi' a border on the edge, with a widden border?

PH: Mm hmm.

00:12:32

RM: And ye scraped them wi' what, what would ye scrape them wi'?

PH: Chalk.

RM: Oh chalk.

PH: We didny get slate pencils, we didny get slate pencils. I don't know if the big yins did but we would a chewed them or something.

RM: They'd be what aboot twelve inches by six or something?

PH: Aye aboot that.

RM: And that's where you learned your letters, and yer sums! Chaynged days!

PH: I remember gaun hame this day, and I said tae my mother, 'Can you explain this to me?' 'What?' For I was always asking questions.

RM: Good.

PH: Hopeless questions! I said, 'Why are,'...I would start to speak English then, so I would say 'why' no 'hoo', 'hoo does that happen.'

RM: Can I ask you why that happened is that because the schule made ye take...?

PH: Oh yes you had to speak Kings English.

RM: So-called.

PH: So-called. But you only stopped immediately you came oot the door, you never spoke it any

other time. Mebbe an odd word like 'any' instead o' 'ony'. Because you would be sure to be drew up.

RM: That was a shame wasn't it?

PH: Uh huh. Anyway there was this boarder, and I said to my mother, 'How are two oranges and an add sign?' She never forgot it, she told me for years, an add sign, and two bananas and an equals sign, makes four. How does an orange and an apple, make a number?

RM: It's a guid question!

PH: She says, 'The blooming questions you ask,' and she'd tae stop whatever she was daen and explain, that it was only to draw your attention that there was two and two and...

RM: Numbers.

PH: Aye.

RM: That's how you started learning adding up.

PH: That's how, and ye had tae hae yer plus sign which was adding, and yer equals sign.

00:15:07

RM: And that'd be in yer book, ye'd hae a wee book wi' this oranges and apples and stuff?

PH: We had this blooming thing on the wall, ye didn't get a book!

RM: A chart? Right, sorry!

PH: It was like a frieze, like...can you picture a frieze? Well...

RM: Aye, I've got the picture noo.

PH: Dinny be daft. And I enjoyed it, I must admit I enjoyed because I would be left alone for two years, nae mother she'd be up the stair and jist to your own devices, and this fascinated me when I did get tae the school, but ye didny speak, oh no, unless somebody asked ye a question, ye sat, never [?], no.

RM: Was that a guid thing or a bad thing?

PH: I thought it was good, and me that never stopped, I thought it was good.

RM: Get away.

PH: It taught me quite a few things that ye listen, and shut up.

RM: Nowadays they would encourage weans tae talk.

PH: And they would get up and they would wander about and ye never.

RM: Never wandered about in the class.

PH: Never. Never, ye went in ye sat doon...

RM: So she was strict Mrs Murray?

PH: Oh yes.

RM: And did she teach everything, I mean everything...

PH: She taught everything! You got...so many got their sums, so many got their reading...

RM: That's in the same class?

PH: Oh yes.

RM: And then...so...or would that be between the classes, are you saying for example a' the wee five year olds they would a' dae the same thing or did they dae different things?

PH: No no. Everything was done, the way...as the classes emerged, it was [done] the times-tables. No we said a times-table every morning in life. It started wi' two, and ye heard it, and ye said it, and it was only after everybody kent it.

00:17:19

RM: I'm jist thinking this teacher must a worked wonders because your talking about three different...primary one two and three, but in that primary one, you'd hae folk that were different abilities, and then two o' ye different...d'ye ken what I mean? And she'd be teaching the reading tae one primary and then...but of course they're all behaving themselves.

PH: When you were doing your reading you walked out and stood beside her at the table. You didn't shout if fae where you were and the rest had tae sit and listen.

RM: Right.

PH: And you were put back wi' either, 'Good', or, 'Take that home and get your mother tae tell ye.'

RM: Aye. So it was kinna private it wasny...the rest o' the weans were listening...

PH: Oh no you weren't walloped or you weren't...

RM: And it was personal tae, yin tae yin.

PH: It was. One to one teaching. Wi' about fifty in the class.

RM: Fifty in the hale room?

PH: Aye, but by that time the big ones would be on tae advancing and they would...the board,

there was two blackboards in that room, and the one at the end was for the back row, and the sums were put up on it and they just took out their jotters or there would mebbe be a jotter time then, because we would waste it paper.

RM: Aye the wee yins.

PH: The wee yins, and they would...and this was put up.

RM: Now, I hae a question here, did she ever teach the hale lot o' the fifty at yince wi' the same thing.

PH: No.

RM: [?]. And did she dae reading at different levels for the three classes but at the same time (d'ye get me)?

PH: No.

RM: So she might have been daen reading for primary yin, she might hae been daen sums for primary tway and for primary three she might have been drawing or geography, so she had three different subjects gaun on at the same time?

PH: And then played the piano.

RM: [*laughs*]

PH: For the hymns in the morning.

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RM: So how did the morning start, how did you start the morning?

PH: A hymn and a prayer every morning.

RM: And a bible reading?

PH: No.

RM: Mebbe no.

PH: No.

RM: A hymn and a prayer.

PH: A hymn and a prayer, and my sister...she was shy, she was worse than me, I would eventually ask if I'd been beyond it but she never, and my father was Plymouth Brethren and his father was beyond the pale wi' Plymouth Brethren and he was sickened.

RM: You mean he was fed up wi' it?

PH: He was fed up.

RM: That's your grand...

PH: My grandfather.

RM: Grandfather aye.

PH: And when Doreen started the school, she aye telt me what happened you see, there was only the two o' us, and she kept telling me so, and she's saying, 'When are ye gan tae the school,' ye had tae say, 'Old man charred in heaven, old man, charred, in heaven.'

RM: Which art!

PH: Old man, so she must a guessed that it was an old man, 'twasny our father, our father was my dad. So it was 'old man charred in heaven', she thought he had been burnt. Because burning was on our mind wi' my mother, ye see everything linked, the kinna whole thing. Anyway, I enjoyed it, and...I must admit, even in those days there was this wee clique, country weans steyed thegither. We didny mix wi' the common five-eight, o' the town, they were too cheeky. We were never cheeky because we never had anybody tae be cheeky wi'. And there was the McWilliams' fae [?], the McKnights fae [?], there was us an...Margaret Kirk.

RM: And of course ye'd a be ferming folk tae.

PH: Ye see we were all...we kent each other.

RM: Ye'd ken each other, aye, yer faithers and mothers would ken each other.

PH: And another thing was ye'd ken what they were talking about.

00:22:14

RM: Aye, the seasons, the tattie-howk and, aye, the hervest.

PH: Of course! And they'd say something, 'Are you at the hervest yet,' that kinna thing. But as I say you moved up, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I canny remember...

RM: At the end o' the year, was it at the end o' the year, [?] didny move up before...?

PH: Summer, summertime yes, if you were bright I shouldny have said, if you were bright, you moved, at the summer whether you'd been a year in that class or no, if she saw that you could tackle the next up.

RM: That's interesting.

PH: Uh huh. Cause she had everybody...

RM: Could you move up at any time o' the year then?

PH: No, it was summertime.

RM: Right, and what if you weren't ready to move on at summertime?

PH: You stayed where you were.

RM: So you could have been in the primary you were in for two years?

PH: Two years. But you would have known everything by the time you moved up.

RM: You only moved up when you were ready for it.

PH: Uh huh. And that's why there was bright children. Because sometimes you couldn't cotton on to pick up something that had been said, and it depended when you went home...now we were maybe different because my mother was very keen that we should be educated fine. We were never pushed into it but you'll do your reading you'll do your spelling, and when it comes to sums and that, 'twas my father for he could count, three lines without...

RM: He was working with the milk all day.

PH: Aye and I mean he was joining for as he was only age.

RM: Is there any reason how your mother did nudge you, and I'm not saying push you, but was there something there that well she felt maybe she could have gone further in education and she wanted her lassies to get what she didn't get?

PH: Exactly. Lived through us. And when we both got...at college, both got that day...first class certificates with...

RM: Your mother would have been pleased.

PH: ...oh but wait a minute, with distinction in needlework, both, out of sixty three students, that year at college. And there was a bit of a do. And Doreen...we'd no phone, my sister wrote home, and

00:25:09

my mother wrote back immediately to say, 'It was no more than I expected.'

RM: *[laughs]*

PH: So if your feet were anything but on the ground...

RM: They stayed there.

PH: They did that. No more! I can see it yet when I opened the letter we thought oh [there'll] maybe be a ten-shilling note in it.

RM: Don't think a bit above yourself, don't get above yourself. Is that a Scottish thing?

PH: Uh huh, and it's lovely, because nobody knows what's in your brain efter that.

RM: It's mebbe lovely, but it's also...it'd be nice to [have] had a wee bit of a...recognition.

PH: Oh I'm no saying she didny think a lot o' us.

RM: But she didny egg you up?

PH: Oh no no no! Anyway, that...we moved up, and I was jist lying in my bed this morning thinking...it was your mother we moved intae next, and she had a bottom class and a top class again.

RM: Now you're talking about primary four?

PH: Well we never had 'primaries'.

RM: Ah!

PH: You moved fae Miss Murray's tae Mrs McQuistan's, and then Mr McQuistan's, and that was it there was nane o' this five or...

RM: So it was mair like an age almost thing, five, six, seven, eight, and Miss Murray would stop about...?

PH: Between seven and eight.

RM: Seven and eight.

PH: And then between eight and nine and nine and ten depending on when ye started the school, ten and eleven was in yer father's class, that was a bottom and a top and at eleven ye did yer eleven-plus.

RM: So it was mair flexible?

PH: Oh it was lovely!

RM: You moved according tae yer abilities.

00:27:09

PH: Yes, your ability. And if ye needed tae be kept back, ye were kept back, and you learnt then what you had missed the time before.

RM: So you wereny being pushed intae a class that you were floundering in if you get my drift?

PH: None whatsoever, you understood everything. Now, as I say I was lying in my bed thinking this morning, and I thought Gosh! When I think o' the years, two and a half years I think I was in Miss Murray's first class, when we stopped starting late, and...you see my mother had this, that she'd Doreen through it first she knew where I should be, wi reading, wi sums, wi' spelling wi everything,

she knew that. And then this is what you're told, c'mon get it out and get this done, and...

RM: There's a level o' expectation at a certain...

PH: Even when you were that high, she set me...

RM: Standards.

PH: She set me down and I could knit a scarf before I went to the school.

RM: Was your mother...

PH: The winter time 'twas too cold to go oot wi' the clogs and the stuff on, and she set me doon and I would knit like the devil, at the side o' the range (it was it wasny a Raeburn), and then tae save wool she would pull it out and tak it down three or four inches, and this, you were set [agaun] next day, 'Where's your knitting oh yes!' And away I'd go and oh I'd sit and knit this, and I always wondered how that scarf never got round my neck, because [it] was ay ripped oot and started again.

RM: Just tae teach ye hoo tae dae it?

PH: Of course.

RM: And it did!

PH: It did! And we went intae Mrs McQuistan's class...bottom class, and it was then that Miss Stewart, she was first year, you see we didny gaun through a' that palaver, and she come through and gave us singing, the two classes together, the tap and the bottom cless, singing. And yer mother as you knew was a beautiful singer, and it was all Scottish songs. There was 'Bheir me o, horo van o', the Gaelic, there was 'Charlie is my Darlin', there was...'Skye Boat Song', I could name them all, and she played...that let your mother go tae take sewing or something, wi' the top class Major [Salmond's].

RM: So what was Miss Stewart daen normally?

PH: Latin or French.

RM: Right.

PH: English. First year.

RM: Right, kinna secondary level.

00:30:25

PH: That was it you went on tae her.

RM: So when she was daen singing she would tak a secondary level and you folks as well thegither?

PH: No, she took just oor top cless and oor bottom cless, your mother took first year for something.

RM: Oh so they kinna swapped roond.

PH: Yes.

RM: Ah right.

PH: And then everybody got a fair share o' the goodies. They told, helped, encouraged, shown.

RM: So the teachers were sharing the levels?

PH: Of course they did, yup!

RM: And it wasny just within the primary it was almost kinna seamless there was nae join, there was nae notion o' P seven jumping on tae S...first year.

PH: We knew the teachers before we ever arrived at them, because they'd taken...

RM: They'd shared.

PH: Aye exactly. You see you've missed a lifetime o' knowledge, I know it's...

RM: So...let's say at the age o' twelve or thirteen, those folks didny have specialist teachers fir French or geography or history or maths like they hae nooadays, they would hae yin teacher that did maist o' they subjects, maybe the singing was different maybe the PE was different.

PH: PE! We didny get it till I was twelve.

RM: And when ye were twelve wha did it fir ye wha taught ye?

PH: Mr Meek came, one day, then he just went roond the school.

RM: But the other subjects, were just...at twelve years old, and thirteen how far up did that gan?

PH: Fourteen and then they left.

RM: To the Ewart?

PH: No! They left school tae gaun tae the quarry or the wherever! Or intae a shop or...

RM: So richt up tae the age of fourteen, ye had one, or maybe two teachers if they could swap about, but they tway teachers did the hale range and was there kinna like one teacher would specialise mebbe in some subjects, it would just end up wi' tway teachers really.

00:32:40

PH: When I was saying about Miss Stewart, now she took Latin and French, when you went into

what was called the 'advanced division'. We come out o' the...no me, they came oot o' the eleven-plus class, that was yer dad's top class in his, and went into Miss Stewart. Now she then took geography history...English, Latin and French.

RM: By the age o' twelve ye [all got] something like that, twelve year auld.

PH: Mm hmm. And, Major [Salmond], when she took that in the other two classes, Major [Salmond] took first year what we would a called first year for maths, geometry, algebra, trigonometry, maths, everything. And I got a hundred percent in geometry when Major [Salmond] (I nearly ca'd him Geordie Salmond) took the class, for he was excellent...excellent I know what folk say but he was. And you see that was the swap-over again.

RM: And would Miss Stewart tak his class for the French and Latin and the rest o' it.

PH: Uh huh.

RM: But he had a speciality in maths and mebbe science, she had the languages, but they jist [dook] back and forrit?

PH: That's right, and there was even a door through, that they just swapped over.

RM: The teachers just cheynged, the weans would stey where they were but the teachers [?].

PH: More or less.

RM: Aye, 'cause it's easier moving the teachers than the weans.

PH: That's right. And ye accepted it, ye never thought there was a thing...it was...

RM: You see later on, they must of like...cause noo in the schools Oh! They've got fourteen teachers at the age o' twelve or thirteen, as if...in your time it was like primary school now it just went a bit further?

PH: That was right. Now, when I was in the eleven-plus class, there was no eleven-plus that year, because it was Nineteen thirty-nine and we were...

RM: Topsy-turvey.

PH: ...over run wi'...I nearly said refugees...what were they, that came fae the cities?

RM: Aye, I ken what ye mean, aye, I know the words gone oot my heid tae...

PH: Evacuees!

RM: That's the word.

PH: Now the protestant evacuees came in the September, o' Nineteen thirty-nine...forty I canny mind, and there was too many. There was too many in the classes tae dae an eleven-plus, so I sailed through without it, never had tae dae it.

RM: That must hae been a right shock tae the school tae hae that number o' folk?

PH: Oh! And the wee chapel at the chapel, they...when the catholics came, they were 'Forty-two, and they were kept separate fae us.

RM: In the same schule building, or did they gan tae the chapel?

PH: No, the chapel, the wee hall, I've never been in't.

RM: Aye. Wha taught them there?

PH: They brought their own.

RM: Oh they bought their own teachers?

PH: Teacher. And fine! We got on fine wi' them. But that year, it was quite something I can tell ye. Anyway, we then went, the group o' us to the Ewart, again this education thing.

RM: Aye well that's what I was saying that some o' them would move on to the Ewart, but a lot o' them would leave at the age of fourteen.

PH: And, we'd to cycle cause there was no method o' getting tae the Ewart so we'd tae gather here, no bypass. The military going tae Ireland, I've seen us getting ontae our bikes at that door there, and the convoy was gaun ower the Cree Brig way is six miles further on, and you try...and just think...the Cree Brig, now we had tae get across tae [?] tae go up the [?] Brae, wi' a bike, and that convoy daen that.

RM: You said you got the...were you living here at that time?

PH: Uh huh. We come down in Nineteen forty, May, Nineteen forty.

RM: And you'd be about fourteen/thirteen then, something like that?

PH: Eleven, eleven.

RM: So did yer faither gie the farm up atehgither?

PH: Yes, that was his term, fifteen years.

RM: Oh right. Did he want to gaun on wi' it?

PH: No, because he couldny get single folk.

RM: To work?

PH: Mm hmm, because they were a' in the ermy by this time, and ye feenished up wi' an aul' bloke coming to gie ye a han' oot maybe twice a week or whatever. And, as my mother was in the state

as you know a few years before, it was too much, for her, tae have tae dae a' the stuff.

RM: So yer mother and yer faither and the hale lot o' yous came tae this hoose, and what did your
00:38:48

faither dae?

PH: Joinering.

RM: Was that a trade that he kent, or did he learn it?

PH: No! He'd left the school at fourteen, at Kirkinner, and his father was a joiner/cabinet maker/undertaker, and he was fourteen tae eighteen daen that...

RM: Apprentice.

PH: ...and he then went tae Denny's Shipyards in Dumbarton till the end o' the war. Instead o' being put in as a stopper o' a bullet, he could do joinering and he was daen the doors and the bannisters and the stuff on the ships.

RM: So that was a trade he'd learnt.

PH: That was the trade he learnt fae he was fourteen.

RM: And then when he come back to Creetown...

PH: He just took up.

RM: As a joiner.

PH: As a joiner.

RM: In the village.

PH: Onybody that wanted something doing, and sometimes if somebody come wanting holidays he would run Walker's van for a fortnight and that type o' thing.

RM: So where did he get his ferming skills?

PH: Ah! Well when he come back fae the...at eighteen/nineteen, he come back to his father, started up with undertaking and a' the rest o' it that's why he always talked and took his bunnet off and...I mean it was second nature to him, if somebody was dead, what you said or what you did or whatever, he didny stand like a fool, because he'd been through it, and his mother died when he was fourteen so he had...

RM: [A wee] experience o' it tae, aye.

PH: And...he come back and worked at Kirkinner he met my mother then, and they were married in Nineteen twenty-two. And during that time, oh I canny calculate that Miss Murray was guid at it

but I canny dae it noo...there was a place just doon the road fae them, and they were MacNally's, oh and I can see the place yet, and he yased tae gan doon at nights when he had finished working and worked on the farm to know...calving kye, milking, sheep...

RM: The whole lot.

00:41:33

PH: The lot...pigs, sheep...

RM: He fancied that kinna work then?

PH: Yes. And my mother you see was a cheese-maker to trade, that she was again on dairy farms.

RM: Had she learnt that at Kirkinner?

PH: She learnt that at...

RM: Kirkinner. Was she brought up on a ferm?

PH: Mm hmm.

RM: So she had ferming in her blood tae.

PH: Canny think o' the name o'...[?]? [?], and that was how that happened, so as I say, we eventually got to the Ewart, and at that time, as we were going through the Ewart, the done thing good job that was always in front o' ye was school meals, had just come up to feed the children that were hungered during the war for five years. And we went, we got our certificate for the Ewart, and went to the college both together I was seventeen in October and I went at Christmas o' Nineteen forty-six, and we were three years at the college and as I say that was the reception having got first-class...nothing more than...

RM: Keep ye in yer place.

PH: So the feet has never left the ground since. And my first job was...after we finished at the college, the top students were taken in, and explained, 'There's this coming up that coming up.' Now we had a lassie she was the nicest body and she come fae the Isle o' Arran, her father and mother had a hotel in Arran, and she was spoiled, do you know she never even got an attendance certificate, she was that (*Makes blowing noise*), because she didn't need to we knew, that money was being spent, you did everything you could, tae get the best you could, for that money. We never got any money to go to the college.

RM: No grants.

PH: No grants, no nothing.

RM: So your mother and faither peyed for...

PH: Mm hmm. And we had to work at home, when we come from the college...

RM: In the holiday time.

PH: In the holidays you spring-cleaned fae top tae bottom, in your Easter holidays, for my mother, for Whit week, after we went back. The summer holidays we were here till September, so we did everything here...

RM: Housework.

00:44:52

PH: ...cooking, housework, washing.

RM: How was your mother at that time was she fit enough?

PH: Well she always had this...

RM: Wee weakness in the side.

PH: Oh aye, I mean it was up like this.

RM: Swollen.

PH: Oh aye. And we did everything that we could because we knew that this money was coming out o' her.

RM: Aye.

PH: And [?] we were taken in this day and Doreen looked at me and she says, 'What'll we dae?' I says, 'Tak whatever flipping job comes, anything.' I says, 'We don't want to be dependant one more...' And up came...and Doreen says, 'I fancy that,' and I says, 'Go for it.' And it was the YWCA at Charing Cross in Glasgow, and the Principal said, 'Would anybody,' and Doreen said, 'Yes please,' she would take that. And she fair enjoyed it. Well up come this other thing and I'd nae idea, and she said there's a...'Does anybody know the film star Pat Rock?' And I said, 'Yes I do.' I didny know her but I knew who she was talking about. And she says, 'Well,' she says, 'The Central Hotel, Mrs [Faschie], of the Central Hotel would like to speak to you if you would like,' and I said, 'Well, what was it.' And she says, 'Oh it's living in, Pat Rock provides the money to bring twenty French children from Breast, across to be fed, and you know how to feed.' I said, 'Yes, I do.' She says, 'Well go to the Central Hotel and I'll give you a note,' and I was take tae Sixty-one, Hamilton Drive, which I could a spat on fae the College or where we worked...where we lived, it was just Great Western Road the next road tae it, and got the job, oh, thoroughly enjoyed it. And my wee bit o' French was wonderful!

RM: Which you got at the school, from Miss Stewart.

PH: Oh boy!

RM: Very good. Listen, I kinna fancy another cup o' tea but I dinny want to disturb ye.

PH: Switch it off for a meenit.

RM: I will dae.

00:47:48