

Interviewee: Elizabeth Ray (ER)	Interviewer: Robert McQuistan (RM)
Date of Interview: 9 May 2012	Ref: DG2-2-1-1-T

RM: This is Robert McQuistan interview...talking tae Elizabeth Ray and it's the Ninth of May Two thousand and twelve. I was thinking we'd maybe kinna start wi' the shops 'cause ye were talking about shops earlier on and...

ER: Right.

RM: What kinna year are we talking about roughly?

ER: I'm eighty-four...going back eighty years.

RM: And Creetown was a bigger place then than what it is now?

ER: Was noo, uh huh.

RM: Aye.

ER: I'll tak about the shops that I hae mind o', no the yins that my mother ta'ked about. Well, Ann Turner at the war memorial, she had a sweetie shop, she also did home-baking, and she also provided teas for the weans fae the country that couldny get hame at lunchtime. Nae skeel meals then.

RM: Right, so the weans fae the country would come in to the schule, and then if they had nae lunch, they went doon tae the shop?

ER: Oh they would hae a piece wi' them.

RM: They'd hae a piece?

ER: Mm hmm.

RM: But they could still come doon tae the shop?

ER: They still went doon there and they would get a cup o' tea, their parents would hae arranged it.

RM: Right.

ER: I don't know whether they got a bowl o' soup or no', mebbe some o' them did, it would depend how much they could afford to pey.

00:01:20

RM: And what about the weans that lived in the village would they...?

ER: You just went hame at dinner-time.

RM: They wouldny gan tae the shop?

ER: Oh no. And got soaked, on a wet day!

RM: Aye, right! So, wha' would pey for that soup and cup o' tea, did they pey it across the coonter?

ER: It would be their parents.

RM: Right. So she had sweets and...?

ER: She had sweets in the winda, and the cat was usually lying in amongst them!

RM: Amongst the sweets?

RM: So nae health...

ER: Oh nae health and safety! Hadny been invented!

00:01:57

RM: And the weans survived!

ER: Maist o' them!

RM: Maist o' them!

ER: Well, ye come on doon tae the corner, tae Jim Vernon's shop, and he had...was a grocer. He also had haberdashery.

RM: Would that be upstairs?

ER: No, it was in a shed at the back.

RM: Oh right.

ER: And sort of ironmongery and things like that. They were kind of general stores.

RM: Right, so it'd be quite a big shop tae?

ER: No no it was just a wee place.

RM: Was it?

00:02:29

ER: Mm hmm. There was [a] shop and a back shop. And I can mind Lizzie Blaine worker there, and Jim Vernon the owner and his wife. And Effie Shepherd worked in the hoose. Next door tae that was Daisy Clelland, and she had a sweetie shop.

RM: I can vaguely 'member...I mind o' her, but I didny 'member the shop.

ER: You'll hae mind o' Jim Vernon's because Davey McGuinness bought it efter the war?

RM: Oh right, so that was...

ER: That was the Jim Vernon that I'm taaking about. Next door was Daisy Clelland.

RM: And what did she sell?

ER: She selt sweeties, tabacca, sugar syrup, cigarettes...

RM: Aye. Onything like that.

ER: Onything like that.

RM: Mair a general store then?

00:03:22

ER: It was mair a general store and her brother lived there and he worked at the quarries.

RM: Right.

ER: And I think he...I think he also played in the band if my mind's richt, then next door was Walkers Bakery.

RM: That would be the village...well, how many bakeries were there?

ER: Twa.

RM: Right.

ER: And they had vans that went oot through Wigtownshire. Next door to that was Geordie Kilpatrick's shoe shop. He was...

RM: A cobbler?

ER: A cobbler. He cobbled in the back and the shoes were in the front.

RM: Was he the only cobbler in the village?

00:04:09

ER: No, there was another yin, Earnest Wilson's father, but [we'd a come] the other side.

RM: Aye sure. What kinna population is Creetown at that time d'ye ken, aboot...?

ER: I've nae idea.

RM: Difficult, it'd be interesting...

ER: It would be difficult.

RM: Aye. But a bigger place than what it is noo?

ER: There wereny as many hooses.

RM: Right. So that meant folk were jam-packed

ER: Folk were jam-packed in a couple o' rooms sometimes.

RM: Aye, aye. So efter Kilpatrick's, the cobbler...

00:04:47

ER: Geordie Kilpatrick and he stocked I think it was Nil Simile shoes, and he aye kent what ye needed ye didn't..ye just didny get what ye wanted ye got what he...

RM: Really?

ER: That was the kinna style o' 'im.

RM: Oh right right.

ER: Then we come on doon a wee bit and there was Jake Morris paper shop, and the Toon Hall.

RM: Right.

ER: Then twa or three doors further doon was the post-office, where Mike Henderson is noo.

RM: Right, Sneddons?

ER: Mm hmm. And next door to that was the chemists.

RM: Barr's?

00:05:32

ER: Well it was Barr's latterly it was Dunn's when I was young, but I think it was Stark that started it, and Stark's name I think is still on the gless in the door.

RM: Oh right I'll hae a look at that.

ER: At that bit. Starks' moved fae Creetown tae Gatehouse.

RM: That's right, I was thinking the Stark name rang a bell.

ER: Aye, the same Starks'. And then we come on doon, tae McDavid's workshop...and cutting room.

RM: And what was his trade?

ER: He was a tailor, the shop was across the street.

RM: And what did he tail, what did he...?

ER: Oh he made very high-class...'bespoke' I think is there name, suits. And eventually...

RM: Tae order?

00:06:29

ER: Made-to-measure.

RM: Made-to-measure.

ER: Made-to-measure, and they were tailor-made.

RM: Aye.

ER: A lot o' the really good suits were made on the premises, sometimes if they wanted an inferior thing it was sent away and...part o' it and just feenished here.

RM: But they did kilts tae?

ER: Aye that come in later on when Jimmy come back fae the army, in the Second World War. He went on a course. He also went to London and learnt cutting, and fitting, and he was a much better qualified tailor than his father.

RM: Aw right. That business the kilt business started efter...

ER: It started efter...oh...

RM: Efter the Second World War?

00:07:24

ER: Late Nineteen forties.

RM: Right, aye, aye.

ER: And it started in a very small way...it mushroomed yince tartan became fashionable and famous.

RM: And he [plaid] quite a few folk did he no'?

ER: He did. Hugh Dole wis the tailor, and Willie ay maintained he never had a richt suit efter Hugh Dole feenished working and Joe feenished cutting!

[laughter]

ER: I'm no' gonny say onything!

RM: No no. But Jim employed quite a few folk in...

ER: Aye, Joe did tae.

RM: Joe did tae aye.

00:08:12

ER: Joe employed Hugh Dole as a tailor and there was ay an apprentice. And my Aunty Mabel worked in there as a...she was a tailoress, she served her time at McDavid's and then went away and came back tae it. But, Billy Blane started off as a tailor there and he contracted TB.

RM: Oh gosh.

ER: And when he got better fae that he got a job in the forestry, and he's a year aul'er than me so he'll be eighty-five and he's still cycling up and doon the A seventy-five!

RM: So efter...that was the cutting shop...

ER: That was the cutting shop, and the shop that selt clothing and bedding was across the street, where it always...I think before it was McDavid's it was...Craigies.

RM: Oh right, 'cause McDavid's name's kerved oot in the...

ER: Aye but I think they put that in efter they took it ower.

RM: 'Cause it's a big hoose.

ER: Oh it's a big hoose, aye.

00:09:38

RM: Big. That was the outlet that would be the shop whaur he selt a' his stuff.

ER: That was the shop, mm hmm, and they also went roond farms and stuff wi' a car.

RM: Did he?

ER: Kinna...Ca'd them Scotch drapers. [We] did that richt up until Jimmy retired.

RM: And Jimmy went [there] himsel'?

ER: Oh aye.

RM: And what would he sell in the back o' the van, what would he...[?] ferms?

ER: They had cases, Robert, wi' samples o' stuff in them...towels, clothing you name it, and they would let folk see them and then they would...

RM: Buy them?

00:10:17

ER: ...they would possibly buy them there and then. I don't know, I think it was the kinna start of the credit, they would pey sae much a week.

RM: Right.

ER: And then when they got the thing nearly peyed off they selt them something else, just to keep them you know...

RM: Keep them going.

ER: But they ca'd it 'Scotch Drapers'. I dinny ken the history o' it, and I often regret no' recording the broadcast fae round Solway on Wigtown, because there was somebody spoke on it about taaking the tiles fae car tae be shipped tae liverpool, and bringing bedding and sheets towels clothing and stuff back tae Wigtown, and they went roond the farms, selling the stuff.

RM: So, it come in...the cloth materials would come in fae Liverpool or whatever...

ER: Aye.

RM: We selt them tiles and they selt us linen.

ER: Well, insteid o' the boat coming back empty.

00:11:24

RM: Empty, aye. And then that would gan to the drapers?

ER: It went to the drapers.

RM: Like McDavid's [it'd be] yin o' them.

ER: Aye.

RM: And then he would go roond the ferms?

ER: Mm hmm. I forget the name o' the folk, I think 'McClumpha', [?] yin o' the names that I can remember daein something like that. And then I can remember somebody-Watson, coming roond Creetown fae Wigtown, the same as Joe McDavid was gan tae Wigtown.

RM: So if they were gaun aroond the ferms that would mean that the...no' like nowadays nooadays the fermers would just come into Creetown.

ER: That's right, but you think about it, the farmers...the farmworkers didn't have any transport, the farmer had a pony and trap.

RM: But that would take a long time coming through the farms into the village?

00:12:13

ER: That's right, so the shops went to the farms. But then you think about [?] keeping eleven families going at yin time, it would be worth somebody's while going to the farm.

RM: Aye. And it wouldn't just be the likes of linen and stuff there would be other vans?

ER: Oh no the bakers and butchers, they've put vans on the road.

RM: So the shops went to the customers?

ER: That's right.

RM: The vans went to the customers.

ER: I don't think any of the businesses could have actually survived on the village itself, I'm quite [sure] they couldn't.

RM: Amazing. And are the folk that were going to the village shops were more likely to be yins that were leaving in the village anyway?

ER: That's right.

RM: So that's changed.

00:13:02

ER: Even the bakers' vans went round the village.

RM: Aye.

ER: And our van went up the way Monday Wednesday and Friday, and it went down the way Tuesday Thursday and Saturday.

RM: Even in the village it did that?

ER: Even in the village, that's right.

RM: And then he peeped his horn and folk's would come out and buy fresh bread?

ER: Even the grocers sent somebody from the shop to get orders, and then they took...there would be a boy after the school on a bike to take the order out.

RM: It's quite a service, it's a bit like Tesco's van coming nowadays! But we thought about it a long time ago!

ER: That's right.

RM: So efter Jim McDavid's wee cutting...

00:13:44

ER: Cutting room, we come doon alang tae...twa doors alang fae here, to Sanny Kelly's butchers.

RM: Ah right I ken wha ye mean.

ER: Or Sanny Loughlin. It was Kelly's but it was Sanny [Loughlin] and his sister Lizzy that I really hae mind o'. And then in...

RM: Was the slaughter hoose in there tae?

ER: There was a slaughter hoose at the back. I hae mind o' them driving the sheep up fae the fiel at the...where Lowden Place is.

RM: Opposite Park Crescent?

ER: Aye. Opposite Grimshaw Terrace.

RM: Aw aye.

ER: They drove the sheep up our...the Iron Brig and up Harbour Street, up the High Road, took whatever sheep was gonna be and drove the rest o' them back.

00:14:39

RM: So...you mean they sent some back?

ER: Oh well they'd jist be needing yin or twa.

RM: So what did they take the hale lot...?

ER: Well they would hae tae dae that tae get the twa tae gan!

RM: Oh I see! So it's easier having the hale lot!

ER: But they were maybe gonna work wi' some o' them as weel I don't know but they did slaughter them at the back there.

RM: But that was...they didn't tak them alang the main street they took them ower...?

ER: They took them up Harbour Street and up the hill.

RM: The auld Iron Brig.

00:15:12

RM: Then up Harbour Street then streght across the crossroads there and then up?

ER: Mm hmm. And of course there wasny traffic aboot.

RM: No. So, did the butcher...he would just tak tway or three what, every week or so or how often would he dae that?

ER: Just when he needed them I suppose. Well they'd nae cold storage.

RM: And how many butchers were there in Creetown?

ER: There was Kelly's and Erskine's, where Willie Lindsey is noo.

RM: Did he hae a slaughter hoose tae?

ER: There was a slaughter hoose doon below the...near ye ken where Clachie is?

RM: Claughlowden?

ER: Claughlowden, the locals ca'd it Clachie.

00:15:55

RM: Right.

ER: There was a building on the left bank that was a slaughter hoose. Now whether that would be the Welshes' slaughter hoose or no' because Welshes' had their butcher's before Erskines'.

RM: So, because the village had a big population, and they'd be guid meat-eaters tae, nane o' this vegetarian stuff...

ER: No no.

RM: ...then you would hae...you could hae tway butchers quite busy, keeping going?

ER: Oh aye.

RM: And you probably had tway slaughter hooses.

ER: That's right.

RM: So there'd be quite a lot o' slaughtering being done because there'd be beef tae and no' just lamb and...well it wouldny be lamb would it it'd be mutton?

ER: It was mutton and lamb...beef and mutton and that was it.

00:16:39

RM: And would they slaughter the beef there tae would ye think, or would that be elsewhere?

ER: No I think the beef was slaughtered at Newton Stewart at the slaughter hoose there.

RM: Aye, a bigger place.

ER: But whether it was done here before that or no' I really don't know, it's very possible.

RM: Aye, maybe a hundred years ago.

ER: I haveny heard the history of that slaughter hoose because it never cropped up.

RM: Aye, but certainly ye mind o' the sheep.

ER: Oh I mind them running the sheep up. I also mind o' Mossyerd driving bullocks through Creetown on a Saturday morning to Newton Stewart market.

RM: A' that road?

00:17:23

ER: Mm hmm. And driving them back in the efternin, they wouldy selt sae monie.

RM: And then...now your taaking how many miles are ye taaking there ye're taaking about...fae Mossyerd tae...?

ER: Well, we used tae reckon it was five mile tae Kirltebrig.

RM: Fae Creetown?

ER: Fae Creetown.

RM: And then fae Mossyerd there'd be another...

ER: Another couple o' mile.

RM: At least. And then a' the wey tae Newton Stewart?

ER: Then a' the wey tae Newton Stewart.

RM: That was a days work that was a days journey. Start there in the morning, tak them up to Newton Stewart, sell then what they could.

00:18:04

ER: They drove them back in the efternin.

RM: Incredible.

ER: It is really when you think about it.

RM: There's nae wey you could dae that [?]. *[laughs]*

ER: I think that a' happened pre-Thirty-nine. I think why I hae mind sae much aboot it was I was a lot aboot Burnbank.

RM: And you would see them?

ER: Ye saw them gaun past. In fact you waited for them.

RM: Right. What fir?

ER: Well it wis an event tae see a drover! *[laughs]*

RM: If ye were a wean you would enjoy that.

00:18:50

ER: Aye. They used tae taak aboot getting a lift wi a drove o' bullocks. I suppose that would be on the drove roads, or drove roads when they were gan fae Scotland tae England.

RM: Oh right!

ER: I don't know but I've heard them saying, "I'll gie ye a lift aye I'll gie ye a lift wi' a drove...ye'll get a lift wi' a drove o' bullocks." So I suppose it would be company.

RM: I suppose sae they'd still hae tae waak it ken?

ER: They still had tae waak it but if ye had somebody tae taak tae it doesny seem sae long.

RM: Naw I ken what ye mean I see what ye mean.

ER: It's like gaun up the Kirk Brae, if I'm gaun up the Kirk Brae on a Sunday morning wi' Annette...

RM: It's no so bad!

ER: I gaun up an awful lot easier than if I'm on my own! *[laughs]*

00:19:38

RM: And would folks come out wi' their buckets and spades when they drove...when the beasts went by?

ER: Oh no I think you'd need to [?] water the road was in a dreadful state!

RM: Is that right? Was it tarred?

ER: Oh aye it was tarred, but it needed to be washed, you can think o' it a load o' bullocks gaun up the street!

RM: Aye but they didny come oot wi' their bucket and spade to...?

ER: Oh no they did wi' the horses though.

RM: Aw right, right.

ER: Come oot efter the horses. And that was on my mother's title deeds actually that they had tae keep the street clear o' horse dung.

RM: Get away!

ER: Mm hmm. It's unbelievable but true. We have digressed fae the shops.

00:20:28

RM: Well I ken but they horses interest me because what horses would be gaun doon...

ER: Well there was the milk-cairt.

RM: Right. And would other...would the bakers have a horse or were they motorised?

ER: They were motorised in my day, but the first van that they had at the bakery in Harbour Street was a horse...a pownie.

RM: Right. So there'd be mair horses...

ER: And of course there was horses gan tae the mill. Fae the farms.

RM: Tae tak the corn.

ER: Aye, back and forrit.

RM: And that'd be ferm horses?

ER: Oh they were ferm horses aye. Oh they wereny sporting...they wereny riding school or aucht like that.

00:21:14

RM: No no they were proper working horses.

ER: They were working horses.

RM: So there'd be mair stables in Creetown than...well the stables'd be at the farms.

ER: The stables were at the farms, aye.

RM: So, that was the slaughter hoose or the butchers, and then alang fae that...?

ER: Next door, here, was Sam Vernon, and he had sweeties and papers, and he made ice-cream in the summertime, and he had chips in the wintertime.

RM: Did he?

ER: Mm hmm. There's chip bit at the back.

RM: Wha' like?

ER: It was corrugated iron, and there was a fryer and aye and we had to get rid o' it when we come in here.

00:21:57

RM: So that was this hoose here?

ER: Mm hmm.

RM: And the shop was at the front here?

ER: The shop was on the other side.

RM: So that's why...there's a bigger window there is there?

ER: Mm hmm.

RM: Interesting.

ER: And there was somebody else in it before Sam Vernon.

RM: And I never really think o' haen a chip shop in they days ye kind o' just think ships are mair modern than that but...

ER: No no.

RM: A deep fat fryer and everything?

00:22:22

ER: Mm hmm.

RM: Were they guid?

ER: They were good.

RM: *[laughs]*

ER: They were better than Sisi's.

RM: And were ye allowed chips, yer mother didny bother?

ER: She wouldny ken.

RM: How, how no?

ER: Well I would hae done messages for my Granny and she would a gi'en me sixpence or something!

RM: And you popped in there...and did he have chips on at night or the daytime?

00:22:46

ER: Oh no it was just I think it would be about yince a week possibly a Saturday night, wasny every nicht.

RM: No. Oh very good. And ice-cream?

ER: And ice-cream.

RM: A wee bit Italian kind o' feeling about that tae is there no', ice-cream and...?

ER: It would probably be...

RM: Just the wey [they did it].

ER: The wey they did it. You see the Italians wereny really terribly welcome when they started.

RM: They came ower wi' the war did they no'?

ER: Aye, but there was a kinna feeling that they had maybe come and ta'en the sugar oot o' the locals tea kind o' style.

RM: Right. And they were setting up their ain...

00:23:37

ER: They were setting up...they were daen something they could dae it theirsel, it would be just in opposition. But of course Sam was...he was a seafaring man, I think he was a captain actually.

RM: Before he came into the shop?

ER: Before he come into the shop, and he was always lame so whether he was injured, and started this up. He was a brother of Jim Vernon in the grocer shop. And there was money among them, so they would start up something.

RM: And what kinna shipping would he be, like shipping locally on his own was he a captain o' a local ship or just elsewhere?

ER: Possibly they started off here, and maybe went deep sea I don't know. I ken Willie's grandfather he had yin o' these schooner, and his son started off but then he went deep sea, and eventually feenished up in Australia.

RM: 'Cause there were a lot o' boats going up and down.

ER: Oh there was a lot o' boats went up and doon.

RM: In Creetown?

ER: Aye. And they were gan a lot o' them gan tae [cart it] tae get the tiles for the drains.

00:24:50

RM: And then the granite tae.

ER: And the granite. I don't know whether the schooners took the granite or no'. I can only mind o' these steam boats coming in, I don't think the sailing boats would tak much granite.

RM: No.

ER: I don't think sae.

RM: No. So, efter that?

ER: So, we gan fae here to The Cross.

RM: Oh richt, to The Crossroads?

ER: Aye, that was aye kent as 'The Cross'.

RM: Aye. What aboot that big hoose that's just...

ER: On this side?

RM: Aye. Was that ever onything special?

00:25:32

ER: Where the stores are noo, it was Morgan's shop.

RM: Right.

ER: And he had a van that went oot intae the country, and employed...I think they would employ about five folk.

RM: In the shop?

ER: Between the shop and the van.

RM: And there was a level...there was a level upstairs was there no'?

ER: No, that was the hoose.

RM: And later on it became the Co-op?

ER: Later on when the Co ta'en it ower they didny need the hoose so they made the tap intae a drapery I think it was. Tom Morgan had a store where Albert Sisi is noo. [He'd] this big shed and it was fu' o china and stuff like that.

RM: So that was his store bit?

ER: That was...it was another bit o' the shop kinna style.

RM: Across the street?

ER: Across the road. And he had a store doon on the back green. And they used tae gan doon the entry, across there at Faye's. Davy Mair put a door on it, but when I was young there was nae door.

RM: Ye went strecht doon tae the...

ER: Ye went strecht doon, and it was a richt o' wey.

RM: So Morgan's is a big shop musta been a...

ER: It was a very big shop and he had a shop in Whithorn and yin in Newton Stewart.

RM: Oh I didny realise that.

ER: Aye he had. And his sister was in the shop in Whithorn, and I canny mind wha was in the one in Newton Stewart, but it was near...the yin in Newton Stewart was near the Galloway Erms.

RM: Oh right, I ken whaur ye mean.

00:27:23

ER: It was in that end.

RM: Aye. So he would stock a lot o' stuff, I mean it wasny just food and vegetables, it was a real general store?

ER: Oh aye, it was a real general store, and paraffin of course, they a' kept paraffin.

RM: And ye'd smell it tae.

ER: Oh you could smell it aye.

RM: 'Cause everybody yased paraffin for their...

ER: And of course nothing come into the shops ready packed. Pert o' the job...they weyed oot sugar intae bags, and a' that sort o' thing you went for the messages, you asked for half a pund o' butter or something and they cut it off a block. There was nothing pre-packed at all.

RM: Right, same wi' cheese and sugar.

ER: Same wi' cheese.

RM: Did they dae let's say twenty packets and pit them on the shelves or did they scoop it as ye went in?

00:28:14

ER: They scooped it when you went for it.

RM: So you went and said, "I'm wanting a pound o' sugar," and you put the bag on the...?

ER: Aye, and it was the same wi' lentils and peas and beans.

RM: Anything loose like that?

ER: Onything loose like that.

RM: It was never pre-packed?

ER: It was never pre-packed.

RM: And veg tae, tatties'n...?

ER: Tatties wereny packed at a'.

RM: No, no. And vegetables and whatever. Did onybody sell fish?

ER: No they didny need tae sell fish we'd a got it fae the nets.

00:28:46

RM: Oh of course. Ye got it yersel'. But naebody went aroond wi' a van...a load o' fish or selt it [?] hoose?

ER: Well yes somebody come roon' in the summertime wi' herring. In a barra.

RM: In a barra?

ER: Mm hmm.

RM: And whaur did that come fae [?]?

ER: And then a van came somebody fae Wigtown I think his name was Bobby Hopkins, and he used to come with his two-eyed steaks I think he ca'ed them, and ye went oot wi' a basin and got what ye wanted.

RM: And whaur did he get the herring fae, [?]?

ER: They would get the herring at Portpatrick.

RM: Ah right.

ER: The herring boats came in fae Portpatrick. You no mind o' the herring trucks gaun through wi' the herring?

00:29:36

RM: And so they would get them fae Portpatrick?

ER: Sometimes they yased tae stop in the village and throw some herring tae ye if ye had a basin or something and sa' them, ye got them for nothing.

RM: So this fella would come aroond in his cart, selling herring.

ER: Selling herring aye.

RM: In the certain time o' year?

ER: A certain time o' year when the were landing at Portpatrick.

RM: A wee bit like onion Johnnies wi' onions on their...

ER: Aye that's right, they come roond tae I hae mind o' them coming roond on the bike, wi' the strings o' onions.

RM: Are they Frenchmen?

ER: Mm hmm.

00:30:14

RM: Were they?

ER: Aye. And they had their...I think somebody came fae Alan's in Newton Stewart wi' a larrie wi' fruit and vegetables on it tae. [?] in the back shop.

RM: Aye. So there's a lot o' delivery, folk coming in wi' stuff?

ER: Oh aye, wi' stuff.

RM: It's no like we go into shops...

ER: And of course everything that come intae the village to be selt in the shops came to the station.

RM: Right. I never thought of that. So the transport would hae tae gan fae the station.

ER: The transport tae begin wi' was a horse and cairt.

RM: Fae the station?

ER: Fae the station it was Kit Ballantyne.

RM: Was Kit Ballantyne was that his job I mean did they hae...?

ER: Oh that was a' he did.

RM: And wha' was his bit whaur did he stey?

ER: He leaved up at [?], at the aul' schoolhoose.

RM: The big hoose.

ER: Mm hmm.

RM: And what was his job, what did he dae?

ER: He cairted the stuff fae the station and went roond the shops.

RM: Delivering.

ER: Delivering it.

RM: So he had pony or horse?

00:31:34

ER: Aye it was a horse and cairt.

RM: And he kept the horse and cairt up there?

ER: Kept the horse and cairt in the stables. You mind where Palmer's yaird was?

RM: Aye.

ER: Well that was where Ballantyne's stable...

RM: Really?

ER: Mm.

RM: I didn't ken that. And his full-time job was gaun up to the station, picking up the stuff, coming doon...

ER: Aye, self-employed. He flitted us fae Chain Terrace tae Harbour Street.

RM: So he did that tae?

00:32:03

ER: He did that tae.

RM: And it was horse and cart?

ER: It was a horse and cairt.

RM: That's amazing. But ye said some vegetable came fae Newton Stewart [?]?

ER: Aye. In a larrie, a wee larrie. I don't know whether they ever brought them on the horse and cairt I can never mind that, it was a motorised...

RM: It kinna feels like you were kinna betwixt the horse and the motorised stuff at that time?

ER: That's right.

RM: It was kinna moving fae yin tae the other.

ER: And this is a' pre-Nineteen thirty-nine.

RM: Aye, that's interesting, aye.

00:32:44

ER: Because after Nineteen thirty-nine...I think maybe before Nineteen thirty-nine Ballantyne'll ha' deid, and the McRoberts'll hae ta'en ower the run tae the station, and they had coal, and they had a wee motor wagon that they ca'ed 'the Blue Bird'. And they plied up and doon tae the station.

RM: Noo that's a move fae the horse.

ER: That's a move fae the horse.

RM: Tae the larrie.

ER: To the larrie

RM: And ye can jist see it happening can ye?

ER: Mm hmm.

RM: And so would this new fella, he would take ower the kinna things that Kit would dae, like flitting hooses and delivering, but he would dae it wi' a nice...but did he hae coal on the same lorry as he pit...no he'd hae tae clean that out a wee bit!

ER: Oh it would be the same larrie Rob.

RM: Really?

00:33:43

ER: Oh aye. It would get swept.

RM: Aye, aye. So yin day he'd be bringing coal doon and next day he'd be bringing fruit and veg or whatever?

ER: Aye. And they had the croft at...roond at Clachan croft there, at the fit o' the Kirk Brae.

RM: Is that whaur he steyed then is that whaur his lorry was?

ER: Mm hmm. They leaved in the richt-hand side and the byres still there on the left hand side.

RM: Whaur aboots is that I canny get my heid roond that.

ER: As yer gaun up the Kirk, ken at the bottom o' the fiel, there's a shed?

RM: Aye.

ER: It was the byre, at yin time, and the croft was in...just as ye gaun ower [?] on the right-hand side..

RM: Oh on the right-hand side?

00:34:28

ER: On the right-hand side it's no...

RM: But'n'ben's...kinna cottages?

ER: That's right, but's no longer there.

RM: No much o' it there [there's] a shell.

ER: That's aboot it.

RM: So that's wha he...

ER: That's where they leaved.

RM: Right. And then did he keep his lorry in the...?

ER: No the larrie lodged doon at...where the doctors surgery is noo.

RM: Doon at [?]? Yin o' the garages doon there?

ER: Doon there.

00:34:56

RM: Aye I ken wha ye mean. I never knew that. So he was the transporter o' stuff, even before Sandy smith?

ER: That's right, aye.

RM: Right, and the station was a big thing in those days.

ER: Aye. Sandy Smith ran a car, back and forrit to the station, and they'd bring stuff to deliver that they could. They transported the mail every day, up and doon.

RM: That was later on of course, wi' Sandy.

ER: Aye it would, but I can mind o' that happening, that would be before the war.

RM: So a' the stuff that went tae Morgans...I was gonny ask you...like flooer fae the...was the mill still working then in Barony, in Barony Mill?

ER: Aye the mill was working then, but then a lot o' the flooer come intae the station and was transported tae the bakeries.

RM: So wha did they buy the flooer [again]?

00:36:00

ER: I don't know if they...I think it was just meal and stuff, oatmeal probably.

RM: So it wasny proper flooer for baking?

ER: The flooer was ay stored doon there as I hae mind.

RM: Even stuff come fae the station?

ER: Carrs' had a store doon there and then the Blue Bird and Kit Ballantyne before them would bring it up whatever bags ye needed kinna style I suppose.

RM: To the shops?

ER: To the shops.

RM: Right. So the Barony maybe wasny quite the flour for baking bread...breid and that, it was mair oatmeal...?

ER: But I can...at the bakery, richt up until it stopped, we made our ain self-raising flooer, and quite a lot o' folk used tae come in tae get it, rather than buy it oot o' the shop, ye ken pre-packed. It was just plain flooer and cream o' tartar and baking soda.

00:37:03

RM: Mixed up?

ER: Mixed up, mm hmm.

RM: And that gave the...raising?

ER: That gave it the lift, aye.

RM: So that was Morgans?

ER: That was Morgans. The other side o' the Cross was Hyslop's drapers.

RM: That's at the very corner?

ER: Mm hmm.

RM: Hyslop's the draper...oh aye I know who you mean aye, the big granite?

ER: The big granite building. That was Hyslop's. You could get yer hoose furnished at Hyslop's.

RM: Did they dae furniture?

00:37:29

ER: They could get it.

RM: Could get it!

ER: They could get it. My father and mother got married in Nineteen twenty-seeven, and that's where a' their furniture come...and of course my mother'd been working in the shop.

RM: So she would ken what she wanted.

ER: Aye, they went to the warehoose in Glesgo picked oot what they wanted and that, but it was a' done through the shop.

RM: And then it'd come doon on the train again.

ER: But they get you a carpet fae a catalogue, ye ken things like that.

RM: And that would come doon on the train tae would it no'?

ER: That's right, and they went oot wi' cases roond...They went as far as Gatehoose, and they went as far as Newton in the other direction.

RM: Aye.

00:38:10

ER: A' roond farms. My mother had a wonderful knowledge o' the farms a' roond about, 'cause she had gone with a case.

RM: She was one o' those folks that went roond the fermes wi' haberdashery and...

ER: That's right, aye, and clothes.

RM: And needles and threads and everything you name it.

ER: Wool, mm hmm.

RM: Whatever they wanted.

ER: Aye. I mind o' saying to my mother...I worked in the craft shop for a wee while, and they started selling jackets and stuff, and I mind o' saying tae her...tights became fashionable in a' different colours and a' the rest o' it, and I mind o' saying tae her, "It must tak something noo tae stock these shops," and she said, "Aye when you think about it." I said, "What was it like in your day?" "Oh," she says, "Elizabeth there was just black stockings and broon stocking." They were woollen, she says, "That was a' there was."

RM: Nae choice.

ER: Nae choice. And she said [Lyle] was just starting to come in when she got married, so the didny have tae cairie the same stock.

00:39:25

RM: So that takes ye doon to...

ER: That taks us doon the Cross.

RM: Aye. Wha' did they ca' it the cross for just 'cause it was crossroads?

ER: It was just...I suppose sae they just taaked about 'the Cross'. I've often heard my aunty saying, "Oh I'll just tak a walk tae the Cross and see what's in the shop windows."

[Laughter]

RM: But there wasny a shop opposite...diagonally opposite there was? Wilsons?

ER: On the corner, where the Creetown Initiative are established, it was Earnest Wilson's shop in my day but that's where Stark the chemist started.

RM: Oh right that was originally a chemist?

ER: Uh huh, and they leaved abin it.

RM: Ah. No much space abin that shop?

00:40:16

ER: No, but that's what folk did ye see.

RM: Crammed them in.

ER: They crammed them in.

RM: And then doonstairs was the chemist aye?

ER: It would be the chemists uh huh.

RM: And there was never a shop at the other side o' the [?], ken the other side opposite?

ER: No that was ay just a hoose.

RM: Ay a hoose.

ER: Aye. I think latterly it was a boarding...in fact in that book o' Joan Slaven's I think there's an advert in it for a 'Miss Poole's Boarding Hoose'.

RM: And that's wha she...?

00:40:46

ER: That's where she was, aye. And my great-grandfather bought the property next tae it and built a bakery at the back o' it, and there was a shop, the shop and the hoose beside it.

RM: So it was your great-grandfather that started the bakery in...

ER: In Harbour Street.

RM: In Harbour Street.

ER: That's right. He came fae Castle Dooglas, as I was telt, tae work wi' Drape, up the street there where Walker's was. And he was a member o' the aul' kirk and he was a Tory.

RM: What's the aul' kirk?

ER: Perish kirk.

RM: Up the hill? Oor yin?

ER: Oor kirk. And Drape was a Liberal, and a UP, and my great-grandfather's face didny fit. But he worked and he played the fiddle.

RM: That's yer great-grandfather?

00:42:00

ER: Uh huh. He made fiddles, and he taught folk tae play fiddles. And he fiddled at dances, a' tae make money, and eventually he started his ain business, and it ran for exactly fifty years.

RM: That's the bakery?

ER: That's the bakery, until I got mairried and it was closed then because it wasny viable.

RM: And so he built that shop up?

ER: Oh aye, he started fae scratch.

RM: And kept it running for...?

ER: It was kept running for fifty years.

RM: It's a lang time.

ER: Aye.

RM: Hillhouse Bakery.

00:42:39

ER: Mm hmm.

RM: And so he had the baker...the bakery was at the back?

ER: The bakehoose is at the back and it's there yet as it was built.

RM: Is it?

ER: Aye.

RM: And then the shop window at the front, there's still a shop window there isn't there?

ER: No, when Mary got the property she got the shop window made intae...and the door made intae twa wee-er windows I think, something like that.

RM: But you probably still see the...

ER: Oh you can still see it, aye, you can still see it.

RM: So that was your great-grandfather on your side, your ain...or was it?

00:43:19

ER: Aye my mother's side.

RM: Your mother's side?

ER: Mm hmm, my mother's side.

RM: 'Cause that Hillhouse is no the name...

ER: That's right, and the 'H' in my name, I don't know you never see me signing my name it's E. H. Ray the 'H' is for the Hillhoose.

RM: Right right. So your mother was the daughter o' Hillhouse the baker.

ER: Her mother was a [Hillies].

RM: She married...

ER: My granny was a Barr, my granny married James Barr, that's where the Barr comes in, and he was the eldest o' twelve or thirteen.

RM: Right, and so your mother married...

ER: My mother married Robert Elliot.

00:44:02

RM: Robert Elliot, and that's where the Elliot name comes in.

ER: That's where the Elliot comes in.

RM: Right. So was there any other shops in Harbour Street?

ER: Aye, Bessie [McMaster], she had a wee sweetie shop and her mother did a bit o' baking...scones and terts and stuff for folk. And there was a shop where the flats are noo, and it was McGrachan's, and it was fancy goods, china and stuff.

RM: Right. The McGrachan's that had the tomatoes, is that the same family?

ER: [?] the same McGrachan, be the same McGrachan.

RM: Aye, I was thinking that, and there was a china shop?

ER: Mm hmm.

RM: Get away. That'd be the only yin in Creetown [?] china shop, there'd be nae other yin?

ER: No but then of course Morgan's and Vernon's they selt it.

00:45:01

RM: Oh o' course, aye.

ER: And there was another china shop on the other side o' the street I mean we've only come doon yin side!

RM: I ken I was thinking that, we're no' doon tae the police station yet! So there was the china shop at the end...

ER: And we hae'ny got tae Burnbank because there was a shop there tae at yon turn.

RM: Burnbank?

ER: Where John Prince...practically. Well that window space is the same the day as it was when I was gaun about Burnbank.

RM: I never noticed it was a...

ER: A bigger window.

RM: A bigger window I never noticed that. So before we forget Harbour Street you got Bessie McMaster then doon ye got police station, cross the road, up the other side, was there stuff up the other side?

ER: There was the Co', at the tap.

00:45:49

RM: The very tap. But was there no' a greengrocers at the tap tae next tae Earnest Wilson's? Other side...wi' a [?]?

ER: Oh aye it kinna cheynged fae yin thing tae another, but it was a shop richt open till...Pauline and Terry James selt it.

RM: Aye, 'cause there's a big [windy] there tae isn't there?

ER: Aye, and of course it was an inn at yin time.

RM: Aw, right.

ER: It was the aul' inn.

RM: Aw I didny realise that.

ER: And Bessie McMaster's was an inn tae, it was either...

RM: Was it?

ER: Aye, it was either the Deer Horn or the Stag Horn Inn.

00:46:33

RM: I didny realise that.

ER: And Bessie sent me a photo' fae Orkney shortly before she died, and it was tae stey in Creetown and Peter Howie's got it.

RM: O' the...?

ER: O' the original, what it was.

RM: And so there were tway inns there was the inn there and there was yin at the tap o' the street tae at the Cross?

ER: And of course you've got tae imagine Creetown withoot St John's Street. 'Cause that was the aul' street, and the travellers would be coming intae Harbour Street and they were gaun up ower the High Road, which was pert o' the aul' military road to Portpatrick.

RM: So that explains how there was inns in Harbour Street, because the Harbour Street would go doon tae the boats and the folk coming aff the would be wanting accommodation.

ER: That's right, aye.

RM: And then folk gaun up the hill, back tae Gatehouse or whatever.

00:47:37

ER: Mm hmm. They'd either come in on a boat o' some kind or on horseback.

RM: Either fae Gatehouse side or fae Newton Stewart side?

ER: Uh huh.

RM: And in the Newton Stewart Road aye, it would [turn] them.

ER: I mean I never mind o' Creetown withoot St John's Street, but that was the original bit o' it.

RM: So, as you go up the tap o' Harbour Street ye can go...right to the Kirk, or left up along the High Road?

ER: Aye. And...church...ye see there's a kirk has gone missing, we've lost it. Well, I hae a feeling that the entrance was at the tap o' Church...what's Church Street.

RM: The entrance to the kirk?

ER: To the kirk.

RM: Oh right.

00:48:30

ER: And I've thought aboot this, it was up aboot the hill [?] somewhere, because there was hooses...they taaked aboot...roond the corner at the tap o' the High Road gan richt, they taak aboot that as the De'il's Elbow.

RM: Aye.

ER: So I think the kirk must hae been in front, before the De'il's Elbow.

RM: In the banking?

ER: Aye, it must hae been up there somewhere.

RM: But it wouldny block the big hoose?

ER: No, I wouldny think so.

RM: They wouldny allow that.

ER: Oh no. unless it was there of course before the big hoose was as big as what it is?

RM: Aye maybe.

00:49:17

ER: That's possible.

RM: Mebbe the kirk came first?

ER: That's very possible. I mean that kirk was opened in Eighteen thirty-four wasn't it?

RM: Oor yin.

ER: Oor yin.

RM: So coming back along this road here, other side o' it...

ER: Oh the other side o' the street on the corner we taaked about Stark's, and we also taaked about McDavid's...

RM: Was the garage there?

ER: The garage was there, Sanny Smith's garage.

RM: That's a motor garage?

ER: And before then it was Waddington's.

00:49:51

RM: And that was horses?

ER: That was horses.

RM: So it was ay a place o' transport?

ER: Ay a place o' transport. And there was a place o'...there was a stable at...just efter the butcher's. I think somebody McGlaughlin had that, and there was a famous...I think they had, it'd be horses and traps. He had somebody very important in the trap and he'd tae gan somewhere, and he tucked the rug roond her knees and he said he hoped she would be very uncomfortable till he come back!

[laughter]

ER: It'll no [?]

RM: No no, no.

ER: And of course the bit that's set in, the hoose that's set in facing the Barholm Erms, when I was young it was Bella HERRIS's shop.

RM: Oh that was a shop tae?

ER: Mm hmm.

00:50:50

RM: And what did they sell?

ER: Sweeties.

RM: Another sweetie shop?

ER: And cigarettes and stuff.

RM: The usual, aye.

ER: And it went on fire.

RM: Right.

ER: And she lost her life in that fire. I don't think she actually died in the fire but I think she died because o' the burns she had...

RM: Oh aye I ken what ye mean.

ER: ...in hospital, 'cause they hadny the skills or onything in these days. And her son went tae stey wi' his faither in Canada. And strangely enough, that sideboard there Robert, my Granny bocht it at Bella HERRIS's sale, and it apparently had come oot o' the manse in [Colvin's] day. And yin o' the reasons my Granny wanted it was, she used tae gan sewing, she was a dressmaker, and she used tae gan sewing tae [Colvin's], and she'd

00:51:54

tae wauk, and he was...passed her on the shore yin day and didny even lift her.

RM: Right. So, we've got the garage.

ER: We've got the garage.

RM: And then opposite here was an inn tae was it no?

ER: [The] Temperance Hotel.

RM: Temperance Hotel, wi' stables at the back tae?

ER: That was Waddington's and there was a bit...a wee stable at the back. I think as his hiring business grew, he went fae horses tae motors, Waddington. So the motors were in the garage there, what would be in there before that I've never heard.

RM: Right, right.

ER: And then, where Gordon Cairter is noo, there was a shop in there.

RM: [?] hoose?

00:52:45

ER: Uh huh, yin time there was three butchers there, I mind o' Fleming's coming fae Dumfries and starting up in there but they didn't last lang.

RM: Whaur Gordon steys?

ER: Mm hmm. His father had a shop there tae.

RM: It's no' a big hoose that?

ER: It's no' a big hoose no. They just opened, they didn't need licenses or aucht.

RM: Get away.

ER: No no.

RM: Aye. So then further doon we got tae...well we passed McDavid's.

ER: And where the paper shop is noo, John Murray eventually bought that, but when I was young it was the Stewartry Dairy that had it, and they had a tearoom there, they had a tearoom on yin side and the dairy and stuff on the left.

RM: Goodness me. Was that the only tearoom in Creetown that'd be the only...?

00:53:43

ER: That's the only yin I can mind o'.

RM: Aye. So that shop was a tearoom, and a dairy combined?

ER: Mm hmm. I think they had a tearoom at the bakery in Harbour Street at yin time in the early days but I've never mind o' it.

RM: No. Did you work in the bakery?

ER: Oh aye, I left the schule, instead o' gaun on tae college, I just steyed in the shop!

RM: And worked in the shop?

ER: Worked in the shop.

RM: Did ye work in the bakery or did ye work in the shop...ye did baith?

ER: Oh aye, ye just had tae dae whatever ye could.

RM: Dae whatever, aye. So that was the tearoom and then...was [there] a café at Sisi's there?

00:54:22

ER: Oh but before we get there, there's another shop, was Alec [Cann's].

RM: Uh huh, efter the newsagent, efter the tearooms?

ER: Efter the newsagent, in the building that you'll hae mind o' Drew Murray leeving in latterly?

RM: Aye.

ER: Well there was a shop on the richt-hand side o' the door, and this was China, and he selt cairds, and he had a cycle hiring business.

RM: [*laughs*] That's in what's noo a hoose noo, Drew Murray's hoose?

ER: Mm hmm.

RM: It doesny look like a shop!

ER: No, it never looked like a shop! There was just the yin door, and there was a bell. And then there was Sisi's of coorse, and before Sisi's had it I think it was an inn or a pub...is it the Black Horse or the Black something?

RM: Right. Another inn.

00:55:19

ER: Another inn. And then The Ellangowan.

RM: Which is a big hotel.

ER: Big hotel. But that would be there before the Ellangowan.

RM: What, the...?

ER: What was Sisi's.

RM: Aye. And then there was another in opposite the other side o' the toon clock...Dawson...?

ER: Dawson [City], that would be before the Ellangowan I think tae.

RM: That's gey aul' that's gaun back a bit.

ER: A bit, aye.

RM: So Creetown was a busy place.

ER: It was a very busy place, and then there was Jimmy Smith's joiners shop doon Duke Street.

00:55:53

RM: Wha'...right at the corner there wha' became the cobblers?

ER: Mm hmm, that's right, and then a craft shop.

RM: And a craft shop later on, aye.

ER: But gaun doon tae Park Crescent, there was shops doon there. John Vernon had a joiners shop there. You could gan tae John Vernon's for a tin o' paint or a roll o' wallpaper. And then twa or three doors doon, [John Clarkie] had a joiners shop, and he had a business. And then next door tae that was [Chlachrie's]...they ca'ed him ha'penny Tam, because everything was either eleevepence ha'penny or yin and eleevenpence ha'penny something like that! He used tae gaun tae Ireland, and bring linen and stuff back, and an awful lot o; folk that were daein embroidery they would come fae...they came fae far and near tae [Chlachrie's] shop, it was very busy.

RM: Another kinna draper outlet.

ER: That's right, and he had claes he had carpets he had linoleum, you name it! They had it.

RM: And did he dae joinery work?

ER: His brother had the joiners shop, and he did joinery work. He was a cabinet maker actually. Actually that roond picture, he framed that for me.

00:57:23

RM: Get away!

ER: Mm hmm.

RM: So, Creetown was a very very much busier place.

ER: Oh aye, you could gaun oot in Creetown and get nearly onything ye wanted.

RM: Aye. And the main ironmongers I was thinking you say onybody wanted nails, and screws...?

ER: Oh you could get them at the joiners.

RM: At the joinery bit, [Clarkie] was gi'en ye them, or Vernons?

ER: Aye, or John Vernon aye.

RM: And maist o' that stuff was bocht on the train [?]?

ER: Oh it was a' brocht in by the train.

RM: It's a lifeline the train tae wasn't it?

00:57:56

ER: Mm hmm. Everything I think come intae Creetown nearly by train...until Nineteen forty-six/forty-seven, and yin o' the first things I mind o' seeing, was Lucozade, pittin' their ain transport on. Now why that would stick in my mind I don't know, but I hae mind o' it unloading the stuff at the chemists.

RM: So they bought their ain van for the first time?

ER: And of course the biscuit manufacturers transported their stuff intae the village by great big vans, that was even before the war.

RM: That'd be McVities and folk like that?

ER: Aye. [?] in price, they a' individuals, Gray Dunn's they a' had their ain vans.

RM: So what you mind is quite an interesting change between the early days of the horse and cart delivering around Creetown, roond about the farms and [?] what, and then a wee kinna move tae the...well the station was ay there?

ER: The station was ay there.

RM: But it also a way into the village.

ER: That's right.

00:59:16

RM: A lifeline, to the world.

ER: Oh it was a lifeline, and we...even in Nineteen forty-seven when...was it Nineteen forty-seven that very big snaw that we had? The first thing that got through...we were cut off at baith ends, the first thing that got through was a train.

RM: So you were isolated?

ER: We were isolated, aye.

RM: And then, the third stage I suppose was like...motorised vans coming in.

ER: That's right. And the manufacturers started transporting their stuff fae the factory tae the customer, basically.

RM: And then one lifeline I suppose was the boats to some extent?

ER: That's right.

RM: But that was mair for things like granite.

01:00:05

ER: The granite, I mind from the [?] put the larries on, and there were very very few boats come in efter that because they could transport their crushed granite where it was needed.

RM: Directly.

ER: Directly.

RM: Door tae door

ER: Door tae door.

RM: Interesting changes.

ER: Oh very interesting, and in very short space o' time when you think about it.

RM: Pre-war/post-war.

ER: Mm hmm. There's been a very much bigger movement...post-war, than there was in the last fifty years, than there was in the fifty years before that.

RM: Interesting, aye, I see what ye mean, things were fairly fixed?

01:00:49

ER: That's right.

RM: Right up till about the war and the war seemed to change everything.

ER: It changed everything.

RM: Everybody became mair aware o'...

ER: That's right.

RM: Did it change the village for the better? [*laughs*]

ER: In some...it's like would I like tae dae without my washing machine no I wouldny. But, there was...I think folk were mair content. Growing up in a place you don't notice the disadvantages until somebody points them oot. Dumfries Infirmary has always been the hospital for Creetown, that's where you went if you were ill, you didny notice the miles, and in actual fact it's nearer noo than it used tae be. And Derek had tae gan intae hospital last time I was doon in Reading, and I went, for the journey, and I think it was something like a couple o' miles, and it actually took langer than it did tae get me tae Dumfries Infirmary!

RM: And no as nice a journey either!

ER: And no as nice a journey!

01:02:12