

Interviewee: Joan Mitchell (JM)	Interviewer: Robert McQuistan (RM)
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THEMES

The entire theme of this interview is farming, and the changes that Joan has seen in her lifetime. It touches upon the living arrangements of the workers.

RM: It's Robert McQuistan talking to Joan Mitchell on the Thirteenth of August, and it's about farming. And it's really the early days o' farming Joan we're thinking now...o' the changes.

JM: Right, well...my family took this farm, as tenant farmers, in Nineteen forty-five, and just tae gie ye a bit o' background Robert I've been farming here myself, for forty years, so that's since Nineteen seventy-two we came back doon here. But I spent a lot o' time about the farm, as a wean, although we didn't actually live at the farm, but I spent a lot o' time as a wean at the farm, and as a teenager. And then we come back doon and farmed oorselves, for the last forty years. And there's been a lot o' changes, but there's also a lot o' things that haven't altered that much.

RM: But to go back to the very beginning, your father had the farm in the early days when you were born?

JM: Eh...no, I would be three year aul' when I took the tenancy o' the farm, because he was in other kinds o' business, and then we took the tenancy...oh it'd be in Nineteen forty-five.

RM: And did he have a background in the farming?

JM: No he hadn't really a background in farming. My father's family were quarrymen, but of course he was brought up in a wee village he was interested in farming he would work about farms, as a wean himself and he ay wanted tae farm, and he got the chance tae get the tenancy o' a farm, in Nineteen forty-five.

RM: So, right, so he was a full-time quarryman? Was he a full-time quarryman?

JM: My father wasn't, no, no, my grandfather but my father's family were quarrymen.

RM: Right.

JM: My father had his ain business...lorry business haulage business, fae a fairly young age.

RM: Ah right right, and so then...he ay had a hankerin' fir...

JM: He had a hankerin' fir farming, he started off he was in the quarry office actually, as a young man when he left the schule and then he got a wee business o'

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his ain and worked fae there.

RM: A wee bit enterprise, and did that?

JM: Yeah, yeah.

RM: But he must o' something about farming, ye canny just walk into a ferm and dae it?

JM: No, no he obvious...as I say he would always be interested, and he would work about at farms, as a boy, you know.

RM: Labouring?

JM: Aye, aye, just in his holidays and ken, he would be jist interested in that.

RM: So quite an ambitious move on his pert?

JM: Aye.

RM: Quite something?

JM: Aye. And he was ambitious aye, uh huh.

RM: So he took over the tenancy?

JM: So he took ower the tenancy o' Begbie but he continued tae have other businesses at the same time.

RM: Right, so what would Begbie Ferm hae as its...ferming...was it arable, was it...?

JM: Well that's yin o' the things that's cheynged sae much, because in these days farming was far mair diverse than it is no, there were far mair enterprises on the farm. So, in Nineteen forty-five and richt through the Fifties there was a dairy here...a dairy herd.

RM: How many coos?

JM: Forty-three would be the maist we ever had.

RM: That's a lot.

JM: Eh, well it's tiny nooadays but it was a reasonable...it was the I suppose probably the kind o' average size dairy, in these days.

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RM: And they were...I dinny want to interrupt you but they were...the dairy coos went intae fields lower doon here, because yer quite high up here?

JM: Aye well we had...I mean it is...it covers a fair range, the land here. But we had dairy herd, we had sheep on the hill, we would grow crops which we dinny dae noo. We grew tatties, we grew turnips.

RM: Were yer crops...ye have tae have fairly flat land tae hae crops dae ye no, fairly unstonny land?

JM: Ye just make the best o' what ye've got! I mean there's very little o' Begbie is really arable land at a', but I mean there are fields that ye can plough, aye. But I mean there are rocky and thin soil.

RM: Aye, aye. So, the corn...what was it ye grew, what...?

JM: Well at that time they would grow...I mean they did what was an [order]...there was a kinna traditional rotation then ok? And ye had a grain crop, which would normally be oat, corn we ca'd it but oats, followed be turnips, the second year, and then...

RM: The second year? So ye wouldny hae corn tway years running?

JM: No. You would never hae corn tway years running. So ye would hae corn yin year and then ye had yer turnips, or tatties, or baith, yer second year. And then a third year o' corn, but under-sown wi' grass which ye ca'd 'soud'. Or they sometimes ca'd it 'reedlin'. The red land, it was jist because ye were ploughin' it oot o' bare soil if ye like 'cause it was in an arable rotation. And then it would gaun doon intae grass for maybe five or six years. This is yer better land, and then did it again, so that was the kind o' pattern, and as I say we had a dairy, we had sheep, and we would hae beef cattle at that time tae.

RM: Aye. Just hing on wi' the oats, what did ye dae wi' the oats, was that...was that recycled for yer ain use or did ye sell it?

JM: Oh aye it was a' for...a' these things were for our ain feeding, aye. I mean we may hae selt some tatties but no more, this isny guid tattie growing land, the guid tattie growing land here is doon on the kinny shore, on the kinny raised beaches bit. But we used tae grow tatties fir ourselves and at that time, farm workers ay got tatties as part o' their wages.

RM: Right, so you really were self contained in that sense ken?

JM: OH aye, we had hens...

RM: Ye didny buy in, ye didny have tae buy in a lot?

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JM: We'd buy in a certain amount o'...aye no a great deal though, no.

RM: So your coos were on the land?

JM: The coos ate the turnips and...

RM: Right. In the winter what did ye feed the coos on then?

JM: Hey, because we made hey of course. Turnips...and there'd be a certain amount bought in.

RM: So tway milkings a day?

JM: Tway milkings a day, and because ye had such a mixture o' enterprises ye see, ye had far mair folk worked here.

RM: I was gonny ask ye. 'Cause forty-five coos...

JM: Well, at that time we had a dairyman...

RM: Full-time?

JM: Oh aye full-time dairyman. A herd...a shepherd, who really didny dae onything but sheep.

RM: Full-time?

JM: Uh huh.

RM: The hail year?

JM: Uh huh, [?].

RM: I'm still impressed by yer faither's enterprise!

JM: And a plooman who lived in his hoose. And a cotman.

RM: What's that?

JM: The biddy that leaved in the cottage was the cotman...

RM: Oh right, and what did he dae...a worker?

JM: He was a worker...well just as it happened, he was ay the horseman. Because ye were ta'king about horses, and then I had a...

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RM: Was it afore tractors?

JM: Aye, I'm no share when we'd hae our first tractor, this a' cheynged I may say kinny...the time o' big cheynge was the early Sixties, when there were cheynges in dairying, and there was a complete move oot o' horses I mean we wouldy hae'd

tractors, I think fae maybe the mid Nineteen fifties I canny really mind. But I mean we did hae a horseman who couldny drive and he left us in...aboot Nineteen sixty-tway I would think.

RM: That's gey late?

JM: Because that would be when we would dae away wi' horses a' thegether.

RM: Right, so what kind o' acreage are we talking about here?

JM: Aboot echt-hunner acre.

RM: That's big.

JM: Yeah.

RM: And includes the high-land tae?

JM: Aye, oh aye, I man mair than half o' that's hill.

RM: Aye aye. So yer horseman...how many horses did ye hae?

JM: At the maist we had fower our stable here tak's fower horses. And that's what I mind as a wean really, were the horses I've got tae say ken you were ta'en on wi' the horses.

RM: And what did the horses dae, I mean they ploo'd...?

JM: Well the did all the cultivation work I mean they did the plooin', a' the cultivation, harrowin', they did...a' yer hey-work was done by horses I mean there were horse-mowers.

RM: That actually cut the...?

JM: Ye had horse-reaper...

RM: Right, and cut and baled it tae?

JM: The things that noo...

RM: Ye wouldny bale it hough would ye?

JM: Oh no we didny bale it at that stage you see, you rucked it.

RM: Aye. And the rucks, what's that?

JM: So ye had rakes, high rakes...horse rakes that turned it, and gethered them thegether and then ye built yer rucks.

RM: Ruck.

JM: Rucks, mm hmm. And then ye had tae...I'm trying to mind how we...? We did tak them on trailers we did just lift the loose hey ontae trailers, tae a certain extent.

RM: And did ye pit that in the barns?

JM: Aye ye built them in [?]. 'Twas a...I'm no gonna swear but it was an awfy work [ken]! 'Cause I mean ye gethered yer hey and ye rucked it in the field, ye cairted it in, ye then had tae build these rucks loose intae a hey-shed.

RM: How did ye no just tak them strecht fae the field intae the...in the barns and miss oot the middle bit, miss oot the rucks?

JM: Well because the needed tae sit tae dry ye see that was the [weathered] oot, they wouldny hae been ready.

RM: They'd be green?

JM: It would be green aye, uh huh. You sometimes...you could [sheet the rocks] but often they were...and of course it was absolutely dependent on getting reasonable weather.

RM: The wey you cut it and bale it nooadays, what colour is it is it green when ye bale it, no?

JM: Well of course we're daen silage nooadays I mean ye then went through a period ye then got...tractors came in, and balers came in and instead o' working wi' loose hey ye baled the hey.

RM: And what colour is it when ye bale it?

JM: Well, it needs to go ower to a certain extent, ye want it have still a bit o' sap in it.

RM: Aye.

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JM: For feeding value, but if ye've too much sap it 'heats' as they say ye ken, it ferments. So there's a lot o' skill in making hey, and ye need guid weather and of course we never seem tae get that.

RM: Nooadays that bales and dries in the bales?

JM: Well nooadays it doesny dry because ye seal it wi plastic and what it does is it ferments.

RM: I ken, but I meant the auld-fashioned.

JM: Oh the auld-fashioned, aye, but it needed to be...it needed to be riper, tae bale, because yer compacting it intae bales whereas when ye built it in the loose rucks it dried oot ye ken naturally.

RM: So ye had tway stages ye had tae pit them in the rucks and then ye had tae get them intae the barns.

JM: Then ye had tae get them in and build them.

RM: And when ye were feeding them tae the beasts in the winter, what did ye dae, did ye bring the beasts in or no? Or the coos, the milk coos?

JM: Well the beasts aye, the milking coos were in the byre.

RM: In the winter?

JM: Aye.

RM: The hail winter?

JM: Aye. Well I mean they would gaun oot and in. But I mean they'd be in overnight.

RM: Aye, and yer still daein' tway milkings a day?

JM: Tway milkings a day and a' that feeding and turnips and everything had tae be cairted tae them, aye.

RM: Into the fields?

JM: No no into the byre I mean.

RM: You'd feed them in the byre?

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JM: Yeah, oh you fed them in the byre, aye.

RM: So you'd hae turnips every year, would ye?

JM: We had turnips every year.

RM: Aye, 'cause they'd feed the beasts.

JM: Aye, yeah.

RM: And ye'd need it for yersel's.

JM: Yup. And then in the Nineteen sixties you see there were a' these cheynges because ye got...as I say ye went ower tae tractors, the horses went. And these wee dairies, dairies on this kind o' land went because ye got intae much mair mechanised dairying. In the days I'm ta'kin' aboot, the milk was picked up...ye put yer milk intae churns.

RM: I was gonna ask you that.

JM: Ten gallon churns, and yer lorries come roond and picked up the churns, which had to be manhandle into lorries you know? And then of course, that ended, and they put in bulk tanks.

RM: And then they sooked it oot.

JM: Aye, and pipes, you know milk pipes fae yer byre tae yer bulk tanks. And ye needed tae be on a bigger scale for this sort o' thing tae be...

RM: And the larries jist come in, as they dae noo...sook it oot.

JM: They were tankers, yep. So at that time, an awfy load o' folk left dairying, as we did, ken the wee yin ye either got much bigger, or ye got oot o' dairying.

RM: Aye 'cause it wasny cost effective.

JM: It wasny.

RM: Tae invest in this big...

JM: No, exactly.

RM: So in your day, the earlier days, the milk was brought strecht fae the coos, poured intae...ye had tae cool it did ye no?

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JM: Ye had tae cool it wi' coolers, [?].

[Laughter]

Aye, ye had a thing that ye had...ye had a thing that water went through, and a tank on the top. How would I describe it...it was kinna like a...it was kinna like a washboard.

RM: A washboard, aye, and the milk would run down and go strecht intae the churns.

JM: That's right.

RM: And how many churns would ye pit in the back o' a lorry?

JM: Oh I couldny tell you Robert to be honest I canny mind.

RM: That wis jist the thing is that is jist yin side o' yer farm, I mean that...but then ye had fellas in the farm, specialists daen each o' the tasks?

JM: Aye, and that's what's altered ye see very much because the folk...I mean the herd, well he would hae a few Galloway kye at the [?] and the herd maybe fed in the wintertime. But by and large the herd jist did sheep. And I mean we had herds here that probably couldny drive a tractor. Ye ken they were...they were jist specialists.

RM: And where did they [have] leeve did they leeve here or whaur did he stey or steyed up...?

JM: He stayed at the [?].

RM: Oh at the hoose at the...so he was up there in the hills onywey?

JM: Aye, uh huh. And I mean these folk a' had tae help at hey-time and that, but they had their ane jobs, yeah they did aye.

RM: They had their specialist...their specialist tasks.

JM: Yeah.

RM: And yer faither in a sense was...well he'd be a jack o' all trades but he'd be managing [them]?

JM: He was mair or less managing it, 'cause he was managing other businesses at the same time, ye ken? He did quite a bit o' work my faither wi' sheep, he liked working wi' sheep.

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RM: Aye that was [his] interest.

JM: That was his interest, so I mean when we did sheep handlings my faither did a lot, but, no other things I mean...

RM: And clippin' and dippin' and...?

JM: Yeah but ye see in these days, things like clippin' were din...ye neiboured, folk got thegether and clipped so ye did communal clippin'.

RM: And who...like wha did the clippin', I mean would ye hae had help wi' the clippin' aye well you would obviously, 'cause that's...

JM: Aye the folk that clipped were the herds fae roond about so they went fae yin farm tae another, and clipped. We would neighbour wi' maybe about six farms roundabout?

RM: And they ay helped each other?

JM: So they came.

RM: And nae charge?

JM: No, but it was reciprocal. And it was an awfy palaver! And they needed tae be fed big time. But I mean there would be aye I mean we would neighbour wi' [Cameron, ?], Barholm, the Larg...

RM: Cairnholy.

JM: Cairnholy. And...

RM: That's a lot o' work?

JM: ...[Philbay]. My neighbour at [Philbay] came here tae.

RM: God that's a guid distance tae.

JM: So they came, they would come here for a couple o' days, and do oor clipping, and then oor herd went tae the other places.

RM: And that would tak up quite a wee bit o' time?

JM: Och it taken aboot the first half o' July up, 'cause then ye got wet weather and ye lost days ye couldny ay...

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RM: And we're talking about hand-clipping?

JM: Aye that's hand clipping aye.

RM: And how many sheep would ye hae at that time?

JM: Well at that time we would hae aboot three-hundred and fifty yowes, three-hundred and sixty, uh huh. Plus young stock tae.

RM: But then if ye had herds fae lets say half a dozen ferms?

JM: Well aye, there would be aboot half a dozen folk clipping and then the other farm workers were catching and rolling wool and bagging wool, but it was the herds that did the clipping, ye ken?

RM: The less specialist jobs would be dealt...[?] to onybody that happened to be there so the hail thing would be done. Was that the only thing that ye kinna neiboured on, or did ye neibour on other stuff tae, like I dunno...?

JM: No, no really, I'm trying tae think, no ocht else in the sheep line I mean when ye did a' yer dipping and a' yer kinna medical stuff, we jist did that oorsel's. Clipping was the big...

RM: The big thing.

JM: The big thing.

RM: But the hay making would jist be done yersel's tae, ye'd pu' a' the...?

JM: Hey making ye did yersel', aye, aye. We used tae I mean the likes o' tatties ye would employ casual labour maybe coming in, but no neighbouring.

RM: No no not to the same extent.

JM: Well it was often schule weans that did tattie-liftin', that was yer tattie-howkin' holiday.

RM: Tattie-howkin' holiday. But ye said ye got cattle...beef cattle?

JM: Aye, yeah.

RM: Was that a big thing or just a side...?

JM: I think we would gradually cheynge ower Robert really there, I think...again in the Sixties we would cheynge ower, and hae mair. We always had Galloways at the

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[Daphin], but I mean maybe no...maybe about twenty or so. And then we would jist gradually cheynge ower, tae suckler cow I mean.

RM: You mean what, beef herd or what?

JM: Well we cheynge, well we did yer obviously dealing wi' different breeds there, and it would be basically Galloways at first that we would cross wi' a beef bull, aye. And it was Herefords originally.

RM: Right, so when ye say cheynge ower what ye mean is cheyngin' ower the breeds?

JM: Cheyngin' the breeds, that what altered.

RM: And also the numbers?

JM: Aye, well I mean we ended up in my father's time...there's no been that much cheynge in numbers as far as we're concerned.

RM: Oh right? [That's what I was interested in].

JM: I mean...well our total numbers, o' coos noo are between ninety and a hunner, and it was about ninety in my father's time here. Eventually.

RM: So the cheyng-ower was...

JM: It was the breed that cheynged.

RM: The breedin'?

JM: The breed that cheynged.

RM: Mair expanded now, mair variety or what? Charolais, Herefords?

JM: Aye, but still it's based on Galloway, ye ken...

RM: And there's a guid reason for that.

JM: Aye because they suit...I mean our stocks are outside so ye need local, native breeds or adapted tae the area.

RM: And that includes the Belted Galloway tae.

JM: And that includes the Belted Galloway, but I mean we, well as ye ken we now hae a basic Galloways but we cross these wi' a South Devon so we've got a cross-

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suckler coo which we then put a variety of both intae it.

RM: So in the auld days would yer main source o' income have been the sheep, or would it be fifty/fifty?

JM: Well ye see ye had a much mair diverse [?] milk-cheque was a very regular thing 'cause ye got yer milk-cheque every month, so that was a steady source o' income. Yer beef cattle you would sell as calves, at a year auld, which was still [?] tae a great extent, and then ye had yer lamb crop so, I couldny tell ye offhand what the percentages were but...it was spread, much mair than ye'd noo.

RM: The [?] ye sell of calves is because, what, are they fattened elsewhere?

JM: They're fattened elsewhere.

RM: Because the ground is more [?] further down.

JM: And folk tend tae specialise again, you know.

RM: In breedin' the calves?

JM: We rear them tae a certain stage and then fatten them elsewhere. Although nooadays we fatten some o' our Galloway cross bullocks.

RM: But yer high up here, yer not...

JM: Aye we're no' fatteners, if ye'r gonny fatten, on ony scale, ye need sheds, ye need tae put them inside. And ye need better ground aye.

RM: So yer old days ye had as ye say a diversity ye had yer cattle, yer sheep, yer crops yer corn or oats...pigs?

JM: No we didn't the herd at the [Daphin] had. Well I think maybe we had occasional pigs! But och no no but the herd at the [Daphin] ay kept a pig. [There] was a pig-sty at the [Daphin]!

RM: And did ye get onything fae that did he, did he butcher it himsel' or what?

JM: Aye well ye see they always...ye see farm workers at that time, always had kinna perks like this, they tended tae hae...particularly herds, would hae their ain coo their ain milk coo, they would hae a few sheep o' their ain. And certainly, they had at the [Daphin] they had a pig, or a couple o' pigs. So I mean that was pert o' the...and everybody as I say would...tatties were pert o' the bargain, half a ton o' tatties I think was the kinna standard, per family.

RM: So the fashion nooadays is to be self-supporting, amongst the good life folks

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but these guys up there were gey near self-supporting. What would you buy in for food, what would you buy in? Flour? Floer and salt and...?

JM: Och aye aye, I mean folk would...aye obviously, a hail load o' staples but the likes o' the herd, would hae their ain coo and they made...Mrs McKnight o' the [Daphin] made butter. They would never make cheese obviously but they made butter, they would hae their ain eggs.

RM: Aye. Ye were gey close.

JM: I don't think you see at that stage 'cause there wereny, when you think about it there wasny freezers or that so folk wouldny really butcher their ain meat, the meat they dae noo, I mean I don't ever mind folk daen that.

RM: No. Yer faither didny [?]?

JM: Refrigeration has cheynged that.

RM: Aye aye but yer faither didny have a pig that he slaughtered halfway through the year?

JM: No, no we didny although some folk [?] salted meat but I dinny mind o' us daen that, no.

RM: So ye had a huge...a big workforce, your staff are what...?

JM: We had about six.

RM: And each o' them had their ain cottages wi' their weans there'd be a lot o' big families tae?

JM: Oh aye, well there were fower cottages occupied.

RM: Begbie Cottage?

JM: Begbie Cottage, this hoose which was divided...

RM: Wha's was the Begbie Cottage?

JM: Well that was the horseman.

RM: Right right.

JM: So there were...and the [Daphin], and this hoose was divided in tway.

RM: [Daphin's] was the herd and this hoose was divided into tway.

JM: That was the herd. This was the dairy end, there was a dairyman's end, and then there was the plooman's end. So there was always these fower, plus...my uncle actually worked here, although he didn't live here, he leaved in the village, but Davy worked here. And...so that was always five, no coontin' my faither.

RM: Your faither didn't stay in the farm?

JM: No, no he never steyed. [?]

JM: He steyed at [?]

JM: And at other times sometimes we also had a single man, that sometimes leaved in here, wi' the ploughman. So there was always five or six, plus my faither.

RM: I still tak my hat off tae yer faither, because, I get the impression 'cause ye were runnin' other businesses at the same time! To me, runnin' this place'd hae been full time? I mean jist amazing.

JM: Well I mean that's yin o' the things ye see that's cheynged completely, because you no longer...we're no' employing onybody noo ootside family. So yer no' an employer like that ony langer, you know you don't hae that...work if you like o' organising a workforce.

RM: Which he did.

JM: Which he did, aye, and a' the bookwork attached tae that. And the management attached tae it ye ken!

RM: I know, I know! That's why I was takkin' my hat aff...

JM: Because you know folk moved farms in these days, particularly, ye ken I mean it was...

RM: Ye mean the workers?

JM: Aye! The herds tended tae stey langer I mean we had..but I mean the likes o' dairymen and that and ploughmen often moved on, ken every couple o' years or that, folk flitted around.

RM: Is that got tae dae wi' the four...like Candlemas, Martinmas?

JM: Aye the terms as they ca'd it.

RM: The fower terms.

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JM: Aye it was [?] November aye, the times that the folk flitted.

RM: And they gethered maybe in the town and, their employment was up for grabs, 'oh he's a guid herd'?

JM: Well, no in oor time, I mean at yin time that would be the case, but no no, it would a' be done by ken, private bargaining. Well you advertised and folk applied, that's what happened. But there was far far mair moving aroond.

RM: So the main changes are the de-employment, the de-escalation, the de-escalation of employers?

JM: Oh aye.

RM: Of workers. And the mechanisation but they two go thegither [don't] they? Mechanisation meant fewer workers.

JM: Aye, and the fact that what has happened noo is...although, I mean a lot mair o' the work is done by contracters. And no jist...I mean obviously yer cultivation work, and I mean a' our silage work is done by contractors.

RM: But also specialisms are now...you hinted at it earlier on when you said 'we got rid o' the milk, the herd', because that had to be a specialist area.

JM: Yeah.

RM: But so tae would be, as yer sayin' the contracting for the silage is a specialist area 'cause that requires heavy equipment.

JM: Big machinery, aye, yep.

RM: So there's much mair specialisms noo, farms are...there's not that mixture o'...

JM: No, no. But that's very [?] too but I mean even wee-er things if I can put it like that you see in the past...I mean nowadays you tend tae employ a dyker, tae dae yer dykin', wherein...I mean still farmers hae a certain skill at dykin', but I mean in the likes o' the wintertime, some o' yer staff would spend their time dykin', and ditching by hand, digging, cleaning ditches be hand. Whereas nooadays, again you would get well you would get in a tractor...a contractor for ditching.

RM: And fencing?

JM: And fencing, aye. So a' these kind o' maintenance things...

RM: Are specialist jobs noo.

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JM: Tend to be specialist jobs noo. Although maist folk could turn their hand to them tae a certain extent but they don't hae the time tae dae it.

RM: No, no. And they don't have the staff tae dae it either.

JM: No no.

RM: So, looking at these changes...how can I pit this? Good or bad's a bit crude way o' pittin' it! But, positives and negatives, let's put it that wey?

JM: Well. The time we hae been describing, there were obviously a lot o' folk working here. We then went through I may say, I think the maist difficult time Robert actually, was probably when I was here, in the early days. Because in the Seventies and Eghties we were still making hey. Ok we did it baling, oursel', but it was hard hard physical work, it really was, and I mean that haes altered wi' contractors nooadays and silage. The switch fae hey tae silage, has made a huge difference, tae the physical work involved. Makin' hey was a very hard [?] time-consuming, however ye did it whether it was wi'...ye ken ruckin', or balin', when ye were daen it wi' wee bales. So that's different. So it's an easier life, certainly noo in the sense it's no sae physically demanding. What folk don't hae and I think what some folk missed, was the kinna camaraderie o' working wi' teams...o' folk. And some folk...I mean somebody like George, missed it terribly, ken, as you ken

our last employee, he missed it terribly that's why onytime he got a chance tae ta'k tae onybody, just gaun by, he stood and ta'ked tae them! But I mean he had been brought up workin' wi' groups o' folk, no workin' fae a' day oan his own, which is what it's like noo it's much mair solitary.

RM: But that's the case, no just wi' George then, it's the case wi' farmers across the country.

JM: Oh aye, aye. I mean folk...if you're working on a tractor, you're working on your own, there's nane o' this sort o'...ye ken I mean when we did dae hey even when we were making wee bales o' hey I mean ye made high teas ye ta'en teas oot tae the field ye stopped [yer] work and ken ye had yer meals thegether. And a' the sort o' neibourin' that went on wi' clipping and so on so I mean these things hae very much altered. The upside o' it is, it's less physically hard work you've got far mair mechanis[t], but I was thinking aboot it Robert and although that's true, there's an affy lot o' the skills and work that hasny altered much at a', in oor kind o' farming. Because, if yer looking after stock, if yer looking after cattle and sheep, the kinna basic skill o' stocksmanship, the noo, is really very similar. And an affy lot o' the things ye dae are very very similar to what folk always did.

RM: Lambing?

JM: Lambing has hardly...

RM: There's no new wey o' lambing?

00:30:09

JM: There's nae new wey o' lambing and I mean we lamb outside some folk lamb in a lot o' folk lamb inside, but I mean the skills o' lambing, the skills o' still haein' Collie Dogs workin', that's the same. The stocksmanship o' jist...judgement aboot sheep and cattle selecting breeding stock.

RM: Buying and selling.

JM: Buying and selling, even the...I mean even the ways o' buying and selling are basically the same it's still livestock markets, still Castle Douglas Market, Newton Stewart Market. You know, still the same dates on the market in the calendar for goodness sake fae there were away back, so a lot o' the stuff hasny...

RM: Plants still grow.

JM: Yeah and you still need the same skills and knowledge.

RM: The anatomy o' sheep hasn't cheynged.

JM: No.

RM: So, on balance yer content wi' the changes, although...

JM: Well I would hate tae gaun back tae the kinna work that was involved, aye!

00:31:26