

Interviewee: May Marjorie Taylor (MMT)	Interviewer: Kirsty Robertson (KR)
Date of Interview: 24 August 2012	Ref: DG10-9-1-1-T

Interview No.	DG10-9-1-1
Interviewee:	May Marjorie Taylor
Interviewer:	Kirsty Robertson
Date:	24.08.2012
Location:	
Region:	DG8
County:	
Town:	
Keywords:	
00:00 – 05:00	MMT born in Airdrie. At the age of 18 joins the land army, moves to Newton Stewart, with another girl; allocated to stay at Hazelgreen, a small farm. Mother's family were farmers, father was a stonemason. After father's death her health fails; goes to work at an aircraft factory: Chapelhall, near Airdrie. Staying on the farm with her new friend, in one room. MMT 'has to' move to another farm because of unwanted attention.
05:00 – 10:00	MMT describes the land army's uniform. Her friend (from Glasgow) unfamiliar with gardening pulls out potato shaws as weeds. Taught to milk cows. First experience milking. The luggie (pail) and hats that kept lice off.
10:00 – 15:00	MMT has 3 brothers and 3 sisters. On the farm she helps out with harvesting, putting the corn in stooks. Using horse and cart. Skeeling (spreading) the lime and the dung. Rationing on in Airdrie, then MMT moves to Newton Stewart where "nobody knew what rationing was": relative abundance of food on the farm in wartime. Taking baskets of lunch to farmers in the field. Farmers helping out other farmers at harvesttime. MMT was paid for this work, "about 19 shillings a week". Journey from NS to Airdrie was 'difficult'. Comfortable farm accommodation, but no bathroom; outside toilet. Baths? You sponged down. Once a week, maybe, used a tin bath in an old outhouse, while the farmer's wife stood guard. Met her husband during this time.
15:00 – 20:00	Tells the story of how she first met/spoke to her husband: a misunderstanding over the phone – the farmer's wife was also called May. Her sisters wanted her to move to Canada, but she stays. Married in February 1947, her first son Alan born December 1947. She has four boys. Makes a large house from 4 houses in Kirkinner, but after her husband dies in 1987 she sells up and moves to NS. Most of her family go to Canada or Australia. Went to school in Airdrie until about 16. Takes to family life "like a duck to water".

20:00 – 25:00	<p>Outside water at Kirkinner house. With a small range and paraffin cooker. Village grocers and pubs. Baldoon aerodrome. Burrow Head. Doing a big washing once a week. One of the first to get electricity in. And the water. Built on a bathroom. Remembers kind neighbours as a young wife. Talks of 'lost' sociality from wartime. Sisters sent parcels from Canada – but her mother shares out the food she receives. A family friend was a butcher's wife: and she got bones off her, but not extra meat, but maybe offal. Post-war food rationing: and making do with what you had.</p>
25:00 – 30:00	<p>Going home from the farm with a pound of butter, seeing her mother's rations and exclaiming, "I've seen more butter floating in the washing up water". Mother's generation never called each other by their Christian names: "Mrs Someone, or Mr So-and-so": saying then that "people were more respected". MMT was a member of 'the Rural', participating in the entertainments.</p>

[KR sets up field recorder]

Kirsty Robertson: This is Kirsty Robertson at the Riverside Day Centre, today is Friday the 24th of August in 2012, and I'm going to speak today to May Taylor... first of all, thank you very much May for agreeing to this interview- <laughs>

May Marjorie Taylor: Oh, it's a pleasure to be here, thank you-

KR: So, could I just ask you again, for the record, to give us your name-

MMT: May Marjorie Taylor.

KR: Thank you. And your address now?

MMT: My present address is [REDACTED], Newton Stewart.

KR: Thank you. And if you'd like to, you can tell us your age?

MMT: I'm 89-

KR: Years young-

MMT: -thank you. <Laughs>

KR: And could you tell us too, where you were born?

MMT: I was born in Airdrie-

KR: Mm-hmm. And did you always live in Airdrie?

MMT: Up until- I would be, what... 18-

[1]

KR: 18-

MMT: Mm-hmm.

KR: -and then?

MMT: I moved to- I joined the land army... and moved to Newton Stewart.

KR: So, what would your earliest memories of Newton Stewart be?

MMT: My earliest memory? Well, I arrived at Newton Stewart... must have been the August of... can't go back so far-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -but the- arrived at the station- a very busy little station, and I was met by the farmer; and there was another girl on the train with me, and both of us were allocated to go to this farm at Hazelgreen, Newton Stewart, it was just a small farm with about ten cows-

KR: IS that farm still there?

MMT: It's still there, but I think it's just a- it's not a farm anymore, it's just somebody's bought the property... and use it as a home- [2]

KR: And why did you decide to join the land army? Did you have an interest in the country?

MMT: Well, my mother's people were farmers... and whether that was in my background- although my father wasn't anything to do with farming- he was a mason, a stonemason-

KR: In Airdrie?

MMT: In Airdrie, uh-hu- and my father died when- 1942... and it was after that that- was it '41? '42? Not quite sure of the year- it was after that that my health broke down, and I thought- I worked for a short time as a progress clerk in an aircraft factory-

KR: Was that part of the-

MMT: -that was at Chapelhall, near Airdrie... well, I was there for a short time, and after father died my health broke down, so I wanted to join the forces, but mother thought, well, the land army was the most... thing that she would agree to, for me [3] to join; so, of course, I then was accepted... and that's how I arrived in Newton Stewart.

KR: So you'd had no experience of working on the land?

MMT: None whatsoever; I had a short time in a shop, and about, what, a year-and-a-half doing a clerical job-

KR: So... what were your first impressions of-

MMT: Newton Stewart?

KR: Of Newton Stewart, and the-

MMT: I loved it-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: And I thought, 'I'm here for life'... that was my first impression; the people were so friendly, there was quite a lot of- going on; and you know there was soldiers billeted quite- round about- Barrachan and whatnot- although I never came into contact with them; but this other girl who was allocated to go to the farm, she was a lovely person, and I was sorry I lost contact with her really- [4]

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. But did you both stay on the farm?

MMT: We stayed on the farm- it was just a small place, and we had to share one room, we had a single bed each, and the farmer's wife was lovely, she was a Mrs Campbell- wasn't struck on her son-

KR: <Laughing> Would you like to say why not?

MMT: He was a bit pushy and I think he thought we were there for his purpose, you know?

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: But I made it quite plain that wasn't the- so I gotta move after a wee while-

KR: A move to another farm?

MMT: Yes. I moved to Cauchrie at Wigtown, and I was there till the war finished.

KR: How many years was that?

MMT: What, four? Five years?

KR: Four years-

MMT: Five years, maybe, yeah.

KR: So, what did you think? What were the first kinda things you were asked to do? Having had no experience?

MMT: Well, the very first thing we had to do when we arrived at the farm- of course, our uniforms were there- and the excitement of getting into the uniform, you know? So we both got dressed up our, our land army- and we thought we were toffs- [5]
<laughs> I don't know what other people thought, but we thought we were toffs-

KR: And can you describe the uniform?

MMT: We had a great-coat, which was a three-quarter coat, and breeches, a hat, a green jumper, we had brogue shoes, heavy stocking that we pulled up like knee-

length stockings... what else did we have? Of course, we were supplied with our overalls, overcoats, all that was necessary really-

KR: Did you have wellingtons?

MMT: Wellington boots, yeah, which we used when going into the byres; but the first job we were allocated to do was go and- thinning potatoes... so this other girl that was with me, she had – she was from Glasgow – well I was from Airdrie but my- we were always used to have a big garden-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -so of course, I was used to gardening- [6]

KR: <chuckles>

MMT: -and of course, I knew what to do- pull the proper weeds out; an I'm getting on pulling the weeds out, and I looked round and Mary's pulling the potato shaws out-

<both laugh>

MMT: -so that was the first laugh we got; other jobs we got- we were taught to milk-

KR: To milk?

MMT: To milk-

KR: Aye.

MMT: -they were all hand-milking... and of course, I'd never, ever been in a byre in my life, never-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -so, of course, there was only the ten cows- we got up early in the morning, it was about half five in the morning... we put into this- the byre... and the farmer said, "you just go up to that top one there, May, and she's a little white cow, you'll be alright", so he handed me this wee stool – three-leg stool – and this, a luggie they called it-

Third Person in the Room: A luggie-

MMT: -am I right?

TPR: Yes- <laughs>

KR: A luggie.

MMT: -and he said, "just start up there", didn't show me what to do-

KR and TPR: <chuckle>

MMT: -so I sidled up to this cow, got in, sat down, and of course, when- the [7]
minute I sat down this cow turned its head and looked at me and started to lick me-

TPR: <chuckles>

MMT: -well, I up... and I said, "Oh it's gonna bite me" ... so I took off- however, he
calmed me down a bit and I got back in again, and still didn't say what I was to do, so
I was sitting looking-

KR: <chuckling>

MMT: -and all of a sudden, I thought, "well, I'll start", and I started to pull, nothing
would come... pull, pull, pull... eventually, this splash of milk landed, "Oh", I said,
"I've got some"-

TPR: <laughs>

MMT: -that sound was [madness?] to my ears- well, I never looked back-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -so whether it was in me or not, whether that was why he kept me on,
because I could- learned to milk quickly, but at the end of the day I could milk the
ten cows-

[Someone comes into the room looking for someone of something] [8]

KR: Just a- a brief interruption there-

MMT: A brief interlude-

KR: -sorry, yeah a brief interlude. You talked about a luggie there, May- that's a kind
of pail, is it?

MMT: Yeah, I think- was it-

TPR: [x]

MMT: -yeah-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -and you held that in between your legs like that – you see – the luggie sat there and you bent over, and you sort of sit with your head next to the cow-

TPR: <chuckles>

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -of course, sometimes there was like these wee lice on the cow- and they didn't live on you fortunately-

KR: No.

MMT: -but they were very annoying... and of course, you've got a sort of hat thing, you learned to put the hat over and that prevented them-

KR: So, were you also expected to- to muck out the byre?

MMT: Yes, we did that-

KR: Mm-hmm.

[9]

MMT: -quite a hard job, mind you, for a young girl, but I just seemed to take it in my stride... quite adapted to it quite well-

KR: And how many times a day would you do that?

MMT: What?

KR: With milking?

MMT: -milking? Morning and night-

KR: When- was it very early in the morning?

MMT: Well, usually half five, six o'clock in the morning-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -and then, maybe, four o'clock in the afternoon- half four-

KR: So, you had to get up early, did you go to bed early?

MMT: Well, if there was a dance on we did-

All: <laughs>

KR: Oh, tell us about the dancing-

MMT: Well, we used to go to the odd- well, there was quite a few actually, but we didn't always go to them... only went to the ones that was near, in the MacMillan Hall-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -but Mary was a very flirty sort of type, a pearl, you know, and lovely looking girl, and I was quieter-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -more- stood back a bit-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -because- I suppose I lived a sort of sheltered life before- [10]

KR: Do you have brothers and sisters at all?

MMT: I had six brothers... three brothers, sorry, three brothers, three sisters-

KR: Were you the youngest?

MMT: The youngest of the family-

KR: So you would be-

MMT: I'd be spoiled a bit I expect-

KR: So, what kind of other jobs were you asked to do on the farm?

MMT: Well, what else did we do? We went to help with the hay... building the- and then harvesting, we had to- when the corn was cut we had to put it in stooks-

TPR: Stooks-

MMT: You remember that, Agnes?

TPR (Agnes): Done it- <chuckles>

MMT: You done it all- we did that- and was it eight went into- was it six or eight went into it? I can't remember anyway-

TPR: [xxx]

MMT: -And then, when they would take the stuff in they had to build it up on the carts-

KR: So it was horse and carts?

MMT: Horse and carts we used-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -and sometimes you had- got the horse tethered, and you led it from [11] stook to stook, while the men forked the stuff onto the cart and built it up- took it into the farmyard-

KR: How many horse were there?

MMT: There was about two, I think, at the time.

KR: Mm-hmm. And did you work with the horses?

MMT: Yes, I worked with the horses- we didnae plough or do anything like that- but there was lime- we used to do lime-skeeling-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -and dung-skeeling- <chuckles>

KR: That means just spreading it, does it? Skeeling-

MMT: Spreading it on-

KR: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm, aye.

MMT: -that was the word: skeeling-

KR: Yeah, that's a Lanarkshire word as well-

MMT: Is it?

KR: Oh yeah, aye.

MMT: Well, we still use it down here- skeeling the dung-

KR: Skeeling, mm-hmm, skeeling the dung, yeah... and were you well fed by the farmer's wife?

MMT: Excellent, absolutely- because... well, of course, where we came from, Airdrie, the rationing was on-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -and everything was very short- everybody was short of food; well, when you came down here nobody knew what rationing was-

TPR (Agnes)- <chuckles>

MMT: -and the first thing I smelt going in the door of the farmhouse was this baking [or it could be bacon?] smell... and what a spread on the table, there were [12] scones, and tarts, and everything, and this big... plate full of rashers of bacon, fried eggs; I thought I was in heaven-

ALL: <chuckling>

MMT: -and we had porridge every morning-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -that was the thing... I was always brought up with porridge anyway-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -I still have it in the morning.

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. And what about dinners? Do you remember the kinda thing? Or-

MMT: Lunchtime- lunchtime- during the harvest we'd just of had, sort of, sandwiches-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -and the men that was working out in the fields, they got... maybe I'd a got the job of carrying out this big basket full of sandwiches and flasks of tea to take to the men- oh, they were all wed fed-

KR: Uh-hu, uh-hu. So did men come from other farms to help at harvest?

MMT: Well, one famer helped the other-

KR: Uh-hu, uh-hu.

MMT: -that was a general- a general rule, you know-

TPR (Agnes): That's right-

KR: And did you go to other farms too?

[13]

MMT: No. No.

KR: And did you get paid for this?

MMT: I can't- I think it was about nineteen shillings a week-

KR: And did you get back up to Airdrie now an again to see your folks an that?

MMT: Oh yes... but with difficulty, because you had to get a bus from Newton Stewart to Girvan-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -and you stood at Girvan harbour for about an hour in the cold winter nights-

TPR (Agnes): Freezing, freezing-

KR: <chuckles>

MMT: -at the harbour, waiting on a connection, and it took- then to Ayr, and then you got a bus from Ayr into Airdrie-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -so it was quite a marathon journey-

TPR (Agnes): <chuckles>

KR: Exactly. And were you- was your accommodation comfortable? Did you have your own room?

MMT: Oh well, adequate, adequate-

KR: Yeah.

MMT: -the only thing that I found difficulty- we had no bathroom, it was an outside toilet, which... wasn't very nice, but you acclimatised to that-

TPR (Agnes): <chuckles>

KR: Yeah. What about baths and things? How did you do for that?

MMT: Well, it was just- you sponged down-

[14]

KR: Oh right, mm-hmm.

MMT: -occasionally- she had one of these big-

TPR (Agnes): Baths-

MMT: -tin baths-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -and she would fill the boiler up and- there was an old outhouse we used to go in and have a wash maybe once a week-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -and every- she kept guard-

All: <laughing>

MMT: -she was a lovely, lovely woman-

KR: Yes. What was her name again?

MMT: Campbell.

KR: Campbell; yeah, uh-hu. That's really interesting. So... you did that for four years-

MMT: Mm-hmm.

KR: -till the end of the war-

MMT: Yeah.

KR: And had you met someone in that time? Or, what-

MMT: I met my husband-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: As I told you, I moved to Clauchrie then-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -I moved there... I was at- the phone rang one day, and I happened to be passing and I answered the phone and this voice said, "is that you, May?", I said, "Yes, speaking", he said, "this is Jim here... I'm at Newton Stewart, can someone [15] pick me up?", I said, "well, who's speaking?"... "you know who's speaking! It's Jim, Jim Taylor"... I said, "no, I think you've got the wrong May", because he was actually looking for the farmer's wife, her name was May-

TPR (Agnes): <chuckling>

KR: Aw, that's a lovely story- <laughs>

TPR (Agnes): What a let down-

MMT: -so, he was the farmer's cousin-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -so that's how I met my husband-

KR: Oh right.

MMT: -he was home on leave-

KR: Uh-hu. Where had he been?

MMT: He'd been- I can't remember, it was somewhere down in England, but he was posted abroad after that-

KR: Was he in the army?

MMT: Yes.

KR: Uh-hu. So, he was a local man?

MMT: He was- we he actually had been Whithorn and moved to... England, to his mother-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -she was in Southampton, I think she was in-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -so he joined up there, you see-

KR: Right. So that was the start of a-

MMT: That was the start of the romance-

KR: -romance-

MMT: -not really!

KR: <laughs>

MMT: -cos we didn't like each other to begin with-

KR and TPR (Agnes): <chuckling>

MMT: -but I used to go to the dances- the local dances- [16]

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -Kirkinner and Bladnoch used to have dances there-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -and... he was always hovering around, you know? And f I'd naebody to take me home he always- he was always there-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -so it just sort of gradually happened... and then, of course, I was leaving-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -cos the war was finished, there was- them back home... and... we just wrote back and forward, and eventually he came back-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -although in between times my sisters had wanted my mother and I to go out to Canada, they'd even got me a job-

KR: Where was that?

MMT: In Toronto, Canada... and it was either a toss-up, did I marry Jim or do I go to Canada... so I married Jim-

TPR (Agnes): <chuckles>

MMT: That's my life story- <laughs>

KR: Ah well... that's your life story until nineteen- when did you marry?

MMT: Nineteen-forty-seven-

KR: Forty-seven- and did you settle in Newton Stewart? [17]

MMT: Settled in Kirkinner-

KR: Right.

MMT: -we bought a house in Kirkinner; and Jim was a joiner-

KR: Oh, yeah.

MMT: -carpenter-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. And how did you find life in Kirkinner, compared to being on the farm? Or being in Airdrie?

MMT: Well... I'm a person that adapts to anything, I'm a very adaptable person, and it was something new, and... I had Alan in- I was married in February, Alan was born in the December-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -end of December, and of course, my life was taken up with my family after that; I had four boys-

KR: Mm-hmm. And was it quite a modern- was it a bungalow? Or a cottage?

MMT: No, no, no; it was an older cottage- there was actually four houses in one, and we had bought the whole- Jim had to buy the whole lot-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -and there was another two people living- [18]

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -so we made the two into one-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -and then, of course, me made it all into the one and finished off- it- quite a big house to finish it- so, eventually when Jim died- he died in '82 I sold up and moved to Newton Stewart.

KR: So, your life after that was your family, really-

MMT: My family, yeah-

KR: -your family, uh-hu, uh-hu.

MMT: -cos all the family- they'd all married or- some went to Australia, most of them Canada-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -and other ones had died off, so-

KR: And when you- when you were first married, obviously, you'd spent most of your life working up until that time, did-

MMT: Oh yes, I did-

KR: -did you find-

MMT: I went to school til I was about nearly sixteen-

KR: Did you go to school in Airdrie?

MMT: Airdrie.

KR: Did you- Airdrie Academy?

MMT: Went to Airdrie Academy-

TPR (Agnes): <chuckles>

KR: <chuckles> Right, so-

MMT: -the old one, not the new one-

KR: Oh yes, I know the old one, mm-hmm-

MMT: Mm-hmm.

KR: -Mr Henderson... so, how did you adapt to- well, you obviously became a mum quite quickly, how did you adapt to domestic... life? [19]

MMT: Like a duck to water.

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. And it would be handy having a husband who could-

MMT: Well, it was in a way because-

KR: -do the- sort the house out a bit, if it was old cottages-

MMT: -you know what they say about the cobbler's children?

KR: Yes. <chuckles>

TPR (Agnes): <chuckles>

MMT: -they're always the last to get their shoes cobbled... well [xxx] he was busy doing up the house in between keep- going to make money to keep the- keep the house going-

KR: uh-hu, uh-hu.

MMT: -so it was- you were sort of last of the list, if you know what I mean?

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. And how... and how did you find the cooking and the washing and everything, the domestic thing?

MMT: Well I had no- there was no water; all the water- had a well outside, and we'd to carry all the water in- [20]

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -which was a big- because I came from the town, which we had water-

KR: Yeah.

MMT: -we had inside facilities-

KR: Yes, indeed-

MMT: -so it was a big- you'd to adapt quite a bit, you know, to this-

KR: Uh-hu, mm-hmm.

MMT: -but... I got through it-

KR: Yeah, and what was it- did you just have a range in the kitchen? Or what was the kitchen like?

MMT: it was like a small range-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -and then I had, like a paraffin cooker-

KR: Never heard of a paraffin cooker!

MMT: Yeah, it was like a- you had two things, and the oven sat on top of it-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: It wasnae a cooker, it was more an oven-

KR: Right, uh-hu.

MMT: You'll remember that, Agnes, do you?

TPR (Agnes): No I don't.

MMT: No.

KR: No, no. And how did you do for shopping and things in Kirkinner?

MMT: Well, we had a lovely wee shop- a grocer shop- in fact we had two shops-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -one at the bottom of the village, and one in the middle-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -and two pubs in the village-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -of course, we were ear the aerodrome, you know, at Baldoon?

KR: Yep.

MMT: -and during the war, of course, the pubs would do good business then [21]
the air-force-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -and then we were not far off from Burrow Head where the soldiers were-

KR: Mm-hmm. And what about, you know, with a young family, doing the washing?
And things? Did you-

MMT: Well, I had a big drying green and a wash-house outside that-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -I coped very well I would think-

KR: Mm-hmm. What did you have in the wash-house?

MMT: I had a boiler that Jim used to stoke up; we used to fill this with water-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -stoke the boiler up, and... I think I did a big washing once a week-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -but- and then eventually, of course, the electricity came-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -I got- we were about the first to get the electricity in... and the water- we built on a bathroom-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -so my troubles were over-

ALL: <laugh>

MMT: -so, I had two children before that happened-

KR: Yes... and what- so when you moved in there was no electricity?

MMT: Nothing, nothing; no, it was all paraffin- it had lovely neighbours- [22]

KR: Ahh.

MMT: -I had- I always remember as a young wife, there was an old lady across the road, and I always remember – I wasn't long settled in – and the knock came to the door, she's standing there with a paper – something wrapped in the paper – and she said, "I just brought you over a wee scone, dear" -

KR: <chuckles>

MMT: -and I kind of went-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -and it was four lovely big scones-

KR: Mmm.

MMT: -I thought, 'how kind'-

TPR (Agnes): Oven scones? Or-

MMT: -it really was kind-

KR: Mmm, mmm.

TPR (Agnes): <chuckles>

KR: Did you find- I know when I first came here, I did find the local accent so different from Lanarkshire-

MMT: Quite difficult, yeah-

KR: -did you have any... experiences like that?

MMT: No, not- not really-

KR: No.

MMT: -I thought it was funny, but probably they thought my accent was funny-

TPR (Agnes): <chuckles>

KR: Ah- that's- so you've seen a lot of changes?

MMT: Oh, I've definitely, yeah-

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KR: For the better?

MMT: Not always for the better-

KR: No. No. What do you think's been lost?

MMT: Mmm, I think... friendship-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -I think... people were def- I found during the war, people were more caring-

KR: Mm-hmm.

TPR (Agnes): Uh-hu.

MMT: -and... I used to have [xxx]- if there was something, like, scarce, and maybe a shop would get it something they hadn't had for a while-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -the word-of-mouth that would go round, you know, they didn't keep it to themselves-

KR: uh-hu, uh-hu.

MMT: -they would come and say, "oh such-and-such has got something in" -

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -and everybody made a mad rush to get their share-

TPR (Agnes): <chuckles>

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: But, on the whole, mother was lucky because my sisters being in Canada, used to send parcels, and boxes a apples, and tinned ham, and- but there again, she shared it out-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -and she had a friend who was a butcher's wife... and we were quite lucky [24] that way, because we used to get bones, and mother was a brilliant cook-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -and she used to make lovely soups with these bones, and-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -but... we did- we didn't get extra butcher meat because she was friendly with them, that didnae happen, but she got, maybe, that sort of, maybe, offal, like, liver and... bits and pieces like that-

KR: Times were still hard after the war, you know, they were still rationing until the early fifties-

MMT: Oh, there was- there was still sweets rationed-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -biscuits, that sort of thing, but you got out of the way of eating sweets and stuff- you'll no remember that much, Agnes, no?

TPR (Agnes): No; I did have sweets-

MMT: Yeah- I don't much... I never was one for eating a lot of sweets anyway-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Well, even meat was rationed for a while, post-war-

MMT: Meat was rationed... but you just... what you got, what you were allocated, you made do with it, you added to it-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -and you used dried egg a lot, and that was a thing that was... very [25]
necessary, really- especially townspeople- not maybe down this area-

KR: No.

MMT: -where they had plenty of milk and butter, because I remember once going home from the land army, and... the farmer's wife gave me a pound of butter to take home... well, that was like a nugget of gold-

KR and TPR (Agnes): <laugh>

MMT: -and I remember looking, and... my mother never forgot the remark I'd made... she was showing me the amount of butter that she got, you know, for rationing, and I said, "you know, I've seen more butter floating in the washing up water than what's on that plate-

All: <laugh>

MMT: -but that was true-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. So, was it the same when you- when you were married- did you find it easy to get eggs and things- living in Kirkinner?

MMT: Oh aye, oh much easier down here-

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -of course, Jim was- he was of the farming community too, and I mean we [26]
always had our roughage-

KR: Uh-hu.

MMT: -and we got an odd chicken or fowl or something like that-

KR: Uh-hu, uh-hu.

MMT: -and a piece a ham-

KR: Mm-hmm.

MMT: -no, we didn't know anything like rationing down here-

KR: No, no.

MMT: -not compared to what it was in Airdrie-

KR: No, no, no.

TPR (Agnes): <chuckles>

KR: So, you've- you've stayed here-

MMT: I've stayed here, and I will be here til the end of my days.

KR: Well, that was wonderful, thank you very much- is there anything you'd like to tell us that you remember thinking?

MMT: I can't think of anything, unless you want to prompt me about something, but?

TPR (Agnes): <chuckles>

KR: Well... it's just really... if you can think of the things that have changed dramatically, but you've pointed a lot of things out, like getting the electricity, getting the water-

MMT: Mm-hmm.

KR: -and people, perhaps, not being so friendly, but-

MMT: Well, I wouldn't say they're not so friendly, but there's not the intimacy that there was long ago-

KR: Mmm, mmm.

MMT: -and I think people are more polite-

[27]

KR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MMT: -my mother's friends, which I recall, they never, ever called each other by their Christian names... it was always Mrs Someone, so- or Mr So-and-so-

KR: Mmm.

MMT: -there was a sort of reverence to people, you know?

KR: Mm-hmm, uh-hu.

MMT: -people were more respected.

KR: Uh-hu. And when you were married, if you had any free time-

MMT: Mm-hmm.

KR: -having four boys I suppose that was difficult- <laughs> what- what-

MMT: Oh yes, I joined the Rural-

KR: Yes.

MMT: -I was a great Rural member-

KR: Yes, yeah-

MMT: -we used to go out and do entertainment, or-

KR: Oh, did you-

MMT: -yes-

KR: -you participate- you helped with the entertainment?

MMT: -oh yes, oh yes-

KR: Can you tell us what kind of things you did?

MMT: -oh, we used to do short sketches and- you'll have done that sort of thing too, Agnes?

TPR (Agnes): Uh-hu.

MMT: -and we used to go out singing-

<a distant voice announces "lunchtime">

KR: Okay, okay-

TPR (Agnes): <chuckles>

KR: -well, that was absolutely wonderful, May-

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MMT: Oh, well-

KR: -thank you very much-

MMT: -I hope it's been helpful-

KR: -oh, it will be much appreciated-

MMT: Thank you.

KR: -and if you think of anything else-

TPR (Agnes): <chuckles>

KR: - you'd like to tell us about another day, I'd be quite happy to-

MMT: Right.

KR: -talk to you again-

MMT: Thank you.

KR: -and thank you; and Agnes, maybe next time-

<chatter and noise as KR switches off the field recorder>