

Interviewee: William Drynan (WD)	Interviewer: Tom McCreath (TM)
Date of Interview: 4 December 2014	Ref: DG12-1-1-1-T

**Key words: Schooling 00m 00s; Sawmill 03m 50s; Galloway House Estate 12m 11s; World War Two; Work 13m 05s, 23m 05s.**

**Schooling 00m 00s**

TM: I'm Tom McCreath, I've been in the area all my life, aged eighty-five now and Willie an I have known each other for a long time, a very long time, which is good. And I'm introducing Willie Drynan who has been in Garlieston area, aged ninety-five but he's been here for ninety-three years, after his parents retired from the Gatehouse area because of ill-health, from the farm of Disdow, which people know about. Could I ask you Willie, you obviously went to school here for a lot of your schooling?

WD: Aye, ah did, up here.

TM: Yes.

WD: Village school, the village school.

TM: And happy memories?

WD: Oh well it's very, some o them.

TM: And were there particular teachers or headmasters that you?

WD: Well, we had one poor soul, he was a good, a very good headaster but he was shell-shocked during the First War an he used to take mad turns an everybody in the whole class yist tae get the belt.

TM: Oh, that's why you're as good today, is it?

WD: Ah widnae agree wi that taeday. May got about seven on each hand,

TM: And what was his name?

WD: Girvan.

TM: Girvan.

WD: Girvan. Oh he was a very good teacher though but...

TM: Occasionally-.

**02m 50s**

WD: ...went off the rails a wee bit.

TM: Uh huh. Yes, one could understand, uh huh. And was he there the whole time of your schooling?

WD: Most of it, a Miss Whitewright at the finish up.

TM: Yes.

WD: He took early, he had tae retire. And she was the, Miss Whitewright, she belonged tae Kirkenner and she flitted intae the village here.

TM: There were some very good teachers that, even from my days, I can remember although I didn't go to school there but Mrs McCallum...

WD: That's right.

TM: ...and then Mr Evans, the headmaster, there was a Mr McCulloch, really good teachers.

WD: Ah wis left jist before Mr Evans took over.

TM: Yes.

WD: Jist before that.

TM: And what age were you then?

WD: Fourteen.

**Sawmill 03m 50s.**

TM: And did you take a job locally?

WD: Ah left the school on the Friday afternoon an started in the sawmill on the Monday morning.

TM: Callendar Sawmill.

WD: Callendar Sawmill, on the Monday morning.

TM: And that was where the caravan site now is.

WD: That's correct. Aye, there were twenty-five of us on the job.

**04m 11s.**

TM: Here? And Minnigaff as well?

WD: Oh, Minnigaff wis big, there were about sixty or seventy o them up there. It was a bigger place altogether. We were just a side-line.

TM: An I think you told me at times you went up to Minnigaff to-.

WD: Aye, ah wis up for a year in 1960 an then ah wis back again in 1963 tae sixty-six.

TM: Right, yes.

WD: No, sixty-three tae sixty-nine.

TM: And for your sawmill here, did the Callendars, the company, do the felling of the wood?

WD: Did everything, bought the trees from the farmers an our squads went in an cut it an hauled it out and we cut it up. An we had cut, sometimes go oot in the wood an help them tae cut, fell the tress.

TM: And in those days they would harvest the timber by horses and had they a tractor to bring it to the sawmill?

WD: Well, wi the horses, had horses for a good few years, they did everything, hauled it intae the mill an all, from a wood right into the mill, and then we got tractors.

TM: Post-war, maybe, was it?

WD: Aye, it would be, aye, well.

TM: And did any timber come into the harbour?

WD: There was a boatload in every year, came from the Baltic. Foreign batons, pine, white pine batons.

TM: White pine batons.

WD: White pine, white and the red pine batons.

TM: Yes.

WD: And flooring boards an that. About four or five hundred ton came in, jist after the holidays in August every year, it came about the same week.

**06m 21s.**

TM: Yes. And that would be heavy work for a day or two.

WD: It was all built in the yard, off the boat intae the yard, it was all graded in the yard, and then it was carried in by shoulder right intae the store, built the store.

TM: And what age were you when you took the big saw?

WD: Oh ah don't remember what age ah was. Ah was a good few year on the job before ah, ah was on a what ye call a running-off bench first for a, an then a wis gaun on tae the big saw.

TM: My early memories of you were on the big saw because I was coming in to get timber to convert the horse machines for tractors. And the company could always supply the right quality of wood and I did the fitting at home, on the farm.

WD: Aye. Four inches square an five inch square, about six feet long, was the drawbar conversion size. Ah can always remember that.

TM: Yes, and did you do railway sleepers as well?

WD: Thousands o them [*laughter*].

TM: Motorway fencing at one time?

WD: Yes, done a big lot of it. Oh, everything, whatever they could get orders for.

TM: And a lot of the beechwood went for blocks on the shipyards.

WD: That's right, wedges, we cut a lot o wedges for the Clyde shipyards, shipyard wedges for wedging up the-

TM: Yes, the ships as they built them.

WD: Aye, we cut a big lot o them.

TM: Uh huh.

WD: We cut a big lot o timber for the local joiners an that, parts o carts, an all, everything you know, all the parts for the wheels, an all the carts, whatever the local joiners required we could supply it.

TM: And of course there was a big family of joiners in Garlestone.

WD: Oh yes, McKean's there wis four o them.

**08m 37s.**

TM: And at Sorbie I remember William Dickson making carts and cartwheels.

WD: That's right. It's a specialised job that.

TM: Yes, it is.

WD: And there's not many joiners nowadays can do it.

TM: No, no. And then they would go across the road to the...

WD: The blacksmith's shop.

TM: ...the blacksmith to get the rings.

WD: The rings, shoe the rim on the wheel, the metalwork on the wheel.

TM: Yes, yes. Interesting days. Would that take you pretty well to the outbreak of War?

WD: Oh, ah was there, oh yes, aye.

TM: Yes.

WD: Aye, we were there right up tae 1966, ah think, sixty-six, they closed here an ah went up tae Minnigaff for three years.

TM: And when you were a young fellow here and when you were really fit and fresh, were you a footballer.

WD: No, no a sport o any kind.

TM: No? right oh.

WD: No.

TM: Ok, but you would watch it.

WD: Ah'd watch it but ah never entered in it.

TM: Right, ok, yes, yes. But it would be a cheery village was it?

WD: Oh well, oh aye, different from nowadays.

TM: Isn't it quiet? Holiday houses.

WD: Pardon?

10m 04s.

TM: Holiday houses a lot of the time.

WD: Oh, ah knew everybody in the village an now ah don't even know half of the folk an men in ma own street.

TM: Yes, yes. But of course, people didn't move around as much then.

WD: Oh, no, no.

TM: Was I right in saying that at the close of the War, how many cars were there in the village?

WD: There wasn't very many. Five or six maybe.

TM: But at the beginning of the War, only three ah think.

WD: There were very few anyway.

TM: Yes.

WD: We could play football in the street an you could lift the ball an the car went by an then start playin again before the next one come [*laughter*]. The policemen come an they chased ye.

TM: Yes, yes. You'd a very considerate policeman.

WD: Oh, we were lucky we had good ones.

TM: Yes.

WD: We had good ones. They'd gie ye a kick up the backside as quick as look at ye [*laughter*].

TM: And ah suppose at that time too, the mills would be going.

WD: Oh aye, Wylie's was busy.

TM: Was that both the oatmeal mill and down at the harbour?

WD: Down at the [*kibble?*] mill.

TM: And the first mill at the harbour broke down in forty-, or burnt down, was it forty-six or forty-.

WD: Ah can never remember the date...

TM: Late forties.

11m 37s.

WD: Ah remember it going but it was burning for a month before it was right put out, aye the stuff kept smouldering. The meal that was in stock it got a hold an smouldered an kept goin on.

TM: Yes, yes. And had you much contact with the fishermen at that time?

WD: Well, there was quite a few boats come out an in, there was quite a few fishermen in the village.

TM: Yes.

WD: There was quite a lot come in.

**Galloway House Estate 12m 11s.**

TM: Yes, and the other thing that I thought of at home was the estate at Galloway House, with Lady Forteviot under there, did they employ quite a lot of the locals?

WD: Oh yes, oh there were quite a lot.

TM: Yes.

WD: Aye.

TM: Aye, because it was a dairy that supplied milk in the village.

WD: That's right.

TM: I suppose gamekeepers, foresters.

WD: Aye, oh aye. Of course a lot o them lived on the estate, had houses, ye know. Houses on the estate

TM: And some here including the factor and others.

WD: Aye. Oh, it's a shame that Galloway House is not occupied just now.

**World War Two 13m 05s.**

TM: And I suppose when War broke out it would be quite a shock was it?

WD: It would be, aye, aye.

TM: But you carried on as usual for a bit?

**13m 15s.**

WD: Aye, you were called up an aw the rest o it.

TM: You were called up?

WD: No, ah got deferred call up.

TM: But ah thought you said you got you calling up papers.

WD: No, well ah never got them but ah had ma medical.

TM: Yes.

WD: In Dumfries, an ah was waiting on ma calling up papers comin but thank heavens they never come.

TM: But you got a letter didn't you?

WD: Aye, ma father got a letter to say that it was delayed.

TM: Because something was going to happen at Garlieston.

WD: Because o a secret scheme comin off.

TM: Which turned out to be the Mulberry Harbour trials.

WD: Aye.

TM: And your job then, in connection with that?

WD: Whatever they needed, whatever they needed cutting, we cut it for them.

TM: For adaptions to their equipment.

WD: To their equipment, aye. It all come in just like a big Meccano set by rail and sea and it was put together here.

TM: Yes.

WD: And whatever they needed in timber, they supplied it, we cut it into the sizes, the smaller sizes whatever they wanted, but we had tae be on call, supposed to be on call twenty-four hours a day.

TM: Yes.

**14m 44s.**

WD: But we never, well, eleven o'clock, late this night we had.

TM: Yes, and you'd got a blacksmith on the site as well.

WD: Blacksmith on the job too.

TM: Yes.

WD: In fact his smiddy's still standin yet.

TM: At the corner of Burnside.

WD: The bottom gate. No, doon at the bottom gate, that wee white shed doon at the bottom, at the new hooses.

TM: Right, right.

WD: That was the smiddy.

TM: Goodness, my word.

WD: There was quite a lot of stuff had to be altered, you know, smaller stuff that couldn't be done on the job here, the blacksmith had to do it and he was an elderly man, retired and he was our blacksmith an kept the place tidy an that jist when he wasn't doing blacksmith work he was jist dodgin about the yard.

TM: But he would have a lot of experience, he would be a good blacksmith.

WD: Oh, tremendous, if ye wanted anything made, for home, say, ye jist drew a drawin on a bit o paper an handed it tae him an he made it.

TM: Yes.

WD: Oh was very, very good, aye.

TM: Yes.

WD: But all the blacksmiths were the same, they had tae adapt machinery an that in them days, there was no sendin away an phonin away an getting a part delivered tomorrow. They had tae make it.

TM: Yes.

**16m 21s.**

WD: Aye.

TM: Yes, yes.

WD: Aye.

TM: We were closer to Sorbie so we went to that smiddy but you had two here, anyway, hadn't you? Two?

WD: Aye, we had two blacksmiths, aye.

TM: You did. And it was easy to understand the Mulberry Harbour trials coming here because the sea routes down the Irish Sea that the components could be towed here.

WD: Aye, an the railway run right doon tae the harbour and it could be lifted off the railway wagon an dropped right intae the sea.

TM: Yes.

WD: You know, that's right.

TM: And there was quite a bit came by rail?

WD: Quite a bit, aye.

TM: Yes.

WD: But most of it, of course the big stuff, it was floated in wi, it come in wi tank landing craft. And they had a sixty-ton floating crane on the job.

TM: And it was talked about that the local football team would play the soldiers.

WD: Aye, oh aye.

TM: There were concerts, dances.

WD: Anything, aye. Aye we had a, Tom Miller used tae organise a concert every year wi the Company fae Burghhead, the Artillery camp at the Isle o Whithorn, an they called themselves 'The Shooting Starts' and they were very good, there was a lot o professional artists an that in it, ye know.

TM: Yes.

**17m 55s.**



WD: They were very good, aye, and they come once a year an they had a concert in the village, concert an dance. Aye.

TM: Were you in the Home Guard?

WD: No. I was in the Fire Guard, what was, Robbie [?] and Willie Sproat an me.

TM: To be ready to put out fires.

WD: Fires, aye, two old men an a boy [*laughter*] wi a stirrup pump an a can o water [*laughter*]. We never got, we werenae let us practice, ken set a hoose in fire [*laughter*].

TM: A whole lot of people, of course, remember the little French girl asking about security.

WD: There was no...

TM: No problem.

WD: ...nobody bothered, no. and ah mean ye could sit here, ah could see everything that was goin on.

TM: Yes.

WD: You know, there was no-.

TM: But people just didn't talk about it.

WD: Jist never bothered, never bothered, half them didn't know what it was, ye never bothered.

TM: Ah heard Jean Alston talking about as kids them running up and down the Swiss Roll.

WD: Aye, och aye, aye. They never bothered wi the village folk, ah tell ye. They were exceptional, officers, were exceptionally good.

TM: Really?

WD: Ah don't think they were really military men.

TM: Yes.

WD: Ah think they would be engineers drafted in tae the, for the job.

TM: Yes.

**19m 34s.**

WD: Because they never, there was no 'Yes, sir' and 'No, sir'. The officer here knew all, there were thirty men in the hall an he knew them all an knew all their first names an that, ah mean there was no bullshit at all.

TM: Yes. They always said, I think, that the Brigadier was a bit of a stickler but-.

WD: He was the only one but he wasnae here.

TM: Good.

WD: Yes, Captain Caroline and Lomond were the two, Caroline was an awfu nice fella.

TM: Right.

WD: If ye wanted to know anything ye jist asked him an he told ye, if he knew, he told ye, even though ye knew it was a secret he told ye.

TM: Yes.

WD: He kent fine that, well we were never, we were never away fae the village an that, it wouldn't go any further.

TM: I only saw the operations one day when Father came down to the Police Station and the car was parked and the bay was full of the military and the equipment and terribly busy.

WD: Aye. Oh aye.

TM: Yes.

WD: Ah remember one time there was a lot o stuff come in wi the the train, flat metal plates and the four, like oil drums welded, one in each corner...

TM: Yes.

WD: ...an they were hexagonal. And they lift them out an they pit them, built them up in the sea, they floated, an a seen frae here an a said 'Ah'll walk doon the harbour one night' and that night ah says tae the Officer that was there 'What's them for?' 'Oh' he says 'they're no supposed tae be here, that's for a landin, a floatin landin, for Lamlash, in the Isle o Arran.'

TM: Really?

WD: Aye, he had no bother, he just told me right away what it was, you know.

**21m 37s.**

TM: It got on the wrong railway line.

WD: No, ah think, they would come here so's they could be shipped wi the landin craft that was comin in here an take it up there.

TM: Taken over to Arran by sea.

WD: Aye. But ah mean anything ye wanted tae know, tye jist asked, like me asking you.

TM: Yes. Good.

WD: There was no hesitation. Oh no.

TM: And were your folks alive at the time, through the War?

WD: Yes, aye.

TM: Yes, very good. And when did you get married Willie?

WD: 1962.

TM: Right. Yes.

WD: August 1962.

TM: And I think you told your brother-in-law, Tom Murchie, about the operation and if he could go to the War Office, not the War Office, the Imperial War Museum, and got details.

WD: Aye...

TM: Photographs.

WD: Photographs, aye.

TM: Yes. So that started the publicity up here.

WD: Oh aye.

TM: Yes.

WD: Aye, that album, did you ever see it?

TM: Ah think you showed it to me the last day I called in here.

WD: Did ah?

**22m 48s.**

TM: You'd just got it, I think.

*[Paper rustling].*

WD: If ye want hae a look at it[?].

**Work 23m 05s.**

TM: And when did you finish with Callendar sawmill, was it when it closed here.

WD: No tae three year up Minnigaffe.

TM: And then it...

WD: Closed

TM: ...closed. I'm trying to remember when you came to work on the farm, what year would it be roughly?

WD: Sixty-seven, I think.

TM: Yes.

WD: Was it...

TM: Sixty-seven.

WD: ...no, no, about seventy ah think.

TM: About seventy, yea, thereabout. Ah can't really remember.

WD: Ah know ah went for two days.

TM: Yes, we were at drains.

WD: An ah was there fourteen years.

TM: Is that all [*laughter*]. There was a lot of fun, yes, yes, yes, and work

WD: Aye.

TM: Ah don't know whether you enjoyed it or not.

WD: Pardon?

TM: Did you enjoy it on the farm?

**24m 01s.**

WD: Oh, heavens, aye. Ah learnt more on the farm that ah did in all my life before that.

TM: Really.

WD: That mony different jobs.

TM: Yes.

WD: You gave me list o orders in the morning, by dinner time ye had as many more to do [?].

TM: But of course the estate, in a way, was in a fairly neglected state.

WD: Aye.

TM: And it had to be brought into a modern dairy farm. Although it's a long way to go in ma son's time, yes.

WD: Ah mind one job ye asked me to do, was make a set o stairs up tae one o the lofts.

TM: Yes.

WD: An ah said 'Oh ah never done that' 'Well', yes says, ye said 'There's stairs down in my hoose and there's stairs in your hoose, away an measure them an see what tae do' and that was that. And ah had tae get on wi it and it worked oot fine, ye had plenty timber on the job an that and it worked oot grand.

TM: Aye it was good.

WD: But ah never thought o daen a job like that masel.

TM: No, but there was no working with sheaves at harvest time, it was combine days.

WD: Aye.

TM: Yes. The story was told of a neighbour that in the days of the sheaves, if it stayed wet too long ye had tae go and move the stooks of sheaves.

WD: Aye.

TM: And Wullie had said to the men this day 'You chaps who've got oilskins go out and move the stooks and those of you that don't have oilskins go with them.'

WD: Gaun wi them, aye, of that, a common thing that.

**25m 51s.**

TM: It was quite hard work, and very unpleasant if it rained and rained.

WD: Oh heavens, aye. Och ye got used tae it.

TM: Yes. I always thought my father had a difficult time in farming, both with prices and everything else, and I've got to say I reckoned that we, in the newer time too it's exceptionally lucky because with more machines it got easier.

WD: Oh yes, aye. They hadnae the machines like what they have nooadays.

TM: Yes, amazing what they have.

WD: Aye, an me trying tae reverse the tractor an trailer ye'll no well about that  
[laughter].

TM: You learned.

WD: Ah think it was wi the one eye made it very difficult to-.

TM: To focus on distance.

WD: Ah could see nothin, this side.

TM: Yes. I find as I'm older I've got more difficulty in seeing behind me.

WD: Aye ye had tae turn half-way aroond.

TM: Have you any memories of either the early days or days on the farm that are entertaining.

WD: Best forgot, best no repeated. No, they were two nice farmers to work wi, Robin and Jimmy were exceptionally nice ta work wi.

TM: That's right.

WD: Very helpful to me that knew nothing about the job, ye know.

TM: Yes, yes.

WD: Especially Jimmy. [?]

TM: Yes, I tried, Jimmy was a very, very nice chap.

WD: And Skipper.

**27m 43s.**

TM: Of course, a one off.

WD: Definitely.

TM: It was a shame that Jim became so much of an alcoholic.

WD: Oh aye.

TM: I find he was awfully difficult.

WD: Aye. Because ye knew him that well.

TM: Indeed, yes.

WD: What did, did he retire? Ah often wondered, ah cannae mind. Did he retire or did he-?

TM: Well, his alcoholism became worse and worse and ah didn't know what to do about it an ah said 'Jimmy, if this goes on, ye'll have to go' and he just shrugged his shoulders, he couldn't stop. You know, he was a real alcoholic by that time so having said that, he had to go.

WD: An did he stay in the house for a wee while?

TM: Oh yes.

WD: That's the bit ah often wondered about, ah could never remember what really happened.

TM: That's why I took on Skipper because he lived in the village and meant that Jimmy and Cathy and the mother could stay in the house, yes.

WD: Uh huh.

TM: Because in those days if someone worked on the farm ye nearly always had to supply a house.

WD: Yes, aye.

TM: Whereas now, with cars, it's-.

WD: Naw, they dinnae want tae stay on the farm no.

TM: No, wives certainly much prefer a village or town.

WD: Aye, och aye.

**29m 10s.**

TM: One day that I was, oh I got a terrible fright, I came back from somewhere and the three of you were paint-, I said you should paint the inside of this grain silo, and ah don't know whether there were warnings on the paint tin or not-.

WD: If there was we never read them.

TM: Well, I possibly had, was the same but when I came back the three of you, in no time, were gasping for breath and luckily one of you got out and the other two stayed at the hatch and gasped until you were hauled out.

WD: We had tae pull Robin oot, of course, Robin was last oot. Jimmy and I, and it was only a wee hatch about two feet square tae get oot.

TM: That's right.

WD: An about a three feet drop, four feet drop doon onto the ground.

TM: Indeed, indeed.

WD: An we went oot an lay, the fields were getting fruity and fruitier, ye ken. What we done, we made a mistake we started at the top tae paint and what we did, we should have started at the bottom an went up because we had tae come through the fumes tae get out anyway,

TM: Just as well that it happened.

WD: And went out and lay on the field, it took the whole afternoon to recover.

TM: I know, I know, oh a shiver ran up my spine, yes. But in the early days of chemicals there were very little warning.

WD: That's true, ah can remember maybe two or three years after that ye said something about painting, and ye were very politely told [*laughter*].

TM: Where to go [*laughter*].

WD: A [?] painted.

TM: But I can remember doing the cattle float warbles and it was an organophosphate which was bad news, medically, and ye got plastic gloves and before you'd half the cows done, the plastic gloves were bust. And ah've got to say within twenty minutes one could feel a stickiness in one's lips. It's systemic.

**31m 37s.**

WD: Aye, oh aye, of course ye're not allowed to, they're off the market now, all these things.

TM: A lot of them are.

WD: Oh aye.

TM: And for the better.

WD: Aye, some and some not.

TM: Yes. And have ye enjoyed retirement Wullie?

WD: Aye, ah would recommend it to anybody.

TM: I always say that farming's a very mixed lifestyle but being a retired farmer is a great job.

WD: Aye, ye're right it is, ye're right.

TM: You've gone on a lot of tours across the country.

WD: Aye, oh heavens, aye. Oh aye, ah like, the tours are a good way of spending a holiday.

TM: Yes. Have you friends in Newton Stewart or very few?

WD: Ah have a cousin in Newton.

TM: Right, yes, but most of your friends are in Garlestone here.

WD: No, well ah've no relations.

TM: No.

WD: Ah've two nieces, a niece, nephew in Scone, a niece and nephew in Perth, and a niece and nephew in Siberia.

TM: Really?

WD: Mm.

TM: In a gulag?

WD: Shanklin Island, halfway between Russia and Japan.

TM: Really?

WD: Aye, he's in oil.

**33m 10s.**

TM: I see.

WD: He's an area director or something, company director or something in the oil and gas or whatever it is.

TM: Interesting.

WD: An he left the school, went tae Perth High School and started in a local garage, he got fed up an went on tae the oilrigs and that's what he is now.

TM: I get white excited when the young people land into such responsible and interesting jobs now.

WD: Aye.

TM: And a lot of the village boys have done that.

WD: Well, Geordie Houston, he comes doon tae me.

TM: Yes.

WD: He's very good, Geordie.

TM: Very kind fellow.

WD: Ye've no idea. He put, takes over the garden an he brings coals an sticks and everything, yea. Ah don't get doin any blooming thing at all, he'll no let me. But his son, he's well up in the police force in Edinburgh an he's discovered there's five locals almost as high as what he is, in the Police.

TM: Yes.

WD: There's Davie McCombe's son, there's Billy Sturgeon's son.

TM: That's right.

WD: There's...

TM: The Moore boy.

WD: ...Bobby Moore.

TM: Bobby Moore.

**34m 36s.**

WD: An there's a Pope girl, ye mind the Popes that lived-.

TM: Yes.

WD: Well yin o them is well up in the Glasgow police.



TM: Really?

WD: Aye.

TM: Yes.

WD: All more or less the same age group.

TM: Yes.

WD: Ah think there's five o them.

TM: Yes.

WD: Inspectors or something like that.

TM: Yes.

WD: In the various police forces.

TM: And then Robin McLaughlin's son's nearly top of the, well he's one of the Deputy Heads of the Department of Agriculture, called [CERAD?] now.

WD: Roy never comes, Roy disnae drive or something, ah wonder what's?

TM: I don't know Wullie, no. He's done well in his career.

WD: Aye.

TM: Uh huh. And seemed to be fairly popular too.

[REDACTED]

TM: Ah hope you don't think being a boss was an easy job because I can tell you it wasn't. One of the biggest problems was if ye knew there was a bit of friction you were the last person to know who was at the bottom of it.

WD: Aye.

TM: And ah've been wrong a couple of times or found out in time, uh huh. Yes, yes.

WD: Oh ah knew that in the mills tae wi the crew we had, ah watched them tae but ye couldnae got twenty-five nicer fellas, that worked in the sawmill.

TM: Good, and yet I knew the foreman well [REDACTED].

TM: I see. Bob McDowell...

WD: Was best.

TM: ...very nice fellow.

WD: Better far better.

TM: I see.

WD: All the years ah went doon there ah never seen a fight.

TD: Right.

WD: Ah went up tae Newton Stewart for three year an ah there was a fight aboot every bloomin day.

TD: Really [*laughs*]. A mean, a serious fight?

WD: Aye, oh aye drawin blood.

**37m 41s.**

TD: Oh really.

WD: Oh jeeze aye.

TD: Those were the days.

WD: But down there it was just one big happy family.

TD: Good.

WD: Didnae matter if ye got a cheeky answer, ye know?

TM: Yes, yes, of course that's the secret often of getting a team of men to work.

WD: Ye get far more work done when they're like, especially if the boss comes and goes.

TM: Ah've a feeling Wullie, that the Army now is more like that than it ever used to be.

WD: Aye.

TM: Yes, you talked about the Engineers' officers in the War but ah think right throughout the Army it's like that, more so, yes.

WD: Aye, ye respect the boss an ye'll do anything for him where if he's shoutin at ye all the time an chasing ye on ye would jist try an get oot his road.

TM: Yes. You'll have enjoyed life in Garlieston?

WD: Oh yes, it's been all right. Ah wouldn't shift for anything from here.

TM: But it worries me that so many holiday houses have nobody in them for most of the winter.

WD: Oh no.

TM: At the heart of the village.

WD: Oh that's where it is.

TM: Yes.

WD: Aye, well this hoose wis built in 1764.

TM: Yes.

**39m 09s.**

WD: An it has only been let for four year, as far as we can-.

TM: Really?

WD: It's been in the, ma family built it, both houses were built by two brothers an I know a descendent of the other brother.

TM: Really?

WD: Yes, Betty was in hospital in Newton and ah wis gaun up tae see her an a went tae the door, jist as a went tae the door, a car drew up there an a wumman got out an knocked on the next door, Oldham's, the holiday hoose. And ah said 'Oh, ye neednae knock, they're away fishin.' An she said 'Ah'm lookin for Wullie Drynan' an ah said 'Well, ah'm him' an she said who she was an ah said 'Well, ah'm sorry ah cannae wait, because ah have ta catch the bus, ah'm supposed tae be gaun up the wife's expectin me, ken up in the hospital in Newton'. And Tom was there tae pick me up an a wasnae [?] getting a later bus, ye ken.

TM: Yes, so you couldn't spend time with her.

WD: Aye, she come from Brighton.

TM: Yes?

WD: An she went intae the shop next door and spoke an said who she was an that, they said there was a concert in the village that night an she had been stayin doon in the Steam Packet so she come back that night tae see the concert and she was kinna late in getting in an she just sat doon in the first seat she got, ye know, the lights went on and, here, it was the folk in the shop Hannah, Steve Hannah an the wife, sittin beside her. So they introduced her to Colin and Rosie, next door, and they invited her up for a coffee.

TM: Yes.

WD: Ah went tae lock the door at night an she come oot o the house an met her again and then she come back the next day an ah was on the phone tae her one night last week.

TM: Yes.

WD: Aye, we were just fated tae meet, ye know.

#### 41m 26s.

TM: Yes, yes, well something very funny could happen next year. You know in America how they dress up and enact historic occasions?

WD: Aye.

TM: Well, there's a woman in, is it Dakota, Williamstown, I'm not very sure, but anyway but she dresses up as Lady Dunmore, who was a daughter of the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Galloway and she is coming across this summer to look at Galloway House and get as much information as she can about this lady, this girl, daughter of the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl, who became Lady Dunmore and that's going back to the time when Galloway House was built, 1740s, or just before.

WD: She'll maybe buy it.

TM: That's an idea [*laughs*]. These far out contacts, you never know when they're coming up, it's great fun when they do.

WD: Aye.

TM: You'd enjoy meeting that lady, yes, yes?

WD: Oh, she comes every year, her and her husband an ah had letters, we had some o the family emigrated to Jamaica and they were in the coffee industry....

TM: Really, yes?

WD: ...at the Blue Mountain Coffee. And she got, ah had letters an they were written normally that way and then it turned on the thingamy, they were written that way an then they were written that way. One hell of a job tryin tae read them, ah gave them tae her because they were nae yiss tae me, an she managed tae get, an she's a retired solicitor, an she managed tae get quite a lot o information an she went out to Jamaica tae see it an she met her husband oot there and she, they got married a couple o year ago, she's a retired solicitor.

TM: Yes?

WD: Oh she'll be well into her seventies, maybe eighties, seventies onyway, but they got married a couple o year ago an both o them come every summer, an stay in the Steam Packet in the Isle.

TM: Right. That's marvellous. Ah love these contacts with people who have gone abroad.

**44m 07s.**

WD: Aye.

TM: And, you know, in the early days, the 1600s an the early 1700s, it was mainly America and then later on Canada opened up and quite number of the farming connections went to South America to Uruguay and the Argentine, places like that, and then New Zealand and Australia opened up and they tend to be favoured places today.

WD: Aye, well she found oot about a lot o relations out in Jamaica too, ye ken.

TM: Yes. We had two Americans of the same name, both ministers and the name of Donan and their forebear came from the farm I was brought up on.

WD: Aye.

TM: And he lost a lot of money because he was a Napoleonic sympathiser and sold horses to Napoleon's Army.

WD: Oh he could, aye.

TM: And he changed his name to Donan, that's with one n in the middle, Donan, which is more French sounding and emigrated to America. And they thought he had owned that farm but that farm wasn't sold until 1921 but I had to impress upon them that being a tenant was a very valuable position to be in.

WD: Yes, aye, oh aye.

TM: Although they said they had a catalogue of the sale, that would be the tenant's equipment and black cattle.

WD: Yes.

TM: There we are. Had enough Wullie? I think we've done quite well.

WD: No bad, ah think.

TM: Very good, thank you very much.

**End of interview.**