

Interviewee: Bill Gibson (BG)	Interviewer: Isabelle Gow (IG)
Date of Interview: 23 January 2016	Ref: DG46-16-1-1-T

Key words: Lochmaben Sanatorium 00m 00s; Farming 04m 25s; Dairy 05m 07s;

Lochmaben Sanatorium 00m 00s.

IG: Bill, you were in Lochmaben Sanatorium when you were a youngster. Can you tell me a wee bit about that?

BG: Well, I was nineteen when I was in the Lochmaben Sanatorium, that was 1949, and ah was in there for six months, came out in the January 1950. But when ah was in there, ah mean, ah lay in ma bed for the first four months, never out o bed. And ye'd only visitors three times a week, Saturday, a Sunday and a Saturday, and a Wednesday, and that was the only visitors. Ma sister wasnae allowed to visit me, she was too young to be allowed into the hospital.

IG: So, you were a bit isolated?

BG: Aye I was really.

IG: So, where exactly in the hospital were you? Which part?

BG: Ah was in Pavilion 1, that's the first bit as you went up. Aye that's where ah spent ma time.

IG: And did you, where was your bed, did you have to go out onto the veranda?

BG: Well, at times, if the weather was good in the summertime ye were put out on the veranda. And there used to be a, quite a fuffle about, if it came a windy shower that, ah mean the rain blew into the veranda, and they had to get all these beds back in quick haste. Aye.

IG: Can you remember any of, was it all female nurses or...?

BG: It was all male nurses.

IG: All male nurses?

BG: Yes, jist the Sister was the female. Sister Durie.

IG: Sister Breary?

BG: Davie Shankland was one of ma nurses.

IG: Oh right, ok, uhuh. And what treatment did you get other than going out to the veranda?

02m 02s

BG: Pardon?

IG: What treatment did you get?

BG: Treatment, ah wis actually on what they called PAS, it was streptomycin, that was a new cure, and that certainly was a big difference really. Ah was only in six months, that was a, some of them up there, they were there for years. And a lot of them never came out.

IG: Aye, uhuh.

BG: I mean I was frightened when ah went in there first, there was somebody dying about every night.

IG: Oh gosh.

BG: Terrible.

IG: That's scary.

BG: And you being sae young, well, ah can see them lying, jist breathing their last. It was really scary.

IG: And some younger than you, as well?

BG: No much, oh well, there was a kid's ward, Isabel, there was a kid's ward.

IG: Oh, there was?

BG: Aye, they had TB too, I mean it was rife in these days.

IG: So, what did you do, can you just lie there, I mean...

BG: Jist mair or less, ah hadnae many interest mase, some o the nurses, some o the patients had different things that they did, right enough. And another thing, a Sunday morning, some o the fit patients was allowed to make a fry-up, so we all had a fry-up on a Sunday morning [laughter]. Ma mother used tae bring tattie scones and eggs.

IG: Oh, my goodness. And what was the food like generally when you were there?

BG: It was quite good, Isabel, aye. There was nothing wrong wi the food.

IG: And it would be made at the hospital?

03m 31s

BG: Aye, it was made at the hospital, it was really.

IG: Gosh.

BG: Once ye got a wee bit better ye went to the kitchen for your meals, later on.

IG: And outside in the grounds you were able to walk about there?

BG: Well, eventually, ah mean eventually ah managed to walk home.

IG: Goodness. And that's how many miles, that's maybe what...?

BG: Two and a half miles, ah was struggling to start wi but, and ah got ma brothers to run me back.

IG: Very good. So when you came out of the hospital did you just go straight back to work?

BG: No, ah had six months convalescent, Isabel, aye.

IG: I see, just at home, yea.

BG: Just at home. It was quite an experience, it was frightening, as ah say, however I survived. I'm eighty-five now so, it certainly didnae do any harm [*Laughter*].

Farming 04m 25s.

IG: No it hasnae, it hasn't. So when you eventually got back to work you were working on the farm, weren't ye?

BG: Uhuh.

IG: What kinna changes have you seen over the years, Bill.

BG: Oh, big changes, well ye were harvesting with a binder and horses in my early days, three horses pulling a binder.

IG: Aye, uhuh, gosh.

BG: Unbelievable.

IG: And how many folk were working on the farm?

BG: Oh well, there'd be five anyways, there wis really.

04m 55s.

IG: That's quite a lot, aye.

BG: Big changes.

IG: And was it more of a mixed farm at that time?

BG: Well, we had sheep an, aye it was a mixed farm really, absolutely.

Dairy 05m 07s.

IG: And what about the dairy?

BG: Aye we had a dairy, we had a milk round, we sold milk round Lochmaben, Hightae, Greenhill and the Heck.

IG: Goodness, so you must have had a lot of cattle?

BG: Oh there was quite a lot of cattle, Isabel, aye, we had really. It was all hand bottled.

IG: Hand bottled?

BG: Hand bottled.

IG: And it wouldnae be pasteurised?

BG: Oh no, oh no, Isabel. Ah've never been on pasteurised milk, ah've still...*[laughter]*.

IG: That's no done ye any harm either *[laughter]*. Oh gosh.

BG: Oh well, Isabel.

IG: And would some of the milk get sent away as well or did ye just sell it local?

BG: If we'd extra milk it was collected in the ten gallon churns, aye.

IG: That would go up to the station, did it?

BG: Aye at one time it went to the station, here in Lochmaben, aye, it did.

IG: Dae ye think life was better then or...?

BG: Well, ah think it wis really, I'm quite sure it wis, there wisnae the buzz that there is nowadays. I mean I can remember ma father, he got a farm in Cumberland for ma oldest brother and he bought cattle somewhere and they came to the station here, there was seventy, ah can remember, and they were driven through the streets to [?].

06m 37s.

IG: Goodness.

BG: It was something unusual.

IG: Oh yea, goodness.

BG: It was really.

IG: Oh well, well thank you very much.

BG: Oh well, Isabel, I hope it helps ye a wee bit.

IG: Ok.

End of interview.