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ANN HILL RESEARCH

Interview with Jean Turnbull
2 Crosskeys Street, Dunblane.

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Only 30 minutes. I'd heard of Miss Turnbull from Mrs Copeland, and called on 'spec' because I was in the area. She was born in February 1899, left Kirkpatrick Fleming as a teenager, and thought she could remember nothing, but memories came back as we talked, and I was sorry we could not stay longer. A cheery, well-preserved looking 88 year old.

School

She was taught by Mr Brown, who retired when she was in his class, to be succeeded by Mr McKerchar. She thought she'd be in Standard IV. She thought it was amusing that Mr Brown was never known as anything but 'Auld Blackie'. An old fashioned but effective teacher. She remembered getting the strap from McKerchar, during a music lesson - for which you had to draw the staff lines. She was drawing faces - 'Come out! - Repeat what ~~I~~ve been saying!'.
I've

In her class her pal was a clever wee girl, Sarah something ... Sarah Hastings! Her father was a coachman for Doctor Carruthers (The mention of Doctor Carruthers evoked an odd response, like a chuckling 'Oh, ho! - but he was a kind old man'. As if Doctor Carruthers was associated with some sort of scandal.)

She thought Auld Blackie stayed on past retiring age. Miss Mckenzie, a highland girl, was a nice lass, Miss Graham took the infants.

Until McKerchar there was no cooking or woodwork. Then a building was put up in the playground, one side for woodwork, one for cooking.

She never liked the soup kitchen, only took it occasionally.

One or two Poor House girls came to school in grey uniforms.

Mr Brown had a family. He used to stand by the blackboard with a pointer which he would hit you with if you got things wrong. She hated sums, liked other things. You had to learn your tables, and they'd gabble them to each other on the road to school. Sometimes the fox hoppers met village pub - on the way to school - take half a day off to follow - would get the strap.
hoppers

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Church

Hardly anything. She had a vague recollection of Mr Graham, and remembered Mr Walker. She was not in the operattas, but was in the Junior Choir - which didn't require good singing ability.

Sport and Entertainment

Too young to go dancing. See school (foxhunting), church (junior choir).

Economic

Her father was crane driver, Cove. Went to Rosyth, she didn't know why.

She lived in the village. I asked if it was Hamper. She laughed, said it wasn't 'Hamper' but 'Victoria Terrace', but didn't specify if she lived there. She'd been asked why it was called Hamper, didn't know. Next door lived Mrs Pagan, a railway signalman's widow, and her daughter Florence.

There were 9 in her own family, she being third youngest. 7 girls, 2 boys. Only her young brother still lives, in Rosyth. Mother died 3 weeks after last child born, so older sisters would keep house, one after other, till married. One sister lived in Maxwelltown, Mrs Irving. Father from Aberdour, mother Edinburgh.

She was hardly ever ill, but remembered how hard it was to get the doctor, who lived a good mile up the road, in an age of no phones. If lucky you got a bike up the road. Doctors frightened her - but once she had measles.

Groceries - R N Bell. Sam Wallace had a drapers business, and his sons did the tailoring (I think she said at the back). Did you get your clothes there? No - straight from Paris! (Not bad for someone we'd been warned was senile!).

Johnstone's had wee clogger's shop on main road.

They used coal, never peat, in house.

Miscellaneous

She thinks the Dumfriesshire folk have awfy funny voices (by which she means Kirkpatrick Fleming: something that has struck me is the odd mixture of dialects, half Lowland Scots, half Langholm/Cumberland). Her people, from Fife and Lothian, spoke quite differently. Naturally she tried to speak the way other children did, and got told by her sister to cut it out. Her father disliked the way Kirkpatrick Fleming people spoke.

Her niece, a retired schoolteacher, was mentioned a good deal. I should have got her name.

I get the impression that Miss Turnbull has been quite a raconteur, and maybe her friends could pass on stories from her childhood.