Interviewee: Joyce Grainger
Interviewer: Martin Eastwood
Date: July 2001

Keywords:

Professor [James Couper] Brash
Mary Pickford
Barbara Clayton
T. R. [Thomas Robert Rushton] Todd
Leith Hospital
World War Two
Law Hospital
Bangour Hospital
Ian Campbell
RCPE conference centre

ME: Today we are interviewing Dr Joyce Grainger who was – on today, the 19th of July. We're in the Duncan room. She was House Convenor from 1985 to 1993. Where were you born?

JG: Where was I…?

ME: Born?

JG: Born? 1923.

ME: Where?

JG: Where? [Laughs] Edinburgh.

ME: Edinburgh. And were you brought up in Edinburgh?

JG: Yes, I was actually. I was at school in Edinburgh and then I was at St Leonards after that.

ME: Right. Was that a - that was quite a popular track, wasn't it for Edinburgh girls?

JG: It was. There were a lot of us went at that time from my own group.

ME: Yes. So, where did you first go to school?

JG: I went first to St Georges. I just lived round the corner there.

ME: Right. And how old were you when you went to St Leonards?

JG: 13.

ME: Right. And what was St Georges like, as a child? Was it a good school?

JG: It was reckoned to be a good school.

ME: But was it?

JG: Well, that was one of the reasons so many of us were moved.

ME: Right. Why was that? Was it just not up to it?

JG: They couldn't - they weren't up to keeping control of us. [Laughs]

ME: Right. I see. [Laughs] [inaudible] And did you board at St Leonards?

JG: Yes. The reason for my parents going… sending me there was a, the education and b, the fact that I was an only child. And that was it.

ME: Right. And how did you find going to boarding school?

JG: I enjoyed it.

ME: Did you?

JG: Yes, I did.

ME: How did they run it? Did they have large dormitories and…?

JG: Yes, but we had houses. We were split and in those days it was ten separate houses, and there were I think about between 20 and 30 of us in a house. So it wasn't a huge group living together and they were all ages, that was all the years from the start.

ME: And did they structure it in a sort of caring relationship or did you just pitch in?

JG: It depended, I think, on the house you were in. I was very fortunate. We had a house mistress who was very good. She was actually one of the games mistresses, too. She was a very understanding woman and I think, looking back, I think she handled the kids very well.

ME: Did you find the change in, sort of, attitude daunting, or…?

JG: No, I think I'd been warned a little bit by a friend who was a year ahead of me. [Laughs]

ME: Right. So the whole of the – a particular group of Edinburgh girls just went up to St Andrews…

JG: Well, there was quite a few of us, yes. There was a quite a lot of...

ME: Right. And were there teachers from both St Georges and St Leonards who had a lasting influence on you?

JG: Oh, yes. Yes. There was a history mistress was the one I can remember in St Georges and she was excellent. She was, you know, way above the others in my opinion. [Laughs]

ME: I see, yes.

JG: And then I had an interest in history at the time because we had another good one at St Leonards. We had some very good people there.

ME: What began to draw you to medicine?

JG: I…

ME: Were you initially drawn to medicine?

JG: Yes, I was. I, in fact, started swithering a bit later. But… I think the original influence came partly, my father was a dentist and in those days women didn't go in to dentistry. He regretted very much, I think, that he didn't have a son. And the other influence really was the GP across the road, that family. We were great friends with them.

ME: Here in Edinburgh?

JG: In Edinburgh.

ME: Who was that?

JG: That was Dr Stark, Joe Stark.

ME: Right. How did you come across him, just through the family and you just saw him…?

JG: Oh well, he lived –he was almost a neighbour, you see. It was in Leith and he was also a neighbour then. And that was how – and his daughter was at school at St Georges. She was a year ahead of me. And his son was at the Academy at the time, and he was further ahead. He was older.

ME: Right. And how did you get in to… So, did you do science at St Leonards or…?

JG: Yes.

ME: And was that well taught, or…?

JG: Yes. Oh, yes. The lady never had a failure.

ME: Oh dear. [Laughs]

JG: Oh dear. She had when I got there.

ME: And did you - what did you do? Biology, chemistry and physics, or…?

JG: That's right. Yes. Mainly the chemistry and physics side.

ME: Right. So rather sort of clearly delineated subjects, aren't they?

JG: Oh yes. In those days they certainly were.

ME: Then you - so what sort of year were you thinking about coming to university?

JG: Well, we really had to think about it quite early because most of the pupils sat the Oxford and Cambridge exam. And I did the Scottish Highers.

ME: Was this with a view to going to Oxford and Cambridge?

JG: No. Yes, they did. Yes, they... And a lot of them – or one of the English universities.

ME: And why did you decide not to go to Oxford and Cambridge?

JG: Well… it was, I suppose, part medicine was thought to be very much better in Edinburgh at that time.

ME: Indeed.

JG: You know that was it. I think that was the simple answer. Of course by the time I was leaving the war had started.

ME: Right. So when did you come to Edinburgh to do medicine?

JG: 1941.

ME: Gosh.

JG: [Laughs]

ME: No, I don't mean that it was twenty long years ago or more, I mean that that must have been a very difficult time to be doing medicine, wasn't it?

JG: It was. Well, we had to work, the lot of us. If you didn't get through your exams at the re-sit, the first re-sit, you were out.

ME: Oh, right.

JG: None of the…

ME: One hit and you're out.

JG: [Laughs] None of the perpetual student.

ME: Right.

JG: Oddly enough, I know of several of the chaps in our year, they didn't really want to do medicine. They were perhaps following father's footsteps. And they just slacked and didn't get through and then came back to it after they had come out of the army.

ME: Perhaps they changed their mind?

JG: No. No.

ME: Right.

JG: One did, yes. One made it.

ME: So you started in '41. Did you do chemistry, physics and biology again, then or..?

JG: Yes. I mean physics was the same as I had done at school, really, but you didn't really get exemption from first year at that time.

ME: Did you get an exemption?

JG: No, I don't think we could.

ME: Do you remember your teachers from that period?

JG: Oh yes, there was the old anatomist. [Laughs]

ME: No, I meant in first year.

JG: In first year?

ME: Yes.

JG: First year medicine?

ME: Yes.

JG: Yes, well, we got anatomy.

ME: Did you?

JG : Oh yes, it was anatomy and physics in first year and it was… as taught it was very boring. Because we got Professor [James Couper] Brash. But of course we occasionally had E. B. [Edward Bald] Jamieson.

ME: But not often?

JG: Not very often. We were separate. Well, we got the lectures together, the whole class. But the women were separated for dissection. We were in another room, you see.

ME: Right. Did you dissect a female body or…?

JG: No, no. No. As I remember, I don't think there was any sex discrimination of the bodies. [Laughs]

ME: [Laughs] What was the reaction of – I mean, I'm very familiar with Jimmy's side.

JG: Yes, I know.

ME: But what was the attitude of girls like you… to this…?

JG: Well, we had been brought up in a very simple way. I mean, schools then, girls' schools were girls' schools. Well, I'll get back to that. In so much as we weren't allowed round certain streets in St Andrews because students frequented them. We weren't allowed to the Byre Theatre, it was out of bounds.

ME: Right.

JG: There was also of course the infection side. We were not allowed in to shops. We had to send our parents in for our sweets and things.

ME: Right. Goodness. So, when you found yourself in a separate dissecting system, you just took that as being the lot of a woman?

JG: We just accepted – we didn't even - no, we didn't – we just accepted that was that.

ME: Right. And did Brash - Brash taught women didn't he?

JG: He taught the whole class. I mean he was - he taught us all together.

ME: Right.

JG: It was Jamieson who wouldn't have any –

ME: Jimmy would have nothing to do –

JG: He would have none of that, no.

ME: And the curious thing was that there were occasions in lectures but he would never lecture on the sexual organs, would he?

JG: No. He had the men separately. He would wander off for coffee, if I remember rightly… [Laughs]

ME: Right. But you found anatomy boring?

JG: I think we must have, yes. Because I remember the first class exam, I plummeted in that one. I was taken in to Professor Brash's room and given a little talk about having to work.

ME: Right. Yes. It was a very uninspiring time in one's life, wasn't it?

JG: Well, it was. That sort of… the didactic lectures all the time, too. So much depended on who was giving the lecture.

ME: Yes. And then in second year, what did you move on to?

JG: In second year we had… still anatomy, and we had physics and anatomy and physics. And that was when our exam was. Our first professional was at the end of second year. And then we moved on in third year to… physiology and… what else did we…?

ME: Biochemistry?

JG: Yes, biochemistry. That's right.

ME: Do you remember who taught –

JG: I think we got along, biochemistry, though…because we had Professor Marion.

ME: Did you?

JG: Yes, we did.

ME: Now how did you find him?

JG: Oh, he was excellent. He was a very good teacher.

ME: Because by the time we went through he'd stopped.

JG: Ah, yes. He would have because he moved on, didn't he? He moved on to Cambridge…

ME: No, no. He didn't teach us, but he was still a professor.

JG: Oh, I see. Ah, I see.

ME: Because it was said that he would have got a Nobel Prize if they'd had those. But he was…

JG: He was a remarkable man. Of course, his daughter was in Edinburgh for a long time.

ME: Yes, his daughter was in my brother's [inaudible]

JG: Was she? Ah.

ME: Yes.

JG: And, there were one or two at that time. I tell you another one was Mary Pickford.

ME: Right.

JG: Mary Pickford's still alive actually, because she was in – I don't know if you know anything about it – she's now in the south… staying near Nice, or something.

ME: Right. What do you remember about Mary Pickford?

JG: … Not a lot, except that we were all slightly appalled at the way she sort of handled the rats and things [laughs] when she was doing her experiments. I don't really – I learnt far more from her since

then because she lived quite near me in Murrayfield Gardens, when I lived in that house. I used to visit her really for the church, actually. We brought in a system of visitors and that was interesting.

ME: Right.

JG: She was fascinating. She was much the easiest to go and see.

ME: Not the easiest?

JG: She was much the easiest. I remember the first time I thought, goodness, what am I going to find? But no, she was a very easy person.

ME: Right. I think there were people who did the honours degree who found her…

JG: Tough.

ME: No, very intellectual.

JG: Oh yes, oh yes. She was. Yes, very.

ME: You're jumping there, just so I don't forget. Tell me what you – when you visited her, what did you learn of her?

JG: She told me a bit about her upbringing, her early upbringing in India.

ME: Right.

JG: And you know, quite a lot of things that she went in to.

ME: What sort of things?

JG: Well, she discussed – she was a very good artist, you know. And she also made silver. She did all sorts of jewellery. Pendants and earrings and things. She was very good.

ME: It was a remarkable achievement for her to be an FRS, wasn't it?

JG: Oh, it was indeed. It was. And she's now about 96. She was still driving her car until she left Edinburgh. She had her hip done I think in '92, '91. She's a game old thing. [Laughs]

ME: Yes, yes. And then you moved on to pharmacology and…?

JG: That was Professor [John Henry] Gaddum.

ME: Right. And how did you find him?

JG: Bit boring.

ME: Right. Did you not find his carpet slippers interesting?

JG: [Laughs] Yes, yes. But as a lecturer he wasn't. That was the boring side.

ME: Did you find the first part of medicine quite - just a continuation of school in a way?

JG: Well it was almost, in many ways. With it being wartime you couldn't go – there weren't opportunities to mix very –well, we did. But by third year, we came in to our clinical years then. Once we came to that in the third year, well, and that… that was quite different.

ME: That was a revelation, was it?

JG: That was - yes, that was the interesting… that was the start of the interest.

ME: You hinted earlier about history and at some stage you had a second thought?

JG: It wasn't history, no. I got rather fond of music and… but I don't think I would've got very far other than just playing the piano.

ME: Are a good pianist?

JG: Not now.

ME: But were you?

JG: I used to play a lot, yes. But I gave up years ago for various reasons. One of them being that at my parents' house I wasn't allowed to practice my music at a late hour. [Laughs]

ME: Right. Yes, that's a problem, isn't it?

JG: My parents were very strict on that.

ME: Yes. I have a friend who plays the trombone - the saxophone and he has an arrangement with the neighbours that he can play at certain times.

JG: When I was older the lady that was next door and she funnily enough, she was a Miss Droble. I don't know if you've heard of Droble teaching in kindergarten teaching and that was her father. And she was a very good pianist.

ME: Right. And then you start – did you come across Marthe Vogt?

JG: No.

ME: She wasn't…

JG: Well, I didn't – I don't remember. I mean I remember the name but I don't remember her.

ME: So you came in to clinical work. What happened then?

JG: Then we were… we had… In the morning, I think that's when we met for some physiology or pharmacology, I'm not just clear. And then we had… we had two hours after, sort of 11:00-12:00 and 12:00-13:00 of ward rounds and teaching, ward teaching. Usually a clinical tutor took us for the first hour, or Sub Chief and then it was the Chief.

ME: And how did you - who were the first people –

JG: I was allocated to Professor Murray-Lyon.

ME: Were you? Tell me about him.

JG: He was a delightful man. Firm, but he was very nice with patients. He handled them very well.

ME: He was said to be one of the great minds who never did in Edinburgh, is that right do you think?

JG: I think I could believe that, yes, because he didn't - he just plodded on, I think. One didn't hear so much.

ME: No, he's not like Derek [Dunlop], is he, who -

JG: No, we had our medicine lectures. They were in the first hour or two usually. I think it was physiology and medicine. Or surgery, depending on where we were at.

ME: But with Murray-Lyon, did he give you a good basis of clinical practice?

JG: I think he did because I was so often sent back to him. We were - it was the Secretary that allocated us. And every now and then people sort of slipped out on to somebody else.

ME: Right. [Laughs]

JG: They managed to change it. But I never did and when I had him a second time I was quite happy to.

ME: Right. And did he do the whole systematic examination? Did he start with cardiovascular and go through…?

JG: No, he didn't do it that way. He took a patient - alright if it was someone with heart failure he started on the basic things about heart failure and how to examine a patient with heart disease. It was a good grounding.

ME: Yes, yes. And was there a lot of mitral valve disease?

JG: Oh yes. Mitral solute and fibrillation were commonplace.

ME: Right. So this would be bread and butter to you?

JG: It certainly latterly was. And aortic incompetence.

ME: Yes. The syphilitic… [inaudible] Which would not be allowed now, would it?

JG: No. Oh, no I don't think so. See I learned from those early years to take a WR off routinely. I don't know if you did but I certainly did.

ME: Yes, absolutely. I remember when Jenny [Eastwood] had the first baby, John Landon did a WR and he looked slightly embarrassed when Jenny said, "I know why you're doing that." [Laughs] What about Derek, what was he like?

JG: Of course he was the master.

ME: He was quite a young man, then?

JG: He was the youngest, after Marion. Derek, he was in his thirties. That at that time was very young for a Chair of Medicine. But he was brilliant, really. He had in addition to his superb teaching a way of putting it across with humour, and I think it was that that came over.

ME: Right. And how big were the classes?

JG: They were – well, I think we started off with 200, there or there abouts.

ME: Right.

JG: And… ended up with about a 100 and… just over 120 or so, I think.

ME: It was quite a fate if you failed, wasn't it. I mean, to go straight off to the army.

JG: That's right. Oh yes. It was pretty – by the time we got to finals, it was a pretty high pass rate.

ME: Were you aware all the way that you were doing this of the war going on? I mean you were –

JG: Oh yes.

ME: I mean were you – did it hang like a shadow over you?

JG: No, not over me personally. But then I didn't have brothers who were in the army or in any of the services.

ME: Yes.

JG: And I think that's where there was a difference.

ME: Right. There were people who had –

JG: I think people with close relatives it was very different.

ME: Who else were you taught by? Who were you taught with in surgery?

JG: Well, we had a number of surgeons teaching us. Wattie [Walter] Mercer is the one I think that stands out there.

ME: Yes. Did he teach you general surgery?

JG: Yes he did.

ME: So he hadn't become an orthopod?

JG: No. I don't remember being aware of that at that time.

ME: He was an extraordinary surgeon, wasn't he, because he was the man – the first man – no, he was the early man to do – to patent [inaudible]

JG: Yes, he was. That's right. I had forgotten about that. Yes.

ME: And then…

JG: Then he went on to orthopaedic surgery. Particularly tuberculosis.

ME: Did you see a lot of tuberculosis jobs?

JG: My time in surgery wasn't that long because I didn't junior in surgery at any time. I… I think I did all medicine… I think I must have done a little because we had to do one period. But I was never sort of on to that side so much.

ME: But was tuberculosis an omnipresent part?

JG: Oh yes. Yes. I mean that came at the head of differential diagnosis so often in both medicine and surgery.

ME: Right. Along with syphilis and…

JG: Rheumatic heart disease. [Laughs] [inaudible] They were both – they were all common diseases. The ones I remember being particular from student days.

ME: Did… What about obstetrics and gynae? What – did you do that?

JG: … Well, that we had… Again, we had our lectures and that was – oh, what was he now… Johnstone. Professor Johnstone who lived up the road from us, actually. But he didn't sort of mix with us all [laughs] and it was Sanny [William Francis Theodore] Haultain. He was the one. And John Sturrock was his Sub Chief. He was a gynaecologist, a very good one.

ME: And what was the reaction to – how many girls were there in your year?

JG: I just don't know. I struggle to remember that. Maybe 30, 40.

ME: Quite a lot.

JG: A few. I think there was quite as many, I could be wrong. Could be under 30. I can remember about 25.

ME: And were they like in our year the cleverest part of the year?

JG: No, but they were the hard workers, I think. Well, they were. That's not quite right because the scholar was Barbara Clayton.

ME: Was it?

JG: We had two very bright women in the year. One was Barb and the other was Rachel White.

ME: What happened to her?

JG: She very sadly died just about a year after – she had an undiagnosed aortic cirrhosis and just collapsed at the bus stop.

ME: Right.

JG: See, that wouldn't happen now.

ME: No, no.

JG: Because it would be, hopefully, picked up.

ME: Where, I'm not sure.

JG: Well… I mean you get so much follow up as children.

ME: Right, yes. That must have been quite a traumatic experience when she died.

JG: Oh yes, it was. It was after – she was a resident I think in the Simpson at that point.

ME: So you did your –

JG: And then Hamish Stewart was another one. The Superintendent's son. He also died during the course. He was another very bright lad.

ME: What did he die from?

JG: Jaundice hepatitis. And it was only one - he was just diagnosed as jaundice and you know hepatitis and that was it.

ME: Did people catch tuber – Did students catch tuberculosis going through?

JG: Not that I'm aware of. I think maybe one or two but not that I'm aware of because you didn't know the whole year. But certainly I know in the first residency, several did who were working at the Eastern.

ME: Did they?

JG: Yes. I think Bobbie [Robert John Murray] McCormack was one who was...he was one of the surgeons there at the time albeit quite a junior one. And I think he was afflicted.

ME: Right. What were your finals like? Were they…?

JG: Well they were all right [laughs] finals. We had the exam and the written and then… the orals. I was really very lucky because T. R. [Thomas Robert Rushton] Todd was the one that everybody hated to get.

ME: Why?

JG: Well because he was said to be very harsh but you see [laughs] I went in and I got away with it and all was well, because he said – and he was - did tend to mark rather harshly because it was said to be the same with the membership. I fortunately – he was one that a lot of people tried to opt out of the clinic and I stayed and went to the clinic along with four others of us. And there were only the four of us in that small group. [Laughs] And on one occasion the tutor hadn't – he said, "Look, there's an hour free to yourself because I can't take you this hour so you can go and do what you want but be back by midday for the Chief." Well, we went down to see the Queen. We thought this would be a good way of spending [laughs] an hour in the city chambers. And then she didn't come and she was very late and we realised we were too late to go back to the Chief so we didn't go. And we went the next day. "Where were the ladies?" So we just told him where we'd been and that was when I realised his sense of humour because he looked at us and said, "You should have told me. I would have come with you." [Laughs] And it was that sort of side of him that we saw.

ME: He was an interesting man, wasn't he?

JG: He was. He was indeed.

ME: The stories are of someone who didn't marry until his mother died.

JG: That's right.

ME: Then he married the Ward Sister.

JG: Oh was she? I didn't know that bit.

ME: But he wasn't allowed a car until his mother died and always went in by tram.

JG: That's right. He didn't have a car.

ME: Big car. Presumably a Rolls or a Bentley. And who I remember very much used to make one examine ones nails and shoes…

JG: Oh yes. And hair. If you weren't tidy…

ME: Yes. And then that awful story of the Australian candidate in the membership ward. "How would you give somebody potassium?" And the man went through all the sources. No, no, no, and then the man said, "Well, I don't know any more." So he said, "What about parsley sandwich?" So the Australian laughed and Tarara is reputed to have said," Why are you laughing?" And the

Australian said, “I thought you said parsley sandwich.” [Laughs] But whether that’s true or not I don’t know.

JG: One of many tales. But again I never examined with him. But from one of his co examiners I heard was that he’d examined a few times and he really his marking wasn’t that hard.

ME: Like others, his reputation was… Yes. What about in surgery? Do you remember…?

JG: I don’t remember. [Laughs] I’ve obviously got a blank about surgery.

ME: It didn’t appeal to you at the time.

JG: It can’t have, no.

ME: Was there anybody in your year who was a girl going in to surgery?

JG: Ophthalmology.

ME: Really?

JG: Yes.

ME: Because there was a German lady…

JG: One of my close friends, actually.

ME: Did she?

JG: Yes.

ME: And operated?

JG: Two of them. Two of my friends did. Yes. One went – the other went – she went overseas to Ghana, I think with the MRC. I don’t know how much operating she would be doing.

ME: Of the girls in your year, what happened to them? Where did they go?

JG: … Most of them I suppose got married, but a lot – and therefore they didn’t practice medicine as much after, not many of them did. Barbara of course went down to Southampton where she still lives and is still working, I think.

ME: Is she? She’s immensely distinguished, isn’t she?

JG: Yes. I saw her just a week or a few weeks ago.

ME: Did you?

JG: We had our 6 – our 55th reunion.

ME: Really? Was that a nice occasion?

JG: Yes, it was. I was reluctant at first to have it but no it worked really well.

ME: The later ones are quite moving aren’t they in some respect.

JG: Yes. And it was a small group and they’ve nearly all written to us. Because there were just three of us that organised it. We’ve done them all from the 25th on.

ME: So having done your finals what did you do then?

JG: I went to Hull Children's Hospital.

ME: Hull?

JG: Hull. Yes.

ME: Why Hull?

JG: It wasn't easy to get one. I hadn't spoken or asked for anything in Edinburgh. I wanted out and I think this was because school, or I think St Andrews, but I then lived in Edinburgh in my parents' house all during university so I was determined to get out of Edinburgh for six months.

ME: And what year was it that you graduated?

JG: '46.

ME: So the war had finished?

JG: War had just finished.

ME: And Hull took a lot of stick?

JG: It did indeed, oh yes. I remember the bomb sites there… about two o'clock in the morning my train used to get in from Edinburgh. I'd go up home maybe for a long weekend and come back on the Sunday night and the train would get in about two in the morning, walking across the bomb site.

ME: Yes. Yes, it was quite a…

JG: I always meant to go back…

ME: Sorry?

JG: I've always meant to go back to Hull and see what it's like.

ME: Oh, it's a horrible place.

JG: Is it still?

ME: Oh it's still a horrible place, yes.

JG: [Laughs] I see.

ME: I was born there.

JG: Oh I see.

ME: It's the end of the pier… place. Lovely places round about.

JG: The hospital was opposite a brothel.

ME: Really? [Laughs]

JG: They had the [inaudible] in that ward.

ME: And you just chose Hull out of the blue, did you?

JG: No, I applied for what was going and Hull was one of them.

ME: Because there were ties between Hull and Edinburgh.

JG: That's right because… funnily enough an old school friend who was… she graduated in Dundee and was… she was a year ahead of me, really. She was down there as a resident. I replaced her. She left soon after, anyway.

ME: My father-in-law went down there to be a GP, in Hull. There were a lot of Hull graduates – I mean Edinburgh graduates down there.

JG: Well, you see – yes, the GPs were… I think some of them did work in the hospital. I don't think… I don't remember… Because we had an ENT surgeon and I used to have to do his lists although I was theoretically the house physician but I had to do the ENT lists with him. So he taught me how to take out tonsils and adenoids and we did about 25 in an hour… you just got them blue in the face and pulled out the… it was horrible! When I think of it now, really. [Laughs]

ME: My grandson went on a little train down to here in the Sick Kids to have his tonsils out. And just went there full of joy at it being so simple whereas it was horrible then, wasn't it?

JG: Oh, I know. It was really.

ME: Yes. Did many die?

JG: No.

ME: Incredible, isn't it?

JG: It is incredible. None… in those children… the other one… the other surgeon who only came once a week or so and did a very small list of four or five, he actually dissected the tonsil and he insisted on having chloroform.

ME: Right.

JG: And I hated doing that. I much preferred [laughs] putting their head back when they were blue. He taught me how to do it. That's the origin of the kitchen table, I'm sure.

ME: Absolutely. And… so you did your six months there.

JG: I did my six months there, yes.

ME: And then what did you do?

JG: I came up to Leith Hospital to do a residency. They had just started taking women that year in Leith and in the Royal.

ME: As residents?

JG: As residents. Yes, I think Barbara and Rachel were the first Royal residents, the first women.

ME: And were they put in a special place? I mean, were they…?

JG: … No, they weren't I don't think. I'm not sure what happened to them. We were because we had to just get on with it, up above – in the rooms above the ward.

ME: Right. Because Jenny and I were the first married couple in the Royal.

JG: Oh were you?

ME: And we were put up in a… up above 23 and 24.

JG: Ah yes.

ME: In a special room. We weren't allowed in the body of the kirk. [Laughs] [inaudible] In fact, Leith was – when Leith Hospital started it was the first teaching of women in Edinburgh took place in Leith, wasn't it?

JG: I think you're right.

ME: Because that lady…

JG: What, Elsie?

ME: No, it was before…

JG: It was before that.

ME: Blake.

JG: Sophia Blake.

ME: Sophia Blake. She…campaigned for somewhere for clinical teaching and I think Leith was the first.

JG: Yes, I think you could be right there.

ME: Yes. So that was the first to have lady residents.

JG: I think that was the first, yes. It was about then. We were…because two of my friends were there six months before me. I was the only one of the residents that was female then. But the two before me, the awkward part was that they both got chicken pox on the same day. [Laughs] You can imagine that upset the works when you've only got half a dozen residents. But I remember - one thing that stands out, I remember being with Chief [inaudible] just to show me where everything was on my first day. And he said, "And that's the ventilator, you'll never use it. It's never been used but you better just get in and try it out." And this was this old bird thing. And he just walked on. And well of course we had to use it one night. And of course they didn't come out if you called them in those days.

ME: No.

JG: You rang, and occasionally this happened. And so I rang him and I said, "We've had to put her on the ventilator", it was one of the very, very early polios. And he said, "Well, that's fine. I'll see you in the morning." Just like that.

ME: So you were - who was your Chief?

JG: I had three. Part-timers.

ME: Who were they?

JG: There was Alastair Bruce, who was really very good.

ME: He would be quite a young man then, wasn't he?

JG: Yes…

ME: Or did he seem terribly old when you were a resident?

JG: Well, he did… he was… Yes, he wasn't the oldest. I think Malcom Smith was.

ME: Right.

JG: He was probably – I'm not sure between those two looking back. And Ranald Murray-Lion.

ME: Right.

JG: Was the other third one.

ME: And how did you like him?

JG: Oh he was a nice chap. I met up with him again later.

ME: You would meet him at St Johns, presumably.

JG: Well – no. Bangour of course yes, that's right.

ME: No, I meant you'd meet him at St Johns Church, wouldn't you? No he was –

JG: No. I didn't –

ME: No, sorry.

JG: No, I didn't – mind you in those days I didn't really know if he was a [inaudible] [Laughs]

ME: And what was the reaction again to women at that stage? How did they react?

JG: That was alright, I think. I don't remember any adverse reaction till I got myself to Law Hospital. There was nothing I can remember. We had to work pretty hard but as long as we worked as hard as the chaps they were happy.

ME: They were lovely men, weren't they? I can't remember Malcolm Smith, I don't know him but…

JG: He must have been the boss because it was he whom I asked if I could have a weekend off halfway through, because I'd had nothing off and I asked, I said, "Do you think I could have a weekend off?" I wanted to go somewhere. And he said, "Well now, let me see. How long have you been here?" "I came in April, sir." "Oh yes. Well… yes, that would be alright. Just go on Saturday after the round at lunchtime and you'll be back in time for the Monday round. You'll be back on Sunday night." That was what he said.

ME: And was that your holidays for the whole six months?

JG: Oh yes. Sunday afternoons if we were quiet, we took it in turns us residents to nip off but by the time I was there the residents, a lot of them were ex-service. I think there were only two, John Locker and myself, I think we were the only two from my year.

ME: Now what was it like when the ex-servicemen were coming in? Did they change the whole…?

JG: No.

ME: …picture?

JG: Not at that time, no. They were working there as residents. I don't think…

ME: No, what I mean is did they challenge the system…

JG: No, they didn't, strangely enough. They didn't. Not then. Later, I think so.

ME: Presumably they were just glad to get back…

JG: I think that's right. Yes. So that was 1947.

ME: Right. Now… that was – what was Leith like to work in? I mean, it must have been an extraordinary different mix…

JG: Well, now you would think of it as archaic. It really was. I mean you had the duty room. There was nowhere else. Our bedrooms were above the wards. And the night sister would come up in the middle of the night and say, "Hey, come down to see this whatever."

ME: Right.

JG: And… you… we had to do all our own bloods and everything of course. Which you probably had to do.

ME: We had to do it, yes, yes.

JG: And I don't remember much about the x-rays. They were done… somewhere down in the depths. And the anaesthetics… that was a very strange thing. I mean I did a lot of them. That was a house physicians duty was if there wasn't an anaesthetist available you had to give the anaesthetic.

ME: I presume you had a long training in that?

JG: Well, it was open ether – ethel chloride and then open ether. I did many, many of them needless to say.

ME: And did you find that scary, or did you just…?

JG: Not at Leith, except… I knew how to do this, and I knew that I was going from Hull where I learned to do chloride and open ether on kids, which was a very straightforward thing really. And I wasn't bothered until I learned that I would have to do it maybe on adults. And my co-resident said, "Well, don't worry. Just go and say, 'Well, I'm sorry, sir. But I can't do anything else unless you want to show me how.' " And I just adopted that. And a poor guy that had an appendix that had to be taken out had it done that way. I must have learned a bit more later because I don't do – I didn't do many adult… but the paediatric surgeons loved that method because the next stage… they didn't make them any less sick. They were just as sick with that.

ME: And what was the population of people coming in like? I mean, the poverty in Leith must have been…

JG: There was a lot, and they dropped in. I mean there were the Saturday night drunks. There were also some homeless people if you like who got themselves having missed the last bus and then they would fall down and "collapse" and get lifted in to the hospital.

ME: Right.

JG: I mean… it was busy.

ME: How did they – in those days the attitudes of drunks to a lady doctor must have been quite… interesting, wasn't it? Or did they behave…?

JG: They often weren't capable of overreacting! [Laughs] It was Leith and it was very busy.

ME: And presumably again the three major illnesses, the tuberculosis, the syphilis and the…

JG: Well, actually…

ME: The heart disease was the major problems.

JG: I don't know that tuberculosis being quite so obvious there, but certainly – and of course the pneumonias and the meningitis. But it was again, odd. I wasn't dealing with that, I'd moved on.

ME: And what about malnutrition?

JG: A bit. I remember that more at the Sick Children in Hull where they came in very dehydrated. Particularly the babies.

ME: My father-in-law talked in Hull of the horror of hearing the neighbours going along to collect the pennies for the ninepence for his visit.

JG: Awful.

ME: Just awful.

JG: Dreadful. Yes.

ME: And then you moved from… you did your time in Leith and where did you move to?

JG: I went to South Shields.

ME: Did you? Where you travelled.

JG: I was there for about 18 months to two years.

ME: Were you? And what did that…

JG: I was there – no, I went to Law Hospital after… immediately after Leith that was right. And then I went to South Shields.

ME: Right. And what was Law like?

JG: Well that is where… certainly… where sex differential came in a lot.

ME: Is that right?

JG: Oh yes. When I arrived, we were all ex-servicemen but me, it was quite a big residence. And when I arrived I was supposed to be doing general medicine because by that time I had begun to think of going along and trying to do membership. And I went… up there and I was on the tuberculosis wards. Now, that was nothing but tubercle. Nothing. Which wasn't really at that time going to give me a lot of experience. I was supposed to be… but the Superintendent was away. So when he came back on the Monday I got transferred to where I was supposed to be. But the Chief, the chap who was in charge, was a physician, Joe Bryant by name who was known quite widely.

ME: Joe Brown?

JG: Joe Bryant. He was… a strange man. Very strange. And I for one thing was separated in to a women's section. You know how these EMS wards are laid out. Well, one block had women – female staff living in. It was quite out in the country and staff nearly all lived in. And there was oh, two or three. There was a radiologist - a radiographer, I mean, I think it was, and a social worker or something like that, I don't know what she was called then. And there was some other woman to do

with records, and that was it. And I had to go there, I wasn't allowed to mix with the chaps who were all up at the other end. Except I could go in for meals.

ME: Awful.

JG: It was awful!

ME: Dreadful. And…

JG: And by this time I'd got used to male company, if you like. [Laughs]

ME: And did they have mess parties and were you allowed to…

JG: Oh yeah. Well we didn't have any until Joe Bryant was seconded to Inverness for I think it was about six months or more. And by the time he came back he found a rather different mess. [Laughs] It was an interesting change. As soon as he'd gone pretty much we had a party.

ME: To celebrate.

JG: We had parties at regular intervals.

ME: And… it was a medicine that was very dependent on clinical examination and history taking, wasn't it?

JG: Oh yes.

ME: The ancillary things like, I mean, we think of CT scanning and all these things.

JG: It was unheard of.

ME: They were…

JG: None of that. It was purely the history and the examination, and then there would be the odd x-ray. And ECGs didn't really come before… until I suppose that was when I… that must have been when I was at South Shields perhaps.

ME: Right.

JG: We may have had them at Law, but I don't really… I'm a bit vague about that.

ME: And do you – where did you get your real skills in? Or did you feel that you got them in Edinburgh in your course? Were you building them…

JG: I just had to build them with what I got. Yes.

ME: What textbooks did you use for the clinical skills?

JG: … Well eventually it was MacLeod's book.

ME: Yes. But I mean when you were…

JG: Before that… I can't just remember which ones, actually… Oh, Dunlop and Davidson, of course was the Bible, originally.

ME: Yes.

JG: That was the one. And then of course with the membership we did our specialist subject.

ME: And what did you do?

JG: Gastroenterology.

ME: Did you?

JG: Yes.

ME: What influenced you to do that?

JG: The reason for that in a way was because I didn't have a real specialty. I had no training really in cardiology to go in to it in depth. And that was the reason because gastroenterology didn't have so much then.

ME: I chose haematology because that was even shorter, or seemed to be at the time. [Laughs]

JG: Yes. It's funny how you select your subjects in medicine.

ME: Hadn't heard about the slides. [Laughs] How did you find gastroenterology?

JG: Well… I was interested in... I'm always… I think again because it's this background of history taking.

ME: Yes.

JG: I think that's possibly…

ME: Yes it's a great subject for history taking.

JG: Yes because you can really do short cuts a lot if you take a decent history. Even now you don't go through the sausage machine.

ME: Did you come across gastroenterologists in the…the Royal?

JG: When I was working for the… must've been when I was working in the… no, it wasn't. It was after the membership, later. I went down to the department that I was… I think I was out of a job for a time, I can't just remember how it happened before I went to Bangour. But I certainly was down there as a sort of an extra pair of hands down at the Western.

ME: Right. When you – who – when you sat the membership, do you remember that? Do you remember that exam?

JG: Yes. Bits of it.

ME: Tell me about…

JG: General medicine was Fergus Hewat and that was a clinical that was done on the day that the… it would have been brought in by the NHS that all consultants had to retire at 65 or 70, I think it was maybe 70 at first, that the consultants in the Royal had to go. Anyhow, Fergus had got his notice… [Laughs]

ME: How old was he? Was he…

JG: He must've been about that age – probably 65.

ME: And was he not pleased?

JG: No. Because I was warned as I went in, “Careful”. [Laughs]

ME: By the registrar?

JG: That’s right, the registrar warned me. I think it was at the sort of break of the examining that I was warned that he had…

ME: Right.

JG: The other one that examined was [Charles] Kelman Robertson. [inaudible] Oh he was actually quite easy as an examiner.

ME: Very kindly.

JG: Very kind, yes.

ME: I think he was…

JG: I think I knew him much earlier. But much, much earlier I knew him as he was our old GPs assistant in general practice.

ME: Right.

JG: I remember he always came with his shabby gloves on. Always wore them.

ME: The thing that I remember was his smart shoes and we had – I had – we as residents had this theory that he had a contract with a shoe shop in Princes Street to wear these shoes, and he’d wear them for two days and then get a new pair because you had never seen anybody with such clean shoes in your life.

JG: Well, there was, during the war time there was a registrar which they wouldn’t be called back then in the unit and we used to always admire her shoes.

ME: Yes, it’s funny isn’t it? The other thing about Kelman Robertson is we either had to give him or he gave us cigarettes at Christmas.

JG: [Laughs] I don’t remember that bit of him.

ME: And he used to come in on a Sunday morning and do a ward round. I think it was so he didn’t have to go to church because he had a lot of family who were clergy.

JG: Yes, that’s right. He had.

ME: And he would open the ward door and shout, “Point me towards some of my patients.” And he would wave and then close the door, and then drink coffee for the rest of the morning.

JG: Yes. He was slightly theatrical in his…

ME: Approach. And who did you get in gastroenterology?

JG: I think I had David Murray Lion. And somebody else. I can’t remember now just who the two were.

ME: So that would be gracious and…

JG: Oh yes. Oh yes. And that was Bock, was the book you read for that.

ME: Yes.

JG: Three volumes, of course. [Laughs]

ME: That's better than my 50 pages of haematology, isn't it?

JG: Yes.

ME: And all of that was before endoscopy and the massive… changes that came about?

JG: I don't think I did any until I got to Bangour.

ME: So then where did you go? You went to South Shields.

JG: I probably went to the Western.

ME: Yes. But it was only the beginning, wasn't it?

JG: Yep. And then I went to South Shields.

ME: South Shields.

JG: I was there for quite a while, too. I was there for about 18 months to two years.

ME: And how was that?

JG: It was a busy general hospital. Again, in a poor part. It was the infirmary. And I enjoyed it. I was… I think it was the GHMO in those days. I think the senior registrar came out just a bit later. And that was where I had to do casualty as well sometimes if whoever it was was off.

ME: And was there any nonsense about male/female…

JG: No.

ME: That was just accepted that…

JG: In fact, I lived in it was a rather nice house across… just outside in what was known as Westoe Village. And it was there that the hospital owned this. It was rather a nice bit of the town. It was – it was comfortable living. We had our own maid. On Sunday mornings we had our breakfast brought to us by the maid. It was… you know.

ME: Can't be bad, can it?

JG: No.

ME: And then what happened to you?

JG: I came up to Bangour.

ME: Right. As a consultant?

JG: No. A senior registrar. As a registrar.

ME: As a registrar. And who were your bosses then?

JG: Well, Randall Murray Lion came in once a week. Alastair Wright? No, he wasn't at first. Who was…? Yes, he was. He was the... And I presume that must have been one of his first consultant moments. Must be his only one, I think.

ME: Tell us about Alastair Wright.

JG: An interesting man. He also lived quite near. And he worked quite hard but he played golf very hard.

ME: Did he?

JG: Oh yes. He expected the residents and staff, junior staff to really do the work. Quite good at delegation, too.

ME: Was he? Do you mean he was idle, or was he…

JG: No. He wasn't either. Laterally he became a great man for committees.

ME: But what do you think attracted him to that?

JG: Don't know. I think one gets in to – you get on to something, and from that it leads to another and then you get interested. That's what I've found throughout life, I suppose. Because he was very much involved with the BMA [British Medical Association] and I think… because I remember at one point he was chairman of something and he said, "I better join the BMA." [Laughs] He had a great sense of humour. A very dry sense of humour.

ME: Yes. Because Bangour - was it separate - did it feel separate from Edinburgh? Or was it part…?

JG: It was separate. Edinburgh felt very separate from it, if you like. We felt ourselves out there, out to Bangour. It was all that sort of…

ME: And then it was a big pit area, wasn't it? A coal mining -

JG: It was originally, yes. Yes. The silicosis was the thing we saw a lot of.

ME: And what sort of age were people who then began to…?

JG: Well, that would be the sixties.

ME: They were aged about 60?

JG: Yes, about that probably. We had a lot of that. The other thing we saw from time to time was paraffin dermatitis.

ME: Really?

JG: Yes. One of the GPs, Dr Scott who lived in Broxburn, his son also was in practice. By the time I came on Dr Scott he was retired. He was a fascinating old man because he wrote several books on the subject and I think did his MD thesis on paraffin dermatitis.

ME: Did you [inaudible]?

JG: Yes. He must've left not long after I… but I do remember him, yes. Oh, there were some characters in West Lothian.

ME: And was there a lot of contact with GPs?

JG: Yes. Yes, there was a lot. And you phoned the GPs a lot, you know.

ME: Did you ever meet socially?

JG: Yes, from time to time.

ME: That is a distinction from Edinburgh, I think.

JG: That's right. I got very friendly with some of them. I think we then got to the stage where the Armadale lot came to me and said, "We want to have a clinic. Are you willing to come out and do one once a week?" In Armadale, at the practice.

ME: And did you do that?

JG: Yes, I did. Because I decided that not only was it good for the community, it was good for me. [Laughs]

ME: Yes. And then you moved a whole, if you like, reference scale down or did it mean that you remain – I mean, if you think that there's a certain threshold which differs from GP to GP in sending people to…

JG: Oh there is, yes, I know what you mean.

ME: And did it mean that in Armadale you saw people earlier in the…

JG: Very often, because when I went out, there would be a list and they did it through our office. And I would go out and there would be a list of people to see. It wasn't very many, maybe five or six of an afternoon. Now that again let you have a rather more leisurely time, and you could examine them and talk to them. Then we had a cup of tea afterwards. And it was there that I would go in to detail about what I thought and why I thought it, and this is what they wanted because they wanted this as a learning situation.

ME: Yes, yes.

JG: And it was for the same reason that we had ward rounds on a Saturday morning and invited GPs to come if they wanted.

ME: And was that a success?

JG: It was a success in that it was usually the same ones that came.

ME: Right.

JG: But again that was their times, was the trouble. You know if they had a busy surgery they couldn't possibly come. Armadale had I think three and then four in the practice so that was much easier, from that point of view.

ME: How long were you, I hate to use the word, a junior before you became a consultant?

JG: Oh, a long time. Too long! [Laughs] Oh it wasn't until 19… I think it was 1970.

ME: Was it?

JG: Oh yeah, it was years I had been a registrar and senior registrar. But that wasn't uncommon.

ME: That's awful.

JG: I know. But you see that was it. Consultants were all much older. But you see the reason is because before us they were all the ex-service people who were naturally given preference.

ME: I didn't appreciate that. I thought…

JG: Some were quicker and I think some of the specialities obviously were quicker. I mean anaesthetists. They got it quicker. The specials like ENT and these sorts of things. There was only… those were a minority. But I think it must've been –

ME: I hate to say it, I think gastroenterology was.

JG: Was it really? Yes.

ME: I hate to say that. [Laughs] And do you think that was because of the… that Bangour had sort of if you like an onions skins round Edinburgh that people wanted.

JG: I think laterally, certainly when we got residents people who wanted general medicine or general practice knew that it was a good place to go to. Because it was a very general education.

ME: And who did you replace there or did they create a post?

JG: I didn't replace. You see, when I went there was a medical unit consisting of Alastair Wright, myself as the registrar and a resident – two residents.

ME: Which is in a way the ideal team, isn't it?

JG: Oh yes. And you knew everybody in the hospital.

ME: Yes.

JG: And it was the medical unit. That was it. So of course we were busy. Of course we had extra beds right down the ward. But it was only later when we got medical superintendents and people like that who we did without for a long time.

ME: Right. [Laughs]

JG: Well, Bangour was originally… although it was built separately and it was built as an EMS hospital out at the back, it still had a superintendent who was the physician superintendent in the village hospital.

ME: Right.

JG: We used to refer to us as "that damned annexe". That was us.

ME: And who were in that? Who was he?

JG: William McAllister. Yes. He had been a schoolmaster before as one day Drummond and I knew [laughs] because we were summoned because the mess was in trouble after a Halloween party. It was all staff and certain members of course got rather drunk and came out and did a little damage in the place. And he summoned us later in the day. And he regarded himself as the be all and end all. And the thing was that down there, we were never asked down to see patients hardly. Once in a blue moon while he was there. Which was interesting because later when he was retired and his successor came, he immediately started referring because his successor had had a proper training in general medicine, not a basic medical training and had his fellowship at the time when he was there. And he…

ME: Who was that?

JG: I knew you were going to ask me…

ME: Not Alfred –

JG: No, no he was never with us.

ME: Not to worry.

JG: It'll come back. Anyhow. He used to refer things, ask us to go down and see – and you would chase a man mixed oedema under the bed sort of thing, had been in there for years. It was terrible what was incarcerated in mental hospitals in those days. It was only when psychiatrists, enlightened psychiatrists were appointed.

ME: Yes. It's a very interesting history, isn't it, of the mad.

JG: Yes, it is.

ME: Of the good and the bad, and it goes both ways, doesn't it? You know, psychiatrists going in to general medical wards and realising what is going on there.

JG: That's right. It got to the stage laterally when some of the psychiatrists asked to come on our weekly rounds on Saturday. Because in those days we did a weekly round on Saturday mornings.

ME: See, we had Ken Aitken.

JG: Oh had you? He was my neighbour, he lived across the road.

ME: Well, Ken was the lecturer with us in the Ronnie Girdwood set-up. And that was brilliant. It gave one insights in to psychiatry that I didn't know existed.

JG: That's right.

ME: Did you do any psychiatry on the course – you'd have Henderson.

JG: We had Henderson. And we… I had some lectures, but not very many. We were also taken out to Gogarburn.

ME: Yes. That was an outstanding experience, wasn't it?

JG: Yes, and I still remember some chap who was mentally disturbed and of course they were the younger people all together and he was a superb pianist.

ME: Yes.

JG: He was there and I think he performed for us all over the years.

ME: Yes, yes. And then one of the great things people always talked about about Bangour was the postgraduate teaching. That was always regarded as something special to go to.

JG: Well, that's right. Because that again was really Alastair Wright who built that up. He was determined that we would have it because we'd always had other people coming out wanting to join our rounds, and we'd had postgraduate students years back asking if they could come.

ME: Yes. And did you – were you involved at all in the teaching in the…

JG: In Edinburgh?

ME: In Edinburgh.

JG: I wasn't involved in Edinburgh but I was involved a lot at Bangour.

ME: It was all the sort of clinical teaching there.

JG: It was all clinical teaching, yes.

ME: And how did you find that?

JG: I enjoyed it. It was small groups.

ME: A lot of [inaudible]

JG: Yes. You know… I enjoyed it because there were also – what happened was and I remember it was my first experience as a senior registrar was when somebody contacted me from Edinburgh and asked… he was Chinese I think, yes, he was. They were of Hong Kong, there were four or five of them about to sit the membership and would I be kind enough to teach them. And I did tutorials at Nuneaton for them.

ME: Did you have to do – I mean, how did you find it? Did you have to do a reconstruction job in that you had to start from scratch and rebuild it or were you building on…

JG: Their knowledge? No I think what you had in a way because a lot of them had learnt things a different way you know depending on where they'd qualified.

ME: Indeed. And Hong Kong trained were different to…

JG: Hong Kong trained, yes.

ME: I mean, Australians were better… I found myself disadvantaged against Australians, they always seemed to know so much.

JG: Yes, I think you're right there.

ME: But with Indians one had to start again.

JG: Oh yes, you had to start at the bottom.

ME: Yes.

JG: Of course, the Burmese were the ones that we had out. I remember the first of them. Well, we had – we got one or two from the army who came out and I don't know why they came to Bangour or how they got advised to come but then as a result of that, or maybe, I don't know but anyhow. Shortly after this all started obviously teaching being accepted in Edinburgh's teaching hospital. [Laughs] And well that was it, to be accepted, that was the thing. I think Alastair Wright was determined that we would be, and it did happen eventually. It was about that time when we were asked to take Burmese and it was when I was on the council here we had about a dozen sent partly through the British council and partly through scholarships in their own country. And they were sent over to sit the membership, really, basically. But they were given two years.

ME: Right.

JG: And at that time they did not allow husband and wife out together. I think it still may be that, I'm not sure but they certainly didn't allow…but that was delightful because I came out and had the chance to meet them all here because Ronnie Girdwood would welcome them all and…

ME: He did that very nicely.

JG: He did. And Mary of course was a superb hostess.

ME: Yes.

JG: But I then had to try and get them placed. And it was John Anderton was very keen on taking one, and I think that guy still keeps in touch with him.

ME: Right.

JG: And I had several because we'd had postgraduates before. So I had several at Bangour we managed to place and the others dotted around. It was more difficult in Edinburgh, we were obviously expected to… Trouble was, there wasn't the accommodation which we had.

ME: Right. So did you have a series of people coming through?

JG: Yes, well at that time there were six here, six that the British Council sent south and then they swapped around – well, I think they were supposed to swap over but I think we kept the six that came up to Edinburgh because they wanted to stay, they were all delighted. One of them I know went to rheumatology. And I can't remember where the others all went. I used to entertain them a bit and they were such a nice lot.

ME: Yes. Let's have tea now and then we'll talk about the college.

JG: Right. [Laughs]

[Interview recommences]

ME: When did you get involved in the college?

JG: … I think just after I sat the membership. I was involved because we did have… I think we had a – well, we did have… no, it was before that, of course. Yes, it must be… that was 1950… I sat the membership in 1949. And I was away for a bit.

ME: Right.

JG: And then when I came back, really I was…it must be from about the time I was – I got the fellowship, probably.

ME: And that's when you started…?

JG: That's when I was allowed to examine but I think I was involved before that because I remember being involved in some report that we had to give. It was a Royal Commission request to the council and I wasn't on the council then but we were asked – I was asked to chair this committee with Anne Lambie and…Mary MacDonald and I think there was one other. It was all women and getting married women training and getting back to medicine, and what did we think about it all about the plight of women, if you like, of married women.

ME: What… Had you any vision about what would happen? Did you…

JG: I never thought it would be like this, now. With equality.

ME: Did you have any perception that one day…?

JG: Not like this, not at that time.

ME: Do you think its equal now?

JG: … I think it probably is. I don't know. I personally have never come up against any problems.

ME: It's not the problems that you've come up against which are the ones that are the worrying ones, are they. It's if you like the equivalent of ships passing in the night. You are never asked or it doesn't appear because one… That seems to have gone totally, doesn't it?

JG: I think it has. I think so. There doesn't seem to be anything…

ME: Which is wonderful. So you started as an examiner. What was the exam like when you first started? And did you find it daunting to examine?

JG: I enjoyed it because…

ME: Did you?

JG: Yes. I enjoyed meeting so many people.

ME: Right.

JG: And I suppose at first I did, particularly with people who were so much more my senior being examined and that sort of thing, but I soon got used to it. First of all I suppose the clinical bit was done at Bangour I mean they tried to keep you if possible because there were fewer sitting in those days. And it was… it consisted of the clinical and the oral, and the written before it of course. And that was all. At first I was involved from that point of view more earlier because early on Alastair Wright was an examiner and therefore as his registrar I had to prepare everything. That was my first involvement. Perhaps with the college, if you like. And then I started coming in to… There were some junior staff, some meetings to do with the junior staff. I came in on that.

ME: And when did you start moving in to the inner sanctums, if you like? Was your first exposure with the council…

JG: Oh, that was… my first sort of insider… There was symposia I got involved with.

ME: You were on the symposium…?

JG: I was on the symposium committee I think at that time, but I was also on the education… Was it called symposium? Was it education, was it not? At that time. That was the first committee I was on.

ME: And how did you find out? What was the sort of… ?

JG: Well, I mean symposia came in to it. We had to… I don't think there was a separate symposium committee because we didn't have so many.

ME: No.

JG: The St Andrews Day one was the main one. The main thing that we had to organise.

ME: And then you progressed to the council, did you?

JG: Eventually, yes. [Laughs] When I first, there was – yes.

ME: Were you involved in the conference centre.

JG: Oh yes. Very much so, because by that time, after being on the council, well while I was on the council, when Ian Campbell became treasurer he announced that really it was far too much for just one person to do all the fabric and everything else, and that was why it was all landed on me like

that, in the middle of a council meeting. To assist him. That was as well as being a council member. And then… and that of course, he taught me a lot about organising and keeping records of things because he was meticulous, well, he hadn't been the Campbell for nothing. I suppose that was it. And…then I was involved more with conference centre once it was decided we would go out to appeal, and John Strong was by that… John was the President at that time. In fact, he was President I think my first year on the council. I think he was elected I think but I wouldn't be certain, maybe it was my second. Anyhow, we had – it must've been because I remember the long meetings we had before John, very long sometimes. They were long even after. [Laughs]

ME: Who was the other President? Ronnie Robertson?

JG: Ronnie Robertson.

ME: Yes.

JG: And Ronnie Girdwood. I wasn't with Ronnie Robertson, that was… No, Ronnie Girdwood was later.

ME: Right.

JG: You'll have the dates anyway. And I think Ronnie Girdwood was probably before John, I can't just remember that one but certainly the conference centre it was all put out to tender and plans drawn up because up until that time the council members had a hall, a much bigger hall, out at the back where the car park is. And of course they tried to take part of that away as well as a bit of that garden.

ME: What were the… I don't know what the challenges were of doing the conference centre?

JG: Well, the very fact it was a totally new building and it had to be – it had to have all the… sound… it was the audio visual provision made, and how you could get that side of it I think was one of the most difficult.

ME: Right.

JG: I don't… I don't think – that was really the one. And then the other thing of course that the architects found, you know the very steep reek? Well, that had to be, because we had to get a reasonable number to make it viable. And it was also of course before that getting some money. And that's how it started by really trying to go round the fellows and seeing what would be produced and it was then that they had this idea of £1000. I mean John Strong worked very hard, he was on that side of the fundraising side of it and he worked very hard at that. And he said that it would be a good idea if fellows could pay a certain amount and they could have their names on the seats, or in memory of or whatever way they wanted. And a lot of us did, I suppose the whole council felt duty bound to do it, probably. [Laughs] So that was how it started. And then it was put out to the public to cough up. And of course it was all very interesting because we knew that if one bank would give us a good amount, two others would follow. And they did. [Inaudible] If you look down at the plaques you will see there are three banks who've given, I can't remember the amount, I think it was £5000. I can't remember. No, it was more I think. But it'll be down there anyhow.

ME: Right. So it was tit for tat.

JG: It was interesting, yes. And you see this I think now, publicly. This is what happens.

ME: Were you involved in the negotiations with banks and people? Did you go on to –

JG: Well, John Strong was. I wasn't. And Ian Campbell.

ME: Right. And Ian Campbell then began to, if you like, teach you about the actual fabric –

JG: Well, you see I used to have to help him and the thing that I do remember more than anything was the biannual dinners you had to have it absolutely accurate, you had all the names but they were all stuck on little bits of paper stuck on and that was done right up literally until the last minute. Right up to the time, well Michael Oliver's day because he took delight and it was the Secretary that was here, I mean my Secretary that was here, who had to change things at the very last minute when he came in late and wanted so-and-so and so-and-so … Up until then, we'd had our own way of doing what we liked. And I could seat people as I liked which was… easier.

ME: Who were the college support staff? There was Miss Malone…

JG: Oh, and there was Miss Oliver, the two ladies of the college. Miss Loney. Miss Loney and Miss Oliver. I always called them the ladies of the college. [Laughs] Because they were.

ME: How did you – What were they like?

JG: They were very efficient women and really very nice. I mean, in those days the college couldn't have done without someone like that, they were dedicated.

ME: They had no – I mean, I forget which way round it was but one of them was with the Treasurer, wasn't she? Looked after the money.

JG: Miss Oliver was on that sort of side of it, yes. No, it was Miss Loney because she was in the Treasurer's Office.

ME: Yes, that's right. With this massive book.

JG: That's right.

ME: She kept everything in it. Yes.

JG: So there was no separate office for the Treasurer.

ME: No. And how did you find the council? I mean, what were the – do you remember what the issues were? Were the issues totally those, if you like, of the conference centre and the appeal?

JG: No. There were beginnings... At some point, I remember the European Union, before that came to pass, that the things that were coming out from there for regulations about things and it was the detail that they produced which is showing itself now… We had to look at all these sorts of things. We had an education committee.

ME: Were you involved in that?

JG: Yes, I was.

ME: Right.

JG: I was involved in quite a lot of these. This was the thing, once I was on the council I was in hook, line and sinker because there was you know so much to be done.

ME: And what were the EC things that were…

JG: Well… health, regulations to do with medicine, a lot of it. Not it all, but certainly a lot of it was. I didn't have so much to do with that, fortunately. [Laughs]

ME: And then as your time developed you worked with various people, didn't you? You worked with Cliff [Clifford] Mawdsley.

JG: Oh yes, he was Secretary after… now, he may have been Secretary at the time I went to the council. He taught me a little appreciation of art.

ME: Did he?

JG: Oh yeah.

ME: How did you find Cliff Mawdsley?

JG: Oh, I found him excellent. He was a little bit hyperactive, of course… But he was a very helpful person and he worked very hard in the college. He worked hard at everything.

ME: Yes, he –

JG: Everything he did. Nothing was slipshod.

ME: What was his influence on the college do you think?

JG: At the time, I think he had a definite influence in organising things and how he thought things should run.

ME: Right. And do you think he guided the President in a way?

JG: I think he did. I think so.

ME: How did you cope when he died?

JG: It was a terrible shock. I mean he had been to a council meeting the night before. In fact, I followed him out to the back door about something just as he dashed off. And you know it was very sad because he had a lot to give and could influence a lot of things in the college.

ME: Yes, he was. And Ronnie Robertson, did you have a lot to do with him?

JG: Yes, but not as President. I think he was President before I was… Yes, he was because his meetings were the ones I was telling you about.

ME: Yes, his was the longest of those, wasn't it? Did you have a lot to do with him in other respects?

JG: Yes, I think maybe it was with education and things like that because he was… I was on the regional postgraduate committee. I was actually, and I suppose my first things were with education was involved when we had – there was a National Association of Clinical Tutors which really there were just a few in the south east so there were four I think who were appointed. Now, that was working with the postgraduate board and after Alastair Wright gave that up, I took it on. As the tutor at Bangour I therefore went down to the association down there.

ME: Right. How did you find that?

JG: Oh, that was interesting. It was very London and England orientated because when I was Vice Chairman but I didn't want to go on beyond it because I knew a) I hadn't the time and b) I did not know enough about the English setting there.

ME: Right. Yes, it was a big leap, isn't it?

JG: Oh yes. But the thing was I used to keeping going down and eventually I got them to come up here for an annual meeting. They had to but somebody let them down or something was so expensive at the last minute and they said, "Alright, you've said you want us to come up, we'll come up." [Laughs] But they… No, it was an interesting set-up. You were so distant from the CMO [Chief Medical Officer] there. You couldn't just pick up the phone and say…

ME: Or even what…

JG: Well, they used to come, very much the CMO coming to the meetings.

ME: And then when did you become House Convenor?

JG: Well, at some point during that time it was a change from the Assistant Treasurer. Because I didn't really do the money bags, I mean I said I would from the word go I'd look after the fabric. And I can't remember the exact year of that, it was while I was on the council.

ME: And what was meant by fabric?

JG: It must've been anything sort of housekeeping, in a way. And also if there were major deficiencies which had to be looked at.

ME: Did it include keeping the place wind and water tight?

JG: Dusted, do you mean? [Laughs] Yes, I mean, up to a point but of course there was Miller, the College Officer.

ME: Right.

JG: And Miller, the College Officer, was a law unto himself.

ME: How did you manage with him?

JG: I managed with him. [Laughs] Let's put it that way. I was quite firm with him. I want so-and-so done. And that was…

ME: Would he respond to that?

JG: Yes, that was how he would respond.

ME: Because he certainly was a tyrant.

JG: Oh yes, he was. I mean he got away with all sorts of things. Oh, that man.

ME: Yes. What about things like – I mean, did you ever have to go up on to the roof and look at the roof or did you have people who would do that?

JG: No, I was up on the roof but I wasn't solely responsible for that and we got someone to do it, but I was up once or twice. More out of curiosity, I think.

ME: Henry Matthew. Who was Henry Matthew?

JG: He was… was he not Secretary at one point in the college?

ME: Yes, yes. Someone talked about as a child going up – no, John Matthew I think it was talked about going up on the roof and looking down the Forth.

JG: Yes. It was wonderful views.

ME: Was Miller obstructive?

JG: Oh could be. Oh yes. “No, it’s not there.” Was one of his things. “It isn’t there.” If he didn’t want to do it.

ME: Did he have strengths? Did he have times when he surprised you by his helpfulness or..?

JG: Oh yes, he could be very helpful. Very. It came back to the biannual dinners was the thing, it wasn’t just the placing and the ordering of the meal, it had to be meticulous and the whole thing organised beforehand.

ME: It must’ve been a massive task.

JG: It was, it kept you busy. That would be – what year was it I had to do all that? Iain Campbell had retired and I had to do all that because he did it, more or less with my help because he said he needed an assistant. But it must’ve been about 25 years ago roughly, I suppose. I remember thinking one time it must’ve been after I retired, I think. I was more involved certainly by the time I came to retirement. Because I used to – I got a dog, just after that and that was when I thought if I’d known I was getting all this I wouldn’t have got one because it was very difficult to sometimes be here and then get home to that wee stout. But fortunately by that time Mr Wise was in the flat and his wife used to take her down. But no, Miller was… he could… If he agreed to do a thing, he did it well. The silver you see he would put out, and at first I realised he was putting out what he thought he wanted out.

ME: Right. And that also was dictated by how much he was prepared to clean, presumably?

JG: It was supposed to all be cleaned. Before the biannuals it had to all be cleaned. And the candelabra brought down.

ME: That must have been a big task.

JG: No, somebody came in to do that. It was brought down. But if I remember someone came in to do that from… it could’ve been Hamilton and Inches, we had a lot to do with them all through.

ME: And what about – I remember Ian Campbell talking about when a beam in the hall was found to be less good than...

JG: Yes.

ME: …it might’ve been. Were you involved in that?

JG: No. I think that was – well, I was around, I was on the council but I don’t think I had much to do with that. I had more to do with next door. With the restoration of that. Well, this perhaps is an example. Miller lived in. He was supposed to see that everything was alright and go round it each day and see that there was no water coming in and so on. And it was about the last nail that went in to the central heating when they were upgrading it the first time that must’ve gone through the water pipe. And the water poured in to what was then the members’ room and damaged all that. It was right down to the Latham plaster. It was fascinating to see what was behind. [Laughs] It was! It was the original.

ME: Were you involved in the members’ room?

JG: Through there? That room? The Stanley Davidson bit.

ME: No, on the ground floor. The one where the Latham plaster came down.

JG: No, this is the one where the… next door it came down.

ME: You remember there was a members' social…?

JG: Social club? Yes. It wasn't for members only, it was just a social club, that's right.

ME: Were you involved in that?

JG: Yes, I was but it never went off. It never caught on. And I think one of the reasons was – Cliff Mawdsley was much involved with that, too. I think people just didn't use it. They couldn't use it if they didn't know it was there but… You couldn't just go in and make coffee and have coffee and a biscuit.

ME: Do you think it was doomed forever, that there would have ever been a future for that?

JG: Not run that way, no. I don't. And not now. Because people haven't time. I think that wee room's served every purpose.

ME: And what other things were you involved in as the Convenor?

JG: Like the first visit of the Queen. Now, there Ian Campbell was down when she came for lunch. That was a great day.

ME: And what were the things –

JG: I can't remember why she came. Well, she came around – I think it was just a visit to the college. I don't think it was anything specific at that one. The next time of course it was the – well, the next royal visit was the Queen mum when she opened the conference centre.

ME: Did that mean you had a lot to do with the palace? Did you… There was a lot of coming and going?

JG: Yes.

ME: Was that interesting?

JG: Oh yes. That was interesting getting it all organised and that took some organisation.

ME: And did you – did they come with a list or…? Was it easy to organise from what they gave you?

JG: Well… yes, they told you what was expected, told you the dress for those who were meeting her. I was trying to think why they came the first time, why the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh came but it must've just been a visit full stop.

ME: And were you told what they would eat and things like that?

JG: Yes. You set a menu. And I was really all the time as House Convenor I was very fortunate because Crawfords catered and there was Mr Dick who was the senior and he gradually rose up through the ranks there, and he was exceptionally good and he would come and I remember when I said and he said, "Oh, don't worry", when they were coming, "I know what they need." Same thing happened when we were supposed to have the senior Rabbi coming but his deputy came instead because I didn't know what you provided and he said, "That's easy, we've done this before."

ME: Smoked salmon.

JG: Well [indecipherable]. I can't remember what he produced. And we dealt with one of the stationers, [Bodies] I think, were the stationers for all the invitations and everything, for the biannual ones, too.

ME: So there were nice patterns that were –

JG: Well, that's right. You know it's… You got a great deal of help from the Royal Secretary. It was the same when Princess Anne came and she – that was and interesting visit, there was a lot to do there because she stayed. She came to be… she was elected a fellow, so she came to be made a fellow. She opened up the… she opened the bit downstairs and then she came to dinner. And that's when I realised she never took alcohol.

ME: Did she not?

JG: No. She doesn't drink alcohol at all and even the beef, which Mr Dick said, "I think we should give her the roast." But he didn't do the beef with any wine, nothing like that. It was just in its own juice. It was lovely.

ME: Right.

JG: It was a very good dinner.

ME: Yes. And did you have to draw up lists – I remember one occasion upstairs coming – in the library, coming round the Queen and the Duke, and did you have to –

JG: That must've been the lunch, was it?

ME: Yes. And did you have to set up the whole protocol for that?

JG: I think that was getting near to Ian Campbell's last fling. Or maybe the opening of the centre. The conference centre was his last. But you had to get that – there were various people invited. And the sort of reception committee who were presented were the council. But others, one or two others and I can't remember why Lord Strathclyde, but obviously an old friend because she greeted him as an old friend and I don't know why he was invited. I think he was probably an honorary fellow because they had to be invited.

ME: Right.

JG: And it's a long list of people who had to be – had to invite.

ME: And a lot of mumblings if you miss anybody out. And… Let me think now. When did they begin to have college managers? Were you in –

JG: No, earlier on. That was the first college manager. Early on, I think it was in Cliff Mawdsley's day we had the college I think it was the [bursar] or something. Anyway, it was not a success.

ME: Why was it not a success?

JG: We didn't pay them enough. That was the conclusion we reached. For the first and second ones they weren't a success. And then Iain came. He was a success in that did – he put a lot of work in to it but I have to say I think he was too rigid with his staff. It was the army and he was ex-service. And this was the sort of person, just the same as you've had with Dick Smith recently. He kept them – to

me, it's interesting looking on because I always felt Elliot ran it like the General in the army. And the other chap, Dick Smith, was a lot more laid back naval type. It just was the difference.

ME: He was Gurkhas, wasn't he?

JG: He was Gurkhas. Yes he was. Well, I had a friend – a friend's husband, actually – and he was with the Gurkhas. He wasn't a Gurkha himself – well, he must've been because he went round to all the reunions, but he was the same rigid, rigid with the family.

ME: And do you think that this was his Achilles heel in what he did?

JG: Yes, I think so.

ME: Because I think in our training we are modulated, if that's the word or… by the nursing staff, weren't we?

JG: Yes, that's right. We'd have to be.

ME: Because I remember one particular sister used to just fix me and say, "Martin, behave yourself." Although she would always call me Dr Eastwood when we were outside.

JG: Yes.

ME: But when we were on our own, just the two of us, and I was being irascible, she would take me aside and say, "Behave yourself, Martin."

JG: So you'd behave yourself. [Laughs] It is interesting, though, isn't it?

ME: The problem it enforces is not such a welcome…

JG: No, because it is very much a very rigid discipline.

ME: Yes. Yes. Was it a success, do you think?

JG: Which one?

ME: [Inaudible]

JG: Oh, I think so in that it sounded a lot of the changes, he brought in a lot, and he able to take over the running of the conference centre a lot more. He didn't do the things that Dick Smith does, you know he was not quite so wily. But he… Oh yes, I think it was an improvement. I think you'll get a different story from the staff of the day.

ME: Right. Did it have an immediate effect in the way that the council ran? Or did the council continue to deal with things which were more…

JG: I think we continued, I don't think there was any great difference there but there were major changes once he came in to it and of course once we got the conference centre which we were able to let it out. Then of course the worry was so that we could let it out without losing our charitable status.

ME: And how was that achieved. What was the…

JG: Well, we took advice from John McPhee. He guided us through that one.

ME: Right. Is that the present John McPhee or his father ?

JG: No, the present one. I didn't really know his father.

ME: I was quite surprised when I met Jock because I think having met his father when a collegiate member I sort of did a double take.

JG: You obviously know him as Jock, too. I do, actually. But at the college…

ME: Well, I know him socially in a different world.

JG: Yes. Quite. Yes, a nice pair.

ME: We play bridge, or… And what effect did the conference centre have on the life of the college? I mean, did it change things quite dramatically?

JG: Gradually over the years, yes. Very much so in that they were able to put certain things out to the conference centre and of course we had that seminar room upstairs.

ME: And you think it broadened the… do you think it make it into a less parochial college? Do you think it make it in to an expanding college?

JG: Oh it did. It did without a doubt. We got ourselves known a bit more. I mean this was just something behind closed doors. That's what it was, you know.

ME: Yes. EFAS coming in, for example.

JG: That's right.

ME: Yes.

JG: Well that was when I was House Convenor we negotiated.

ME: Did you?

JG: That was negotiated.

ME: And how was that negotiated?

JG: That was Ian Elliot I think was here because I think he did the final bit. Because the trouble was they hadn't an awful lot of money to spend. We wanted some money.

ME: Right.

JG: So it was agreed that they could come in once a month. I don't know what the agreement is now but it still holds.

ME: Because it's a very large community, isn't it?

JG: Well, it was great, yes. Because you see they used to only allow 200 members. They used to use the university and the sound was not good, you couldn't really hear. The acoustics were poor in there. Whereas that was the one big thing in that conference centre, the acoustics are so good.

ME: Right, yes.

JG: I didn't say it before but one of the things that John Strong delighted in was when we were trying to select seats for that conference centre. And that was – he used to try every kind that was sent for us to look at. And when he found it could fit his long legs. [Laughs] And that was how we got such good seating. 301 seats.

ME: So if it had been John Croft as President…

JG: It might've been different! [Laughs] You needed long legs. No, he made sure that the seats were comfortable.

ME: Did you work with James Syme?

JG: Yes, on the council.

ME: But were you Secretary or –

JG: I wasn't, no. I wasn't Secretary at that time.

ME: No. Who succeeded you as – Ross?

JG: Ross McHardy. But then that's when things changed because by that time Dick Smith had come in and he was able to take on a lot of that work. I mean, he did and he found out as you know the staff have increased over the years. Because I always had to put the wine out for council meetings and that was William MacLeod taught me that one. And it was first at one of our own reunions he got hold of me, not a college thing but we were having a dinner here. And he said, "Now, you count the wine out, count what you ordered, see that you've got it all." We had it coming I suppose from outside at that time. And he said, "And be sure to go and count your bottles after." And Willie himself came in to count all the bottles, he had nothing to do at the dinner but he would come in just see that we weren't cheated.

ME: I see. This is why you do six years of medicine and then the fellowship to count bottles. [Laughs]

JG: I had to keep the – in those days, the Treasurer's Office had to keep with a stock stored with whisky. And so had the President's Office. They both had their drinks in their office. Miss Loney used to do that before.

ME: Did she? Because when John Croom was President it was gin.

JG: It was gin. Well, that was what's there. And I don't know if they've finished the whisky yet that Willie ordered as his last drink before he went off. But I'm not joking when I tell you that he ordered it way back when he was Treasurer.

ME: Right.

JG: And he wanted enough that it would last. But of course there isn't so much drinking of whisky or so much drinking full stop.

ME: No. Is there anything that we haven't covered?

JG: I don't think there can be, is there?

ME: Great. Well, that was great fun.

JG: [Laughs] Yes. I agree.

ME: Thank you very much.