

9EI-1034

AGNES DOROTHY FAIRCHILD

BIRTHDATE: 1900

INTERVIEW DATE: JANUARY 12, 1999

AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW: 98

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INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE

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TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: MELANIE DANIELS

TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY: ELIZABETH ORCUTT/IS

SCOTLAND, 1911

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PORT: GLASCOW

RESIDENCES:

- **SCOTLAND: EDINBURGH**
- **US: CORNWALL, NY; EAST ORANGE, BRICKTOWN, NJ**

HISTORIAN'S NOTE: Mrs. Fairchild's daughter, Dottie Sachs, is present.

LEVINE: –Today is January 12, 1999, and I am here in Bricktown, New Jersey with Mrs. Agnes Dorothy Fairchild and her daughter, Dottie Sachs. And this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service. Mrs. Fairchild came from Scotland in 1911 at the age of ten. At the time of this interview, Mrs. Fairchild is ninety-eight years old. Okay, if you would say for the tape, your birth date, your birth date?

FAIRCHILD: My birth date is November 23, 1900.

LEVINE: And where in Scotland where you born?

FAIRCHILD: In Abbey Hill, Edinburgh. And I went to school there to the fourth grade. I loved living in Scotland, and when I heard that we were going to America, I didn't like it. I – I didn't want to come, but we had to come because my father couldn't find work. It was very hard to find work in Scotland. And my mother's father, my grandfather, offered to pay our way -- my brother (who was five years older than me, sixteen) and Mother. But dad came a year ahead of us to get work. And he lived with one of my mother's sisters in Cornwall, New York. So, we -- my grandfather said that he would give us some money to come here and [pause].

LEVINE: How about if I start asking you questions?

FAIRCHILD: That'd be better.

LEVINE: We'll start back and,

FAIRCHILD: That'd be better,

LEVINE: Is Abbey Dale,

FAIRCHILD: Abbey Hill.

LEVINE: Abbey Hill, okay. What do you remember about Abbey Hill?

FAIRCHILD: Oh, Abbey Hill was very nice. It was right near the Queen's Park.

LEVINE: And what was that like?

FAIRCHILD: And right near Hollywood Palace.

LEVINE: Oh.

FAIRCHILD: We lived right near Hollywood Palace.

LEVINE: Describe Hollywood Palace.

FAIRCHILD: Well, I can't really describe it. The King and Queen used to come there every summer, and they would have what they call the 'tattoo'. It was the kilties, and the King and Queen would come out on a -- on a balcony. And everybody used to, you know, went to the Queen's -- to Hollywood Palace -- and the King. King George, and the Queen Mother now. It was before they were married. They had two daughters and one was the Queen now. And they used, I always remember, they used to sing a song when they came out on the balcony and it would be 'Will You No Come Back Again?'.

LEVINE: Oh.

FAIRCHILD: They wanted them to come back every year, and they did. But it was a great day for that tattoo. And they had all kinds of dancing and it was very nice. And Queen's Park was a great -- it's there yet, but it was a great time. I always remember I had my tonsils taken out when I was about five years old and I went to the hospital to have it -- to have them taken out. And you didn't stay in the hospital, you had to come home. And my dad carried me all the way through the Queen's Park. And I remember the house was in back somewhere, and I -- I was quite sick. But in those days they just, you just had your tonsils out and then you go home.

LEVINE: Wow. What, do you remember by any chance any of the words, or could you sing a part of 'Will You Come Back Again'?

FAIRCHILD: (Sings) 'Will ye no come back again? Will ye no come back again? Better lo'ed ye canna be. Will ye no come back again?' And everybody sang. It was – it was a lovely time.

LEVINE: And you went to school?

FAIRCHILD: I went to school in the fourth grade. And I always remember -- if you did something wrong, they had a strap. And they would hit you on the hand with it, but that was all. But I'd always remember, they had the -- what they called the Palmer Method in writing and my handwriting today is very good.

LEVINE: Do you remember what the Palmer Method is?

FAIRCHILD: Well, no I can't remember what it is. But I know it's --. We used to have like, take -- do five A's, and make five lines. And that taught you how to do the A. And you did the B, and the C. And it was I think, yeah, oh, we made o-- ovals. That was the exercise, and then the -- lines up and down. And I -- I really learned how to write very well. And I liked school. I really liked school.

LEVINE: Now was this a religious school, or public school?

FAIRCHILD: It was a public school, yeah. And I think it's still there, it's in Abbey Hill.

LEVINE: What was its name?

FAIRCHILD: Just Abbey Hill. Abbey Hill School, yeah

LEVINE: And was your family religious?

FAIRCHILD: No. Well, my grandfather was. And we always went to Marnoch – Marnochs Church. And every Sunday you had to go to church, and Grandpa used to take us. And my grandfather and grandmother were very religious

LEVINE: What religion was that?

FAIRCHILD: Presbyterian. And when all the – all the – the -- we all lived together. My – my -- around each other's. My mother, my mother's sister (Jean) lived - -. Oh – my grandfather had a business, sold papers and all kinds of paraffin -- oil and paint.

LEVINE: A little shop?

FAIRCHILD: A little shop in Abbey Hill. And I –I remember he -- they had ten children.

LEVINE: Now, was this your mother's father?

FAIRCHILD: This is my mother's father -- mother

LEVINE: What was your mother's maiden name?

FAIRCHILD: My mother's name was Mary Smith [Laughs]. A real old name and I remember --

LEVINE: And your grandfather, do you remember his name?

FAIRCHILD: Oh yes, my grandfather was a nice old man.

LEVINE: What,

FAIRCHILD: He – he had a long beard, and he lived to be sixty-three. And they had, they were able to have a little summer place in Kippen, near Stirlingshire. And I always remember going, you know, going there every summer. And I al—I re – I reminisce now. It was — they was such a nice place. And it was e-- every, all the children had two weeks at Kippen. And it was a stucco house. It had up and down stairs. And I remember the stairs were real steep up to the -- I think there was two bedrooms on the second floor. And we really had a nice time.

LEVINE: Can you remember any experiences in Kippen?

FAIRCHILD: Yes, I do. There was a, they're – they're outhouses. There was a place to wash clothes, and there was, like gardens. And Grandpa used to have a garden. Pla-- he had planted all his vegetables, and I remember they grew gooseberries and all the kids used to go in the back and pick the strawb-- gooseberries. And we all got very sick and they wanted to know what we ate. So we had to tell Grandmother that we ate the gooseberries! And of course, we got punished, I just don't remember how we got punished, but we got punished. But we really had a nice time in Kippen.

LEVINE: And how about your grandfather, do you remember any experiences with him?

FAIRCHILD: Oh, yes. It was a -- down the road, it was all dirt roads, you know. And down the road, it was what they called the *balloch*, and it was a long road with big trees on either side. And I remember one day, my cousin (who is ninety-seven) we w-- went down there and started to walk down the

balloch. And all of a sudden we looked down and there was a – a hobo coming up the road. And tha-- they didn't call them -- they used to walk through the *balloch*. And my cousin and I got scared and we turned around and ran back home! But I always remember that – th—that th-- they used to stop at all the houses for something to eat. And I remember that that day that my cousin and I walked down there. We didn't walk too far because we were frightened. But he didn't touch us. He just -- I guess my grandmother give him something to eat and he went on his way.

LEVINE: Now this was in Kippen?

FAIRCHILD: This was Kippen, yeah.

LEVINE: Now, how do you spell 'bala'?

FAIRCHILD: B-A-L-L, B-A-L-L-A-C-K. Yeah, they call it the *balloch*. And that led to a farmhouse and I remember -- I think their name was M-A-I-N, Main -- and they used to have a farm. And Grandma got all her vegetables there and I think they lived quite a while. But I remember Grandpa used to have all kinds of vegetables and that's what – that's what they used, you know, in their everyday. And, oh, and there was a -- you walked up to the village and there was a – a shop there by the name of Blair. And Grandma -- we walked up everyday with Aunt Jenny and Aunt Minnie and they would give us a penny to buy sweets with. So, I really loved going to Kippen.

LEVINE: What kind of sweets would you be choosing?

FAIRCHILD: Little penny, penny candy, like butterscotch and licorice. I remember licorice sticks we had. But I know we used to love to go to the village. And that's where the church was, up in the village. But it was a very nice

little place -- all the small stucco houses. And it was very nice. And they had -- they had seven daughters and three sons. And the daughter's names were Lizzie -- Lizzie, Mary, Jean, Aggie, and my mother, Mary. Did I say seven? And three sons, one was Sandy, Willie, and uh, Sandy, Willie, and Jimmy.

LEVINE: This is your mother's,

FAIRCHILD: That's my mother's brothers and sisters

LEVINE: Now how about your Grandmother, what was she like?

FAIRCHILD: Oh, she was a very, very nice old lady. She wasn't too old then, but she dressed so funny that she looked old, you know?

LEVINE: How did she dress?

FAIRCHILD: She had a real long, wide skirt and a shawl. And then she wore a little bonnet on her head, I remember that. And she was a very good living [sic] lady. And two of the daughters never married, Jenny and Minnie, never married. But the others -- Aunt Lizzie had one son, and Aunt Jean had one daughter, and Jimmy -- I think -- had Aunt Bessie...or cousin Bessie. And they -- they didn't have too many children; I guess they grew up with too many children! But they were nice living people and very good to us, Grandma and Grandpa. I did have a picture of Kippen house; I don't know where it is though. Dottie, it might be in my drawer but --

LEVINE: How about --

FAIRCHILD: I have my birth certificate!

LEVINE: Oh, wonderful.

FAIRCHILD: Would you like to see it?

LEVINE: When we get finished, I'll look at it.

FAIRCHILD: Okay, okay.

LEVINE: Tell me about your other grandparents?

FAIRCHILD: My father's mother, my father's father died when, while he was quite young. And my father had one brother and a sister, Aunt Dora. And the brother was Harry, I think, if I remember right. And they were -- they were very poor, too. Aunt Dora married William Moody and lived -- they all lived together (in a -- it was, I think it was only like a two room apartment) and they all --

LEVINE: You mean your Grandmother?

FAIRCHILD: My Grandmother and --

LEVINE: Dora.

FAIRCHILD: -- the daughter. And my, oh, my mother and father didn't live with them. My mother and father lived in -- in Edinburgh. I was born in Edinburgh.

LEVINE: Oh.

FAIRCHILD: Yeah. But they lived in Lief, that's a suburb of Edinburgh. And they, they were always very poor, too. Aunt Dora had three children, I think, and the -- we used to go to visit them quite often. And Grandma, she had one

eye, I remember that. And she -- it was an accident with a, with the i-- an ironer that she used to wind, used to turn to -- to iron the clothes. And she was ironing one day and her hand slipped. And the handle came back and hit her in the eye. And she had to lose that eye. So, I always remember that she always had a patch over her eye. But she used to wear a bonnet, too.

LEVINE: And long skirts?

FAIRCHILD: And a long s-- oh, long, long skirt and a shawl. Always remember she wore a shawl. Oh, good.

LEVINE: Okay,

FAIRCHILD: Oh, that's a --

LEVINE: Pictures of, of, um,

FAIRCHILD: That's a picture of the house!

LEVINE: This is the house...?

FAIRCHILD: In, in Kippen.

LEVINE: In Kippen? Oh, ah ha.

FAIRCHILD: And this is, this is my dad right here. He was -- he was in the Volunteers.

LEVINE: In Lief, in 1903?

FAIRCHILD: Yeah.

LEVINE: Oh, that's wonderful.

FAIRCHILD: Yeah.

LEVINE: Now what was your father's name?

FAIRCHILD: Alexander Alan. Alexander Alan Lord. They called him 'Eck', E-C-K.
(laughs) But he was a good-looking man, quite – quite tall.

LEVINE: When you lived in Abbey Hill,

FAIRCHILD: Yeah?

LEVINE: Do you remember the house you lived in there?

FAIRCHILD: I think we lived in two or three houses. It seems to me we moved around a lot. But I remember I was born in Willow Bray -- Willow Br-- Willow Bray Road. But I went to school in Abbey Hill. And I remember we lived in a two-room house in Baltic Street. But I used to have to walk to school, but I li—I liked walking.

LEVINE: Did you have sisters and brothers in Scotland?

FAIRCHILD: I had – I had one – one sister and I had two brothers. But my one brother, Jimmy (who was named after my grandfather) he died at seven years of age. My mother and father and -- we were walking. We used to – we used to walk a lot in Scotland. And I remember, Jimmy ran ahead of my mother and father and he fell. And when -- that night when he come home, he had a pain in his stomach. And they took him to the

hospital and operated on. He had done something to his stomach. And they operated on him. He came out of the operation, I remember. But he -- the nurse wasn't at his bedside and he wriggled, wriggled, and broke the stitches. And he died. But I always remember that was a very sad thing because he was my grandfather's favorite grandchild. And he was the first grandchild, and I always remember it was quite a sad time.

And then I had a sister who died at eighteen months. She died with what they call consumption of the bowels. And she was a very pretty little girl, she had curly hair. And my -- then my brother Alan, he died. He was married and died at...how old was? Oh, she gone. He was forty-nine when he died. I th-- no, fifty-two when he died, he died in '49. But he died of -- he was in the navy. And he -- he, they were -- (clears throat) they were out one day and he was in a -- in a truck. And they were going through a road where there was a lot of, what do you call those... like, they grow on trees and they fall?

LEVINE: Oh, coconuts?

FAIRCHILD: Dottie? [Speaking to daughter]

LEVINE: Coconuts.

FAIRCHILD: Coconut trees. And one of them hit my brother on the si-- on the head and they think that's what caused his death. It did something, and he got cancer and he died.

LEVINE: Wow. How old were you when your first brother died?

FAIRCHILD: My first? I was just a baby.

LEVINE: Oh.

FAIRCHILD: Because my brother was – I was just a --I think, I was the youngest. So,
my brother -- it was my brother and my sister and me as a baby. I just
don't know how old I was.

LEVINE: So the sister who died when she was eighteen months?

FAIRCHILD: Eighteen months.

LEVINE: How old were you then? Were you younger than she?

FAIRCHILD: I think I was just a baby.

LEVINE: I see. So you can't like remember a funeral or anything?

FAIRCHILD: No.

LEVINE: For your brother and sister when you were little?

FAIRCHILD: No, no, no. I can't remember that, but I do remember my grandfather's
funeral.

LEVINE: Oh, was that, that was in Scotland.

FAIRCHILD: That was in Scotland.

LEVINE: Can you describe that? What was that like?

FAIRCHILD: Yes. We lived in -- my grandfather had this store and they lived in the
back of the store and there was bedrooms downstairs. And I remember

my grandfather -- there was a -- steps across -- across the street and they used to go up the steps to the High -- what they call the High Road. And I always remember the grandchildren were told to go up there and watch the funeral. And in those days, there was -- there was no women allowed to go to the funeral and all the men walked behind the hearse down to the -- down to the fu—down to the cemetery.

LEVINE: And then the women could be at the cemetery? Or not?

FAIRCHILD: No, they weren't allowed to go to the funeral -- just, just men. And I will always remember his friends and all his church friends had -- you know -- they were all dressed in their long t-- coat tails. And I remember that they walked behind the hearse.

LEVINE: Now was there such a thing as a funeral parlor or was he laid out at home?

FAIRCHILD: No, they were bur-- buried from the house. The -- the coffin was laid out in what they call the parlor.

LEVINE: Do you remember that?

FAIRCHILD: I remember that. And I remember they were -- he was wrapped in a shroud. There's no -- no dressing up, just wrapped in a shroud. Just a plain box, no -- no fancy coffin. And that was how he was buried.

LEVINE: Now did people come in? Friends and relatives come into the home during the time he was laid out in the home?

FAIRCHILD: I --I think so. But not many, it was all very quiet. And I don't – I forget how long they kept him. But I know that the coffin was in the – in the parlor.

LEVINE: Now this picture that we have here where your father is --

FAIRCHILD: Yes.

LEVINE: What did you call that, what he was in?

FAIRCHILD: The Volunteers.

LEVINE: The Volunteers

FAIRCHILD: Yes.

LEVINE: And what were they volunteers for?

FAIRCHILD: I think they would volunteer to go to war, if there was war. And I just don't know. Taken -- They're taken at Lief, 1903. And my,

LEVINE: What can, can you describe your father? What, how...?

FAIRCHILD: My father was a great, a great singer. He loved to sing all the Scotch songs and he played a melo — a melodion and we used to s-- sing all — all Scotch songs. And I remember learning some of the songs that he used to — he used to sing.

LEVINE: Could you sing a song that he taught you?

FAIRCHILD: Well, he taught me one. (Sings) 'I'm in love with a bonny, wee lass, but I don't think she cares much for me. The last time I met her she told me that I –she told me --

DOTTIE: (sings) do anything for her –

FAIRCHILD: --I'd–

DOTTIE: (whispers) do anything for her

FAIRCHILD: --do anything for her, in fact I would dee [sic]. She turns 'round and tells me she thought I was daft, but she fair knocked me ~~ee~~outout when she said, 'What, marry you? A whoa, man, you're daft.' She does nee care for me, not a little b-i-t. She is what the neighbors call a lady. I've known her all my life. I'd like to have her for my wife. I loved her ever since she was a baby. (laughs) I'm foo anew, I'm absolutely foo, I adore the country I was born in. For my name is Jock McCraw and I dinna care a straw. I've somethin' in my bottle for my morning'. (Both laugh) I remember a lot of – lot of songs.

LEVINE: Oh, that's wonderful. And how about your mother, how would you describe her?

FAIRCHILD: My mother was a servant, growing up. In fact, all the girls went, were servants to the rich.

LEVINE: Did she have a particular job? What kind of?

FAIRCHILD: No, my mother the --the women didn't work. Oh, you mean in the -- when she was young, you mean?

LEVINE: Yeah, in the wealthy person's house. What did she do?

FAIRCHILD: She dusted and had a uniform. A white apron and a little cap, I remember that.

LEVINE: Now would she live there or would she live at home?

FAIRCHILD: She lived at the house.

LEVINE: At the house.

FAIRCHILD: Yes. At the -- at the -- wherever -- where she was working. She lived there, and then I guess they had their days off. But -- but th—but they have a name for it. But I remember most of the girls were -- in fact, my grandmother was a servant growing up.

LEVINE: Now both sides, your mother's side and your father's side, they were born in Scotland?

FAIRCHILD: Yes, born in Scotland.

LEVINE: So your grandparents were born there, too?

FAIRCHILD: My grandparents were born in Scotland, yeah.

LEVINE: Well, you mentioned your father was the first one to come to this country.

FAIRCHILD: Yes.

LEVINE: Now, did he have relatives here when he first came?

FAIRCHILD: No, but yes. Not – not his relatives, my mother's relatives. Aunt Jean. She, her and Uncle Sandy, they came a year ahead of my father. And they had one daughter, my cousin, who is living now. She lives in Essex Fells right now, and she's fifteen months younger than I am, and she's still living. We go up there to see her quite often.

LEVINE: So it was through your mother's relatives that your father happened to come?

FAIRCHILD: Yes. And they came to a little town called Firthcliffe, a little suburb of Cornwall, New York. Where the military academy is now.

LEVINE: Oh, I see, and so he went and stayed with your mother's relatives at first?

FAIRCHILD: He stayed with Aunt Jean until we came.

LEVINE: I see. And he left? The reasons he left?

FAIRCHILD: Left Scotland, because he had no -- didn't have any work.

LEVINE: What had he been doing for work in Scotland?

FAIRCHILD: He --he was what they called a saddler. He had something to do with the seats in the trains, makin' – makin' the seats. And he – he – he was called a saddler, sewing the seats. And, but it got so that there was -- there wasn't enough work for everybody. But that's what he did.

LEVINE: Okay, we're going to pause here for a second.

END SIDE A BEGIN SIDE B

LEVINE: Okay, we're resuming the interview here, and we were talking about your father coming first

FAIRCHILD: Yes.

LEVINE: To this country, and that he was a saddler.

FAIRCHILD: When he left Scotland, yes. And saddler is, they make horses' harnesses. I remember, just, he got – he got a job when he came. When – in the year -- later years; he got a job as saddler up in – in Cambridge, New York. But when he first came here, there was a carpet mill in Firthcliffe (suburb of Cornwall). That's when he first came. And he got a job in the – in the carpet mill, and that's where he worked. And I remember he got nine dollars a week [Laughs]. But that was – that was a lot then because everything was so much cheaper. And we had a very nice house.

LEVINE: Well, did your father write to you and your family before you came over here? Do you remember that?

FAIRCHILD: Oh, yes. I think he wrote and told mother about gettin' a job, and that he liked America. But I remember when we came, I didn't like America at all.

LEVINE: Did you, you said you didn't really want to leave?

FAIRCHILD: I didn't want to leave Scotland. I loved Scotland. And when I went to school here, they didn't know what to do with me because (and I think Rita was telling me the same thing one day) I was far advanced for what grade I was in. I left Scotland in the fourth grade. And I remember I had an accent and I -- all the kids used to laugh at me and I would cry because they were laughing. I was – I was a crybaby. But the teacher

was so nice, she said, 'Don't mind when – when they – when they laugh at you. They're not laughing at you, they're laughing with you. They're laughing because they like to hear you (laughs) talk'.

LEVINE: And did you believe her?

FAIRCHILD: Yes, I did. I believed her. And then I -- I -- I just didn't pay any attention. She says, 'Just don't pay any attention to them. But they're not laughing because they're -- want to be mean. They're just -- they just like to hear your accent'. So I remember that and I, they were very pleased with the way I used to write and of course, school here was a lot different than – than Scotland, you know. But I went to the eighth grade and I was fourteen. And I went to s—I went to work in the carpet mill, too.

LEVINE: How was the school different? How was the school different?

FAIRCHILD: Well, I guess the different geography, and I – I remember the teacher saying that how good my writing was, you know. And the arithmetic, I guess the arithmetic was about the same. But I – I can't remember a lot about it.

LEVINE: Can we, if we could back up a minute? What, do you remember how you felt when you were leaving? How you felt about coming here?

FAIRCHILD: Well, I guess, I didn't know what it was going to be like. And my mother, she -- she didn't really want to come either. But it was just a matter of necessity. We had to. But I remember coming to Aunt Jean's house and how – how good she was to us.

LEVINE: Well, before you left, did you know anything about, what did you expect? Did you have certain expectations about this country?

FAIRCHILD: No. I -- I didn't have, but I -- I know I was -- I was glad to see Madge. My cousin's name was Madge. And I was awfully glad to see Madge again because she's been like a sister to me. Wasn't like my cousin. In fact, my mother took different jobs and I -- I stayed with Aunt Jean. Most of -- most of my -- my youth, I was with Aunt Jean most of the time.

LEVINE: And how about like when you left? Did people come to say goodbye, or what was it like when you were actually leaving?

FAIRCHILD: I do remember all the relatives coming to say goodbye and the few tears. I remember that, but I don't -- I don't remember too much about it.

LEVINE: Do you remember the actual departure? Actually leaving your home and how,

FAIRCHILD: No, I can't remember that. I just remember getting on the boat, I remember that. And I had a big wart on my wrist and everybody kept saying to me, 'You'll never get to America with that wart there'. And I remember there was a doctor at the -- on the -- when we came on the boat. There was a doctor there looking you over, and he -- I remember him saying, 'What are you doing with that ugly thing on your -- on your wrist?' (laughs) And I cried then, too. But my mother told him we were going to have it taken off we got to America, and we did. I always -- it was right there, a great, big thing.

LEVINE: Now where did you leave from?

FAIRCHILD: Glasgow.

LEVINE: Glasgow. And do you remember getting to Glasgow from Abbey Hill?

FAIRCHILD: No, I don't remember that too well. But I remember we came steerage and we were down underneath. I remember it was kind of rough.

LEVINE: And the ship, the name of the ship?

FAIRCHILD: Columbia, yes. And I think it was, we were about the third day out when we hit the iceberg.

LEVINE: Why don't you tell all about that? Whatever you can remember.

FAIRCHILD: I remember it was quite foggy, I remember that. And my brother, he used to play near the rail. And just before we hit the iceberg, he was sitting on the rail, and just got down. Otherwise, he would have been thrown into the water. But I remember this terrible jarring, and they say that it's a -- the captain seen the iceberg at the last minute and reversed the propeller. Otherwise, instead of us hitting the iceberg, the iceberg floated to us. And I remember that there was a terrible, terrible excitement, running all -- people running all over, cry-- kids crying. And I remember there was one man, he had been drinking and he had a bag of candy and he said, 'Where's all those greetin' bairns?' That meant, where's all those crying children?

And the lookout man, he was on a -- a top of a mast. And he was the one that looked for the icebergs, and he -- he was killed. But they never -- they never told that. They just said there was one man killed. But I remember they said it -- it damaged the bow of the boat and there was a hole in -- in it as big as a horse and wagon could go through. And we -- we had to stay. We had to, we were stopped there all -- all night. And if it had been stormy, we might have sunk. But all you could hear was hammering. They tried to fix it as the best they could. But they fixed it so

that we could just move very slowly. And it took -- I think we were about ten or twelve days late in getting -- getting to America. But I remember it was quite a lot of excitement.

LEVINE: What were people doing? Do you remember?

FAIRCHILD: They, well, I guess the workmen tried to quiet them. And I remember, I guess there was a lot of people wondering what was going to happen -- whether we were going -- going to, you know, get it fixed or not. But they -- they did fix the hole as -- as much as they could. I -- I remember my mother saying that she wondered if my father would, you know, it's likely they tel-- telegraphed it. But it was -- it was quite a -- a busy time.

LEVINE: Was there any talk about getting into lifeboats, or anything like that?

FAIRCHILD: No, I don't remember that. But I don't think so. I think that whatever -- whatever they did they got things quieted down, and then started to fix it as best they could.

LEVINE: Now this happened before ~~the~~ *Titanic* went down?

FAIRCHILD: A year before, yeah.

LEVINE: Fourteen, 1914. Oh, nine months before, okay. So, that must have been very frightening?

FAIRCHILD: Oh, it was frightening. I -- I remember. We were all crying, all the kids were crying. And I guess it took quite a lot for the parents to, you know, to quiet them. And in -- in this article here, it tells how many was in first class and second class and then steerage. And there was about a -- more than a thousand people on the boat.

LEVINE: Now you were traveling with your mother?

FAIRCHILD: Mother and sixteen year-old brother.

LEVINE: Sixteen year-old brother.

FAIRCHILD: Alan. He was named after my father.

LEVINE: So, did you make friends with other children on the boat?

FAIRCHILD: I don't remember that, I can't remember playing with any children. No, I can't remember that. But I know it took quite a few days because it had to go so slow. [Talking to daughter] What is that, Dot?

LEVINE: Okay, well, so, do you remember when the boat came into the New York Harbor? When the *Columbia* came in?

FAIRCHILD: We came in through South [sic] Island, yeah.

LEVINE: Do you remember seeing The Statue of Liberty?

FAIRCHILD: Yes, I remember that, and everybody was excited. And was Ellis Island, Ellis Island's near, is it near?

LEVINE: Right near The Statue of Liberty.}

FAIRCHILD: Yes. Statue of Liberty, yeah.

LEVINE: And did you come in the morning or the afternoon?

FAIRCHILD: I can't remember that, no. But I remember they had rows and rows of people walk through one -- one place after the other. And then you -- they asked you questions. And I remember meeting my father, it was quite exciting. He's so glad to see us. And then I remember -- I think we took the boat up to Cornwall on the Hudson. That's how we, it has -- they didn't have any cars. But I remember we took the -- the Hudson River Day Line up to Cornwall. And I like Cornwall. Corn-- Cornwall's a very nice little place.

LEVINE: Well, was there anything else at Ellis Island? How long did it take you? Were you there a long time?

FAIRCHILD: I can't remember that. No, I can't remember just how long we were, were there.

LEVINE: Did you eat anything there? Do you remember if you went to the dining room there?

FAIRCHILD: No, I can't remember that either. No.

LEVINE: But apparently you went through rather quickly. You didn't have any problem?

FAIRCHILD: No, we didn't have any problem because we had somebody meeting and taking us, meeting us.

LEVINE: How was the wait?

FAIRCHILD: I guess you'd more of a problem if you didn't have some relative to meet you. But we were so glad to see my aunt.

LEVINE: Well, did any of the doctors pick up on the wart on your wrist?

FAIRCHILD: No. In fact, I don't remember how it was taken off. But I remember I didn't have it too long after I got here. But I remember the kids teasing me in Scotland, 'You – you won't get to America with that thing on your — on your wrist.'

LEVINE: So you, when you got to Cornwall --

FAIRCHILD: Yes.

LEVINE: -- and then you started school...soon after?

FAIRCHILD: Yes. Yeah.

LEVINE: And what were some of the things that struck you as new and different in this country that you hadn't -- ?

FAIRCHILD: I guess, the weather. Hated the summers, it was so hot, I remember that. And it was cold in the winter because we had no heat, we had just a – a fireplace, you know. But, and I remember I had to walk -- walk to school. And in the winter when I got to school, I would be frozen! And in the summer, it would be so darn hot that I didn't like that. I wanted to go back to Scotland!

LEVINE: When did you start to change so that you no longer wanted to go back, when life got more pleasant here for you?

FAIRCHILD: Oh, I guess when I met my husband.

LEVINE: Ah, and how did you meet him?

FAIRCHILD: Yeah, well I had a girlfriend. I remember that. And she had a boyfriend and he introduced Charlie to me. And I was only about fifteen. And I think I -- we went together for about three years. Then we got married. Then I had Dottie the next year.

LEVINE: What was it you liked about Charlie?

FAIRCHILD: Well, I just, I thought he was good looking and just that I -- I liked him. I didn't like his mother. But we -- before we got married -- oh, we -- we got married and my mother and father --. I was fifteen -- and my dad, my dad was in the First World War. I didn't tell you that.

LEVINE: Oh, no. Do you remember the First World War?

FAIRCHILD: I remember that. He was, he was in the First World War and he went. He joined the cavalry, and it was called Lord Strathcona's Horse.

LEVINE: Lord -- ?

FAIRCHILD: Lord Strathcona's Horse, the Cavalry. And when they got to Germany they had to dismiss. They had to take their horses away from them because there was so much mud, they -- they couldn't use them. And well, I remember dad telling us that they had trenches then. That's -- he was in a trench and he was buried in sandbags and it caused a -- a -- it caused him to be very lame. His hips were crushed and -- . He died through an accident. His -- his hips was -- in -- were -- . e....He was crippled and that -- that's -- that's what caused his death.

LEVINE: Ohh.

FAIRCHILD: He – he joined with the Canadians and when he got so that he couldn't get along, he came to Canada and stayed in – in Canada. And he was – he was in Canada quite a few years. But then he died and then Mother had his body moved down to Cornwall, and he was – he was buried – buried in Cornwall. And Mother's buried in Cornwall, too.

LEVINE: So, when you say he was buried in sandbags, this was for protection in the trenches?

FAIRCHILD: Yes. There was protection for them. And I guess a bomb or something exploded and the – the – the men in the -- that trench were buried. But I guess they got – they got them out. But that – that was what happened to him. And he had a – he had a pension from being --

LEVINE: Injured in the First World War.

FAIRCHILD: Yes, injured.

LEVINE: Now do you remember anything about the First World War? How it affected you, personally?

FAIRCHILD: Well, I think it – it affected me that I had to live -- go and live with my aunt. And my mother, Mother went over to England to visit my father. And she couldn't get back again because of – of the war. And she went to work as a First Aid in England. But I remember it was quite a – quite a bad war.

LEVINE: So, let's see. How about your husband, was he of Scottish descent?

FAIRCHILD: No, he's -- he was born in America, yeah. He was born in Orange, New Jersey, yeah.

LEVINE: And so you had two children?

FAIRCHILD: I just had -- . Did I -- did I have two children?

LEVINE: Yes.

FAIRCHILD: No, I just had Dottie.

LEVINE: Just Dottie. Oh, okay, yeah. Oh and let's see. How about grandchildren?

FAIRCHILD: I have one grandson and two great grandsons, yeah. And they live in Lake -- Pompton Lakes.

LEVINE: You know, thinking about the music, that your father was so musical and that you learned all those songs. When you came to this country, did you learn songs here?

FAIRCHILD: Oh, yes, I was -- I was singing all the time. I remember, 'I'm -- I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles'. That was a great song. And my I'd -- my mother-in-law -- we -- that we'd go out on a Sunday for a ride and I would be singing all the time. And she didn't like that -- she didn't like me to sing. But I used to like to sing.

LEVINE: What were some of the other popular songs that you remember from --

FAIRCHILD: Do I remember?

LEVINE: --when you first came over?

FAIRCHILD: Oh. You want 'I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles'?

LEVINE: Oh, well, uh yeah, or just the names of some that you can recall being --

FAIRCHILD: Oh, what were some of the songs? I can't think right now. But I know I used to, every song that came out I would sing. (laughs) I used to love to sing. Doing my housework, I'd be singing.

LEVINE: Now did you stay connected with other Scottish people in this country?

FAIRCHILD: No, I don't remember. My brother's -- my sister-in-law was a Belgium heritage and they had one daughter, Elaine. And she has just since died and we miss her terrible. I'll show you her picture. [Talking in background] Oh, yeah, that's her picture there. She died of cancer and her husband; he's a basket case yet. She's dead about; how old, how long is? [Talking to daughter]. Six months she's dead. And we all miss her terrible.

LEVINE: Were there any things, any kinds of habits, or ways of doing things that you continued in this country that you would have done in Scotland? Did you, did you----

LEVINE: Well, I went to work in the carpet mill and we'd all be singing. I remember everybody used to sing. We all sang while we worked and we used to have to stretch the yarn before the carpets were made. And everybody worked in the carpet mill. My brother worked there, he worked in the coloring in the carpets. And Ida, my sister-in-law, she -- she got me a job in there and I used to be on her -- her loom stretching -- stretchin' her yarn. And I worked there quite a -- quite a long time. Then -- then I came -- came down here to live.

And my brother and sister-in-law lived in Cornwall quite a few years. And they come down here to live and we – we lived in the same house for a while. They lived upstairs and we lived downstairs, Charlie, and Dot and I. But we all – we all mo—we all liked Firthcliffe. But they – they got so that they closed that carpet mill and there was no place for people to work there. So they came down here and got jobs.

LEVINE: And how about your husband, what did he do?

FAIRCHILD: Charlie was – worked -- he worked in different, he was a milkman for a while. And then he worked on a -- the trolley cars, he was a conductor on the trolley car. And I remember that. I used to take his supper over to him -- over to where the car would come. And he'd stop and I had to give him his supper.

LEVINE: That's the kind of thing that people would do in Scotland, I would imagine?

FAIRCHILD: Yes, yes. (laughs)

LEVINE: Okay. Is it, do you think that coming here as a young girl made a difference?

FAIRCHILD: Oh, I think I'm much better -- much better off than I would be in Scotland, I think. If – if we stayed poor, it – it wouldn't have been very nice. But when – when I was growing up (I was about sixteen) my father was in the war and there was a ammunition factory in Bloomfield. And I – I worked there on a lathe. And I was only sixteen.

LEVINE: Wow.

FAIRCHILD: I worked on a lathe and Charlie worked in the powder room. I remember that.

LEVINE: How did you,

FAIRCHILD: And that was in 1916.

LEVINE: Uh huh, wow.

FAIRCHILD: And then Charlie would meet me at noontime; we'd go and have lunch. But I remember wor-- working this lathe and we made the shelves, do something to the shelves. And that was quite a --. That -- that ammunition factory didn't last long either though. But I worked there maybe a year or so.

LEVINE: Was there a great feeling, like during the Second World War, of everybody pitching in and doing what --

FAIRCHILD: Everybody pitched in, yes. And then when America went into war, that was in 1917 when America went in? Well, my father had been over there about three years. He -- he was a great soldier. You can tell he was -- he loved to be in the -- in the -- the army. And I remember my father telling us about all the balls he used to go to and the ladies would be all dressed up and the men would be in their dress uniforms.

LEVINE: This was when he was in the service?

FAIRCHILD: Yeah. And this before -- before he was in the war, when he was young.

LEVINE: Oh.

FAIRCHILD: He was in the – in the --

LEVINE: In the Volunteers.

FAIRCHILD: Yeah.

LEVINE: How about the Depression? Do you remember how that affected you?

FAIRCHILD: Oh, yes. We had, you were in the Depression too, weren't you Dottie? We had – we had to have coupons to get eggs and meat. And we had a hard time, but we got over it. Depression was very bad. And then the speakeasies was a bad thing.

LEVINE: What about those? Give me more about those.

FAIRCHILD: That was terrible. I remember 'cause Charlie used – used to go to one of the speakeasies and I didn't like it. I remember that. But I forget how long the Depression lasted, but it lasted a long time. What – what year was that?

LEVINE: Well, it was the Thirties.

FAIRCHILD: Yeah, the Thirties.

LEVINE: Do you think you, your personality was affected by the fact that you came here and started a new life as a young girl and your whole family did that?

FAIRCHILD: No, I don't think so. I was always, I was quite quiet when I was younger. Maybe that had something to do with it. But, you know, coming from

another country, I don't know. But I'm glad we came here because, well living was much better here, you know. You had more, more to eat and things – things were better. Dottie went to school in East Orange, went to high school there.

LEVINE: Okay, well we're right at the end of the tape. Is there anything else that you want to say before we close?

FAIRCHILD: I can't remember anything else, dear.

LEVINE: I think you've said --

FAIRCHILD: You think I've done enough?

LEVINE: You've done a wonderful job; I want to thank you so much!

FAIRCHILD: Yeah, okay, okay.

LEVINE: I'm speaking with Agnes Fairchild, who came in 1911 at the age of ten from Scotland, and this is Janet Levine signing off.

End of Interview