

**MANX HERITAGE FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPT**

**‘TIME TO REMEMBER’**

**Interviewee(s):** Mrs Joyce Olive Kinley

**Date of birth:** 7<sup>th</sup> November 1930

**Place of birth:** Kirk Michael, Isle of Man

**Interviewer(s):** Elizabeth Ardern-Corris

**Recorded by:** Elizabeth Ardern-Corris

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**Topic(s):** Glen Wyllin  
Early school days  
Nurse training at Myrtle Street Children’s Hospital  
Sunday School and Church  
Father’s building business  
‘The Hut’ shop in Kirk Michael  
Grandparents emigrating to the USA  
Chores as children  
Travelling by train to Ramsey Grammar School  
WWII and rationing  
Meeting husband and starting a family  
Emigrating to Canada  
Moving to California  
Retiring to the Isle of Man  
Manx Society in Winnipeg  
Grandchildren

**Joyce Kinley** - Mrs K  
**Elizabeth Ardern-Corris** - EA-C

**EA-C** I'm Elizabeth Ardern-Corris, it's the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2012 and I'm at the home of Mrs Joyce Kinley in Douglas. Mrs Kinley, can you tell me your full name please?

**Mrs K** Joyce Olive Kinley.

**EA-C** And your date of birth and where you were born.

**Mrs K** November 7<sup>th</sup> 1930 and I was born in Kirk Michael.

**EA-C** Are you an only child?

**Mrs K** No, I have one sister and four brothers.

**EA-C** Can you tell me their names please?

**Mrs K** Right, I have Win – Winifred, or Win, who's oldest – she's four and a half years older than me. Then the next is Fred and he's three and a half years younger than me. Then there's John, he's another three or four years younger; and then Alan is less than two years between those two; and then Geoffrey is twenty-one and a half years younger than my sister – he's the baby of the family, so my mother had twenty-one and a half years from first to last – a long time, so you know, Win was away at college when he was born, yea.

**EA-C** What were your parent's names?

**Mrs K** My mother was Ester Annie – known as Etta, and my dad was George Henry – known as Georgie. My mother had been Caley before she was married, and of course my dad was Crowe.

**EA-C** Do you know the story of how they met?

**Mrs K** You know I don't even know that! There's, I think, ten years difference in age from my mum and my dad and I'm not sure about that. I don't think I've ever known. My sister probably knows, but I'm not sure about that. Kind of interesting – I may find out (*laughter*) from her now.

**EA-C** Where about in Kirk Michael did you live?

**Mrs K** We lived, when I was a little girl, where I was born, we lived down in Glen Wyllin, in a little valley area in there. And then we moved up to Station Road and we lived in Station Road first, and then moved to another house in Station Road, and that's where we spent the years I really remember. Glen Wyllin where we lived was not where the glen is that we saw – that's across the other side of the valley. In fact the road to Peel goes kind of between there – the glen where the houses are, there's the mill, which used to be a working mill, and then there's like a ... quite a hamlet of houses down there. And then the other side was the glen, the amusement park, the glen, you know, where we used to have Sunday school picnics and all the stuff that used to go on there years ago – little different now to how it used to be.

**EA-C** Would you have attended Kirk Michael School?

**Mrs K** Yes – went to Kirk Michael School – I think I started when I was four, because apparently, when my mother had the next ... Fred, the baby, he was very ... what's the word – difficult baby, so I was sent to school when I was four, so ... but umm ...

**EA-C** Did you enjoy your school years?

**Mrs K** Umm ... Kirk Michael was alright, and then I eventually went to Ramsey Grammar – I'm sorry but I didn't ... I wasn't a lover of school at all. I had a sister who loved school and was clever and loved it all. I'm sorry, but I didn't ... I left the day I was sixteen, much to the horror of people, but I just ... that was when you were legally allowed to leave. That was it! (*laughter*)

**EA-C** Let me take you back to your earliest memories. What would they have been?

**Mrs K** You know I don't have ... like some people seem to remember a lot back – I just remember going to the shore in [Kirk] Michael, 'cos we used to go down the shore a lot in the summer. And the green – well, we lived in [Kirk] Michael, there was the green in front of the house which apparently was ... originally someone had meant to keep that as a village green – now it's full of houses, but in those days the green was right opposite where we lived and we used to go out there making daisy chains and spent so much time out in that area right in front of our house, we were very fortunate really. And then going to the shore – it was a very lovely childhood, really, you know you couldn't have wished for ...

you know, we went to town, maybe on Saturdays to Douglas – big deal! – ‘cos my grandparents eventually came and lived in this house, and we used to come in to see them. But it was just a very quiet life, really, you know, school and – which I didn’t like – and ... (*laughter*)

**EA-C** Can you remember who your neighbours were?

**Mrs K** Yes, we had ... one side of us we had Mr and Mrs Fielding, and he was Headmaster at [Kirk] Michael School at that time. And the other side were the Kissacks – Mr Kissack. And each had daughters, and ... you know, the neighbours stayed the same all the years, you know, very few people moved. Everybody was ... you know, how it used to be, not like later on in years I think. So the same people were ... all the years I remember when we were in childhood.

**EA-C** You wouldn’t have far to go to school?

**Mrs K** No, just up around the corner, you know, just up and then ... very short walk compared to a lot of the country children who had to walk a few miles – some of them, you know, the country kids as we used to call them.

**EA-C** Who was your best friend at school?

**Mrs K** I guess I was friendly with the [Kirk] Michael people, but then I made friends in Ramsey with Mona. She was a good friend when I was at Ramsey Grammar. But I ... you know something, I don’t know what – was something wrong with me? I mean, I had friends, but there was no one that really stands out in my mind. Jean, one side, and Claris the other, were the two in our age group and we spent a lot time with them.

**EA-C** Can you describe what the school itself was like – can you take me for a tour around the school?

**Mrs K** Very different now to how it used to be. Yes, we used to walk up the road, go in the playground – the boys and girls of course, you know. Walk in, up the steps, and when we went in the entry there was the porchway where they hang their clothes. And then you had to go in through the Headmaster’s room, and then through the spare room as we called it, and then there was the infants’ room and

Miss Curphy's room – she was a teacher who taught after infants. Mrs Comish was the infants' teacher. Miss Curphy, she came up from Sulby every day, she was that teacher, and then Mr Fielding was the Headmaster. And then the boys had a porch where they'd come in in a different area, and then they came right into the spare room, you know, kept us really segregated. (*laughter*)

**EA-C** How would you have started your school day?

**Mrs K** Always with a hymn and a prayer. We all met in the main room – that was how we always started our day, with a hymn and a prayer.

**EA-C** And was it routine lessons then throughout the day?

**Mrs K** Yes ... we stayed in our rooms, you know, the infants had their room and then Miss Curphy's room and then Pa Fielding as we called him, his room, you know. And I'm sorry, but I didn't ... I was not a school-lover – my sister loved school, but I ... I mean, you had to go, so you suffered. (*laughter*)

**EA-C** Were there any subjects that you actually liked doing?

**Mrs K** I can't remember anything that I could say that I really liked (*laughter*) – I was just not a school-lover at all!

**EA-C** Well, when you were a very young child, did you have any aspirations about what you wanted to do when you grew up?

**Mrs K** No, that was another thing I didn't ... my sister always knew she wanted to be a teacher – she always knew that – and she turned out to be a very good teacher. But no, I didn't know what I wanted to do, and it probably was a real problem. I went away and trained as a children's nurse in Liverpool, but I didn't know until, you know, you get to that teenager and what are you going to do, and that's ... I went away to Myrtle Street Children's Hospital – did my training there.

**EA-C** When you were growing up in Kirk Michael, what would you have done outside of school hours and in the summer holidays?

**Mrs K** Well, we spent a lot of time in Glen Wyllim, which was, in those days, different

to how it is nowadays – it used to be really lovely – and on the shore, you know, that was ... we didn't go away, that was ... we just really spent it locally. And then once we have Sunday school picnic, which was a big deal, you know, if you went to Sunday School and got you points and all that through the year, but then that was a big day out, the Sunday School picnic. The coaches used to come and take us to wherever we went, you know, Laxey sometimes, or Silverdale, and then on into Douglas to the pictures and ... but it was a real big day out, that, you know, you really looked forward to it.

**EA-C** Can you just explain what you mean by 'getting your points'?

**Mrs K** Well, every attendance at Sunday School you got ... I think it was four points for each attendance, so you got four in the morning, four in the afternoon, and so that added up over the year, your grand total. One year Fred and I, my brother and I, we didn't miss one time, so we got complete attendance, because at Christmas time when we had our Christmas party you got awarded a book written in with how many marks you have, and then you go up – the Bishop used to come often to [Kirk] Michael Church to present the prizes on St Stephen's Day – the day after Christmas used to be our day – and they used to come, and then you went up and received your book, and then you got your pick of the Christmas tree afterwards. But you know, that was a big deal, so there's one year Fred and I, we didn't miss one time so we would get top marks, 'cos often Miss Cannell's nephew and niece used to get it, they ... *(laughter)* so this year we determined we were going to do it, one year, you know, so we did! *(laughter)* big deal!

**EA-C** Do you think the church played a great influence in your life?

**Mrs K** I would say so, I think it was very good, I don't think nowadays all children go to Sunday School like we did, but when we were in [Kirk] Michael, I think most of the children went to one – there were three Sunday Schools then. Apparently now there's only one in [Kirk] Michael, but when we were growing up there were three. There was the church we went to, the Primitive Methodist and the Wesleyan Methodist, you know, and I think it was good to go.

**EA-C** And was it common for people to attend church regularly every Sunday?

**Mrs K** A lot more than now I think, yes. Not everybody did, but I think it was ... there

were certain people you knew ... you would see them going down, 'cos we would see them from where we lived walking down there. I think a lot more than now, I think it was good.

**EA-C** What did your father do for a living?

**Mrs K** My father was a builder and employed quite a lot of men. And then when the wartime came, that was very odd, because a lot of them were called up, so he managed to keep going as well you could, 'cos it was hard to get materials and everything – it was tough times, but ... and in fact, during the wartime we actually we went ... my ... they bought a farm and we went and lived on the farm for about a year and a half, and rented our house to an Air Force officer that ... 'cos all the Air Force were Jurby and Andreas in those days, and we lived on a farm for a year, which was lovely. And used to go on the train to Ramsey Grammar School at that time – walk down to Bishopscourt sometimes. There was a Bishop's Halt, and get on the train there and go into Ramsey to school – it was Ramsey Grammar in those days. But umm ...

**EA-C** What was the name of your father's business?

**Mrs K** It was just ... I think it was just under his name – George Crowe Builder, yea.

**EA-C** And did he build mainly round the Kirk Michael area?

**Mrs K** No, he ... in fact up in Onchan there's a lot of the commissioners houses they built, and in Ramsey they built a lot of houses, you know, when times were good. I'm not sure what years that was, I ... my sister would probably know, but I can't remember the years ...

**EA-C** And after the war years when the men ...

**Mrs K** Came back ...

**EA-C** Some of the men came back.

**Mrs K** Some of the men came back.

**EA-C** Did it pick up again, the business?

**Mrs K** Yes, it improved again then. And then eventually my brother ... my brother next to me, he went into the business and he ran it for quite ... I don't know how many years, but quite a long time.

**EA-C** You mentioned earlier the big span of children that your mother had over the twenty-one years.

**Mrs K** Right.

**EA-C** Presumably she was at home most of the time looking after the family?

**Mrs K** Oh yes, yes, yep – six children you have all those years – you have to be, yes. She and ... for a little while my aunt had a little shop in [Kirk] Michael and she used to go down there and help her, but mostly she was home.

**EA-C** Can you tell me a little bit more about your aunt?

**Mrs K** Yes. My aunt ... funnily my grandparents had emigrated to America in umm ... can't tell you the exact year ... and they had their first four children in Colorado, in Leadville Colorado, and they came back to the Island and my mother and Auntie Ness were both born on the Island, but the other children were all American. So then Auntie Ness had – Auntie Nessie her name was – had the little shop in [Kirk] Michael and as I say, my mother used to go down there and help her, you know, when ... she loved doing that you know, 'cos she probably never had a chance when she was ... all the children, you know. *(laughter)*

**EA-C** What kind of a shop was it?

**Mrs K** It was just a little ... it's not there anymore, it used to be called, 'The Hut,' just a little wooden hut, next to the garage in [Kirk] Michael that's still there, and they sold everything – fruit, sweets ... they'd have some bread would come in – you name it, it was in there. It was just a little tiny shop, but it was crammed packed with everything. And of course everybody going in there – the big jars of sweets – remember that they used to have on the counter, picking out your penny-worth of sweets, whatever. But oh yea, Auntie Ness loved it. My mother loved going down there to help, too, when she could.

**EA-C** Did you ever get the opportunity to help?



**Mrs K** Not really, no, 'cos I probably wasn't old enough, but no, they were too busy doing it themselves to want ... (*laughter*) no.

**EA-C** Do you know why your grandparents would have emigrated?

**Mrs K** I'm not exactly sure. They emigrated in ... I think work must have been tough or something, because they went out to Leadville Colorado, which is the highest place in America – it's the highest ... very high. In fact we visited there – Malcolm and I went there with our children – I'm not sure what year we went there to ... and you could even feel your breath being affected by it 'cos it's so high up. Lovely place, but you just think why on earth would they ... but he was mining, you see, I think he worked at the Foxdale mines, and it probably must have been tough times or something, that's probably why they emigrated. But it's amazing really, all those years ago, to go all that way. You just think, gosh, from the Isle of Man, the way they ... how long would it take you to get there in those days? It's ... it wasn't like nowadays. A boat trip and then probably a train or however across ... just, you know, a whole different world. And I'm not sure really why they came back. I don't know – is it just because she wanted to come – if Grandma wanted to come back? I really don't know why ... it would be interesting to know the reason why. But then, as I say, the two younger ones were born here, so ...

**EA-C** Well what memories do you have of those grandparents?

**Mrs K** Very little. They lived here actually, when ... at one point, and this is how we eventually were able to buy the house. But we used to come in from [Kirk] Michael on a Saturday and ... to visit them, and we'd come here and then my dad would take my sister and I to the pictures and my mother would stay here with her parents, you know, so we spent a lot of time here, you know, just on Saturdays usually ... we came to see them. But ...'cos Granddad, he'd been a farmer originally, and then he ... obviously he was a miner when he went out there mining, so ... different worlds, you just can't imagine, in those days, emigrating all that way with four children, you know.

**EA-C** Was there anybody in particular who had a great influence on you as a child?

**Mrs K** Well I spent a lot of time with my auntie – Auntie Ness. I used ... in fact, when ... at one time they lived up at Sartfield, up in the mountain above [Kirk]

Michael – my grandparents lived up there – and Auntie Ness used to come down on a Friday for the paper – *The Examiner*, which was a big deal to get the Manx papers, so she would come down on her bike – all that way down, which was quite a way, and ... to get the papers and who knows what else – she probably got other stuff as well – and then I would go back up with her, we'd have to walk all the way back up to Sartfield, and spend the weekend; and then mum and dad would come on the Sunday and take me home again. But I think I spent ... maybe they were glad to get rid of me, (*laughter*) but I think I spent a lot of weekends up there with them at Sartfield, and ... I spent a lot of time with Auntie Ness. I was ... it was lovely. When she moved down into the village later on, I spent a lot of time with her. She was never married, she was a single lady and lovely – I was very fortunate.

**EA-C** Who do you think you take after most – your mother or your father?

**Mrs K** In looks, probably more like my mother. I don't know, in ways, who I would take after – maybe mother – I'm not sure.

**EA-C** Where about in the family structure did you come?

**Mrs K** I was the second, yea, my sister's older than me and then four brothers, all younger.

**EA-C** And was there expectations, as a girl, you would do a lot of housework?

**Mrs K** Oh yes, we had – oh believe me, we had our jobs, yea, (*laughter*) definitely, yea!

**EA-C** So what kind of things would you have to do?

**Mrs K** Well, we had to sweep and dust an ... probably mop floors – all those things, oh yea, we had to do that, no rest for the wicked, right?! (*laughter*) Yea, we always had to do that, that was on weekends.

**EA-C** Did your brothers contribute?

**Mrs K** No, brothers didn't, and that was a sore point, right, when you're getting a bit bigger you think, 'Why those boys don't have to do it,' you know, 'why should it just be the girls?' (*laughter*)

**EA-C** How would you describe yourself as a teenager?

**Mrs K** Oh gosh, I don't know ... not very confident, probably, I ... Win, my sister was always much more confident and I ... I don't know, I just ... I would say that I didn't have any confidence at all, really – very little.

**EA-C** Just tell me a little bit about the transition from a country school in Kirk Michael and then going to the secondary school in Ramsey.

**Mrs K** In Ramsey, right. Well, you had ... in those days you had to sit the scholarship, and I did pass the scholarship ... just before you were eleven – went to Ramsey – I probably went just before my birthday – my birthday's November, so I probably just went just before I was eleven I think – I'm not positive on that, and ... we'd go ... we had to leave to get the train at five past eight in the morning to go to Ramsey, like a half hour on the train, basically, picking up the Ballaugh, Sulby – two Sulby's, Lezayre ... and then coming home again, we got home about quarter to five in the ... you know, we had to walk down to the train afterwards, and err ... we had school dinners usually, you know, paid for school dinners.

**EA-C** Did you have to wear a uniform when you went to Ramsey?

**Mrs K** Oh yes, yea, we wore green tunics, black stockings, yes.

**EA-C** What would happen if you missed the train, how would you get home?

**Mrs K** I don't think that ever happened to me, I never missed the train, so I don't know what would happen. You'd have to wait and come on a later one, probably, 'cos there was a school train in the morning – left [Kirk] Michael at five past eight – and then in the afternoon. It was really the school train, I don't think anybody else travelled on that, I think it was just specially ... came as far as [Kirk] Michael from Ramsey, you know, it wasn't a regular service that other people went on.

**EA-C** Did school children behave themselves on the train?

**Mrs K** Pretty good, yea, I think so. I ...'cos I think when Miss Davis, who taught at Albert Road and lived in [Kirk] Michael, she taught there, I think, I think she'd be on the train, probably, coming home, too, and I think that would make you ... but I think everybody behaved pretty well, yea.

**EA-C** You said you left school at sixteen.

**Mrs K** Right.

**EA-C** Can you tell me what you went on to do after that?

**Mrs K** Yes, I first of all worked in a shop in [Kirk] Michael, in a grocer's shop for a little while, and then eventually I went away ... I'm not sure how long afterwards ... I went away to Liverpool to Thingwall in Liverpool, and there was a ... it was like a children's home for illegitimate children, and I was ... I'm not sure how long I was there, even, I was there looking after the children who lived there, and then their mothers used to just come and see them once a week, and umm ... I'm not sure how long I was there, I was probably there a year and a half, two years, till I was old enough to ... eventually went to Myrtle Street Children's Hospital and became ... you know, worked and trained as a children's nurse there.

**EA-C** At what age did you realise that you wanted to become a children's nurse?

**Mrs K** Probably ... probably about that time, when I was sixteen-seventeen.

**EA-C** It would have been quite a culture shock going from the Isle of Man to Liverpool.

**Mrs K** It was, because you lived in, you know, the nurses' home, and there were, you know, lots of rules and regulations. The sister was, you know, you had to be in at night, you know, and you couldn't go out without permission – which was good, I'm sure, for girls going – especially because a lot of Welsh girls came there as well as girls from the Isle of Man, you know, we were not used to the ways of Liverpool! (*laughter*) But I mean, you know, it was a whole different world. So I suppose those rules were good, for our benefit.

**EA-C** What about just the experience of going shopping in a big city?

**Mrs K** Oh well, that was ... we didn't have that much money, because we were paid ... I can't remember what we were paid – it wasn't a lot of money, and just to go down and look in the shops was a big deal. We'd walk down, usually, down to Owen Owen's ... I'm trying to think what they were ... Owen Owen's was one of the big shops ... can't even remember. And then a big deal would be once in a 'blue moon' we could afford to go and have tea ... I think it was Reece's it was called, and that was very special, 'cos it was ... you know, not very often we could do that. But we could get a bus down, but that was taking our money, and we had so little money, I mean we lived ... had to live very meagrely you know, it was ... which was probably good, it was probably better that we didn't have a lot of money when you think about it.

**EA-C** Did you get many opportunities to come back to the Isle of Man during that period?

**Mrs K** Umm ... came a few time, not an awful lot – on the boat of course, the only way ... I don't think – if there were planes, it was very unheard of for anyone to fly. Came home several times ... I'm not sure exactly how often, but I was lucky I had an aunt out in Barnston, my mother's sister, Auntie Lizzy, was out there, so I could go out there for ... to stay or go for a day or anything, which was lovely, so I was very fortunate in that. 'Cos ... and then I spent part of my training was out at Heswall, which is out on the river Dee, as you know, from Birkenhead you got a bus, I think it was about a half hour, and one year was spent out there nursing, you know, the rest was in Liverpool, so ...

**EA-C** Can you tell me how the war years would have impacted your family life?

**Mrs K** Well, of course for my dad who was in building, it was very difficult because they couldn't get supplies. It was very hard. And some of the men had gone to war. He kept ... Mr Kelly was old man, a labourer, he still was there, and Nelson from Ballaugh, Nelson Mandle [sp ???] was a tradesman, but the others, several of them, were called up, you know, so ... plus, when he did have jobs, it was getting the materials, you know, so it was ... a very difficult times for my dad, I'm sure. I'm trying to think what he actually – but he had his lorry, so he was important in the defence thing in [Kirk] Michael, 'cos not many people had vehicles in those days, it was a whole different world to now, (*laughter*) people

walked or went on bikes, you know ... yea. We rented our house, *Palm Villa*, Station Road, to an Air Force officer and his wife and that's how we moved down to *Ballarhenny Beg* and spent ... I think we were down there for eighteen months, it might have been longer, but I'm not sure. I think that's ... but what I remember was down there. So that was a good life because we lived on the farm and had horses, cows, pigs, hens, ducks (*laughter*) – you name it! It was a nice time, I loved living down there. But we did not have electricity, so we had oil lamps and then a candle to go to bed (*laughter*) – quite different days! And then a hurricane lamp outside, 'cos I remember going home from the youth club which I used to go to in [Kirk] Michael on a Friday night, and going home used to be kind of scary – I was always scared of the dark – and I remember Mother walking up the road with the lantern, you know, to meet me one night. You know, you remember things like that, but I was a real scaredy-cat so ... (*laughter*) and for the water, we didn't have taps. As I said, we had no electricity and then we had no running water, so the well was down quite a steep little lane, to go down there, to go down there and carry ... to get a couple of buckets of water and then carry it up. So I mean, it was ... when you think about it, well, everything, you know. We did have a tank where rainwater would collect, and that could be used for washing and stuff like that, you know, but it was, you know, when you think about it, how different it was. You know, really, I don't think I would want to go back to that, but you know (*laughter*) you go through these things and everybody survives and ...

**EA-C** And what impact did it have getting to school, living in the country?

**Mrs K** Oh, from there, I was going to Ramsey Grammar School at the time. So we would either have to go up to [Kirk] Michael Station or there was Bishop's Halt at Bishop's Court and we'd often – we had to walk across ... walk up the lane, across a field, down Cloudy Lane – another little lane, and then along the railway track down to Bishop's Court. That was quite a trek – or we could cycle up to [Kirk] Michael Village and get the train there – just depending 'cos the train left at five past eight in the morning, so I mean, you had to be up and moving and you daren't miss it or big trouble! (*laughter*)

**EA-C** What would happen to your bicycles when you ...?

**Mrs K** Oh, we could leave them up at [Kirk] Michael Station. You know, you didn't worry about stuff like that, I don't think there was any danger of them being

taken or anything, they just stayed there all day. I don't remember having bike-locks or anything, so I guess ... you know, you just didn't worry about stuff like that.

**EA-C** Do you remember having ration books?

**Mrs K** Yes. Oh yes, and sweets ... trying to think what else – sweet ration was very little, which was probably better, I don't think people worried about bad teeth or anything with too many sweets. Very small amount and, you know, you were limited ... I think a lot of ... I'm not sure how many sweets came in when you think about it in the wartime. Rushen Abbey used to make a lot of Manx confectionary – Manx Knobs used to be a big thing, you know, the peppermint – you know what Manx Knobs are? I think you can still get them now, but ... we probably didn't get a lot of chocolate or anything if I remember, I think it was very limited, but it didn't do us any harm. And then food rationing, that was minimal too, I think it was half a pound of sugar per person a week, I think it was ... it was an ounce of butter, I think it was something of marg [margarine], and an ounce of lard – I remember that, 'cos I worked in a village shop for a while, so used to have to weigh it all out, and everything had to be weighed – nothing came packaged in those days. Everything was weighed out and if you could get sultanas you were lucky, and I guess you would be lucky here, we had Rushen Abbey for jam, because if you relied on the English jams, you'd have ... you know, so we were fortunate in that respect. But ... and then I think it was ... how much bacon, bacon was very ... and cheese – the farmers could get more cheese – the working men could get ... I think they could get eight ounces of cheese, which was a big chunk, where everybody else just got two, or something. Yea, yea, it was ... it was different – didn't do us any harm, probably ... you know, maybe did us more good. I mean, too much sweet stuff and fatty stuff ... and then we had the clothing coupons, they were ... well actually, in [Kirk] Michael, I don't remember ever ... very rarely if we ever had bought dresses. We had a dressmaker in [Kirk] Michael, Miss Kewley, and her parents were also tailors – Mr and Mrs Kewley and Miss Bessie – and my mother used to buy the material and she used to make our dresses, like for the anniversary, it was very special. We had to go down there, and she'd ... I guess ... I don't know who decided what pattern it was going to be and then she would ... we had to go down to be fitted and pinned up and all that stuff, so that was a big deal, really, once a year to go and get your new dress for the anniversary. But ... I don't know ... it's funny when you think back, but we'd have to go down and be

pinned up and fitted and ... *(laughter)* yea!

**EA-C** Do you remember being issued with an identity card?

**Mrs K** Yes, we all had identity cards and we were supposed to carry them at all times. I don't think we did carry them at all times, because who knows, our kids would have lost them, but yes, we all had identity cards.

**EA-C** You would have been around fifteen or so when the war finished.

**Mrs K** Right.

**EA-C** Do you remember any celebrations happening in Ramsey or round where you lived?

**Mrs K** We had a big day in [Kirk] Michael ... I think that's where we all had down Glen Wyllin and the shore, it was ... in those days Glen Wyllin was a real family thriving place and we had a really big special day and ... there used to be big refreshment rooms they called them, long gone. And big tables would be set up there with all the food and everything. You know, people get together and ... you know, they made sandwiches and cakes and ... it was a great celebration, you know, to go down there, and that's where we went for ... to celebrate it. The glen was full of people, you know, wonderful, happy days, you know, when that was over it was good. Yep!

**EA-C** Were you involved a great deal with the upbringing of your younger brothers who came after you?

**Mrs K** Well, yes, because you ... families did everything together in those times. You know, we'd go down Glen Wyllin, down to the shore, you know, so yes, you did, you spent time with your family, that's what you did, you know. Yea, we spent a lot of time down ... when the weather was nice. Go down and ... just down on [Kirk] Michael shore, you know, and paddled and take a picnic probably, most times, and ... you know, just a nice walk down and it was ... or Glen Wyllin – either one. But, yea.

**EA-C** Did you stay in Liverpool for long after you qualified?



**Mrs K** I didn't stay. As soon as I'd sat my final exams, I came home on holiday with my friend, Ursula, and we came over for a week, and I didn't go back! I think I met Malcolm when I was home on holiday (*laughter*) – that was it! Changed my life! Isn't it funny how that can happen? But yea.

**EA-C** Where did you meet your husband?

**Mrs K** We met at a sports day in [Kirk] Michael – used to have big sports days in those times. And then Malcolm would come ... he was living in Peel with his sister, and came down with his two friends. I think they came to organise the sports day, actually, and that was ... met ... and then the dance afterwards – that was the end – changed my life, right there! It's funny isn't it, how one thing can happen?

**EA-C** How long did you court for?

**Mrs K** We met in July and we were married in December – he was sick of coming down every night from Peel in the cold (*laughter*) – it's a good excuse, right? (*laughter*)

**EA-C** And where did you go to live when you got married?

**Mrs K** We lived first in [Kirk] Michael, for ... we got married December, two weeks before Christmas, and I think we moved into Peel in ... 'cos Malcolm was working in Peel mainly, so it was driving back and forth every day, so ... I think we moved in about the April, we found a house in Peel that we were able to rent, and we moved in. And changed ... and then I couldn't work ... you know I'd been working in the shop in [Kirk] Michael when we first got married, but then we moved into Peel. Got one little house in Peel and then very fortunate, Malcolm knew someone who ... his parents lived in this bigger house, and they were moving to a small house, and they told us about it and we were able to rent this lovely big house in Peel, so changed everything for us – it was lovely.

**EA-C** And what did your husband do for a living?

**Mrs K** Painting and paper-hanging, always, (*laughter*) always.

**EA-C** And did you go out to work when you were in Peel?

**Mrs K** No I didn't. I think I was intending to, but I didn't, I stayed home. And then we were married in the December and I had Alistair in the ... ten and a half months later I had him, so changed everything right there, yes, yep!

**EA-C** How many children did you have?

**Mrs K** Umm ... I have him there, then we had Fraser in Canada, then we had ... went to California and we had our twins, and then Geoffrey, our youngest – he was supposed to be my other girl, (*laughter*) turned out ... but you wouldn't change them once you have them. So we have five, yea.

**EA-C** You don't have a Manx accent at all?

**Mrs K** Well, we've been away so long.

**EA-C** Tell me about moving off the Isle of Man.

**Mrs K** Well, Malcolm, when we emigrated, Malcolm went first and I moved down to [Kirk] Michael and stayed with my mum in [Kirk] Michael. And then he had to pay his own fare and then we borrowed my fare from the Canadian Government, and then we had to pay it back. We borrowed it and ... I'm not sure how long we had to pay it back, but we had to pay every month, which was tough, it was not easy, but you had to do it. And ... but we moved, we went to Winnipeg first, and Malcolm stayed with some other Manx people who had emigrated before, and then I came out. And they were coming home on their first trip back to the Island, so we were able to stay in the house they rented, and then that was from ... I think I went November, and then the ... they were coming back April or May, and we decided that we didn't want to stay in Winnipeg – it was a very severe climate – flat – and we did have ... my mother had a cousin there, and it was great to see Harry, but we decided we should head on out to the coast, which we did, so we went and bought a car, didn't tell them we were moving with it – you know, we bought it on payments, a down-payment, and we drove out, which was with our little boy, and we drove out to Vancouver – took us three days – and stayed overnight in hotels and it was quite a trip, I mean, wonderful trip really, when you think about it, going into the unknown, which it was for us, but it was ... and then we got there, and we stayed in a little motel the first night, we thought, 'What are we going to do?' and Isobel, who was a Manx ... had been a war-bride in Winnipeg, she said, 'go

and see Mona,' who'd been another war-bride, 'when you get out there.' And we did go to see Mona and Arthur, and Mona said, 'Why don't you come and stay with us until you find somewhere?' I mean, I don't know what we'd have done without that. I mean, that was ... absolutely a God-send. So that's what we did, we went and stayed with Mona and Arthur and they ... it was very good. We stayed there several months, and then eventually we were able to ... Malcolm worked with some painters, and very fortunately worked with Charlie, and they had a house in Vancouver, and they were moving, they had bought a Laundromat, and they were moving to live by their Laundromat. Doris, his wife, was running it and he worked as a painter with Malcolm. And they said, 'We're going to be renting our house.' Talk about a God-send, so we went down town Vancouver and rented that house where we lived for the remainder of the time we were in Vancouver, which was ... I mean, we really, really were fortunate, so ...

**EA-C** What brought about the decision to emigrate in the first place?

**Mrs K** No work! It was very hard, there wasn't any work and I think Malcolm's sister's in-laws were in Canada and they probably had said that it was a great place ... you know, to go. And I think that's probably how we ended up going to Canada. Canada seemed closer. Australia ... I think we could have gone to Australia on the £10 fare, but Australia was so far away, you know, you think, well, Canada's a bit closer, maybe one day we'll get a trip home.

**EA-C** Do you think it made it easier to emigrate because your grandparents had emigrated?

**Mrs K** You know, it's something ... times were so hard and so desperate that I didn't have any worries about leaving even, you know. But I mean, it didn't ... I'd been to England before, but I think times were so tough and work was so bad, you know, that it was just almost a relief to be doing something, you know, I think that's ... you know, I don't know.

**EA-C** Would you describe emigrating as an important turning point in your lives?

**Mrs K** Oh yes, yes, very much so. It was out of necessity that we emigrated so I had ... I ... Malcolm had gone ahead of me, so I ... you know, I just wanted to get there ... it was just a relief really, to think, 'Well, we're going to be able to survive,' I

mean, it was so tough in those days. So I ... I mean, I'd been to Liverpool before, and you know, and that was, I guess, when I got over my crying and all that stuff that you do when you first go away. I think it was just a relief to be thinking, 'Well, we're going to have work, and things are going to be better,' you know. And we were very fortunate that we had ... knew someone out there, too – that helped. But then we knew that we didn't want to stay in Winnipeg. I mean, it was great to go there first, and start off there, but we knew that wasn't where we wanted to be. The climate was tough, and we bravely decided to head out to Vancouver, and ... when you think about it, you know, we ... the unknown, really. And ... I'm trying to think how that came about. We went out there, went and bought a car, didn't tell them we were going anywhere – bought on time, you know, paid our first payment, and then we'd send our money back to Harry, my cousin – mum's cousin – and he would pay it for us, you know, we didn't want to tell them we were ... (*laughter*) so we did that, and he did that for us. But when you think about it, we drove out there in this car that we'd just got, with a little boy who put the glove compartment up and down the whole way (*laughter*) and err ... you know, to go ... to drive right across Canada like that, you know – stayed in motels at night, as cheaply as possible, and then, as I say, when we got there we went to a motel, and Mona and Arthur – now Mona had been a war-bride, and Mona ... Isabel had been in Winnipeg – this is May's sister where we stayed – and she'd obviously phoned Mona, which we didn't know, and told her, and we were staying in this little cheap motel and Mona and Arthur came down to see us and said, 'Why don't you come and stay with us 'til you get work?' I don't know what we'd have done without them, you know. You think about it, it's ... and Mona just died, I think last year, we just heard, we got a letter from her son and we thought, 'Gosh, it would have been nice to have seen her one more time,' but anyway, you know. So that was how ... we were very, very fortunate to have met somebody that was so good to you, you know, and helps you out like that. What happened in Vancouver ... my mother's older brother, who'd been born out in the States, and then they'd come to the Isle of Man, then he'd gone back when he ... I think he was about 17 when he'd gone back to the States – the others stayed in the Isle of Man – he went back and somebody told him ... oh, I know, my cousin, who'd been in the World Manx, he'd told Uncle Eddie and they came up and said to us, 'Why don't you come down – you should be in God's own country.' That's how he put it, and they sponsored us to go down, and that's how we got down to California, I mean ... you know, you just can't believe how fortunate we were, really, you know, 'cos ... we didn't have any money, you know, it was tough, tough times,

but you survive, you know, you know. We ended up in California in 1960 and we were there ... we came home in 1970 ... was it '70? We came for our first trip, and decided ... Malcolm decided we should come back to live, so we went back, sold our house, sold everything – got rid of everything – and we came back over here in '71 to live happily ever after. And then Alistair said – our oldest son – he said, 'Well, I don't know what you're going to do, but I'm going back to California.' He'd arranged with his friend to go back and stay with his mum. And ... then he went, then we decided we'd all go, so Malcolm went and I was left, and we had a big house up in York Road at that – which is a nursing home now, but we were up there, and Malcolm went ahead and then I had to stay and pack everything up, and we sold the house and then I went off with the other children. He went in the summer and I think it was October when I finally got out there. You know, tough times, but ...

**EA-C** And how long did you stay the second time – before you came back to the Island?

**Mrs K** Well we stayed out there ... we came back here ... oh heck! We've been ... we've had this house now ... we came over ... I'm not sure how many years we've had it now. I think we've had it ... what year are we in?

**EA-C** 2012.

**Mrs K** 2012 – we bought it with the idea – my brother was selling the house, 'cos this was my mother's house – it had been my grandparent's – in '36 I think they'd bought it here, and Alan was going to sell it. And we said, 'Don't sell it, we want to buy it, we don't have any money right now, but we want to buy it,' so we were able to ... I forget how we got the money, but we were able to buy it, thank goodness, so we bought it and here we are! So now we spend half the year here and half the year there, so ... but we don't have a house away now, we sold that. 'Cos we did keep a house in Idaho and ... where we'd moved, and our daughter and husband had to take care of the garden and that was crazy. So we sold it and kept this. So now we share our house with Susan and Eddy, we have rooms in there, and just have this here. And if any family want to come and stay, we're very happy for them to come and use it. Otherwise Alan and Win, my sister and brother, take care of it for us – which we're very fortunate, yep, very fortunate.

**EA-C** When you moved out to Winnipeg, did you get involved or meet up with any Manx people?

**Mrs K** Yes, yes. It was a very small Manx Society in Winnipeg. I guess there weren't that many Manx people there, really, so we did join that. And then just met a few people through that, but then we moved to Vancouver, they've a very active Manx Society – big group there, and that was great. That's a great ... wonderful times with them. And I presume ... I think that's still going very strong, that was a very great one. And then when we moved down to California, they had had ... they had had a Los Angeles one, but it kind of fizzled, so when we went out there and James Caley, who was a Manx man, he lived in Huntington Beach, and we were in Costa Mesa, and so he started a new Manx Society in ... down there in Southern California. And hopefully it's still going strong, so that was very good. And we also used to go down – someone had started one in Santiago and we used to go down to their meetings as well – we belonged, you know, switched between both of them, which was lovely. So, you know, all the people from home were there, you know.

**EA-C** Can you tell me about your other children and where they were born?

**Mrs K** Well, I had Frazier, and he was born in Vancouver, he was born in the Vancouver General and he was just over a year old when we left Vancouver actually, when we moved down to California. Then we got down to California, stayed with my uncle and aunt for a little while in the house, on the fairgrounds – they lived in Orange County, and then we were able to rent a house near there, after they were coming back. They came their first trip, to the Island for Auntie Mary, and Uncle Eddie hadn't been back since he'd been in the World War I, so it was a big trip for them – they came home for several months, and so we lived in their house on the fairground. And then I had our twins, and Uncle Eddie said, 'See – had to come to California to make it big!' As if he'd had any part of it! *(laughter)* Yea, as if he'd helped in that! And afterwards we had ... three years later we had Geoff – he was supposed to be my other girl, and that didn't happen either. *(laughter)*

**EA-C** When you eventually came back to retire permanently in the Isle of Man, did you find it difficult to settle down in a colder, smaller country?

**Mrs K** Not really, because you know something, I do more here – we do – than we do

out in Idaho. We don't belong to anything in Idaho I'm sorry to say. We come over here, Malcolm sings with the Mariners' Choir, I go to whist drives with my sister – very important – and I don't know anybody out there who plays whist, and err ... I don't know, we do a lot more here than we do away – apart from having our family there, that's the thing, all our family's in that country and here we are over here. But I have my brothers here and my sister, and Malcolm has just one brother here, but we do more here, you know, so really, why are we there, because our children are out there, you know, and it's ... and our grandchildren, so it's kind of sad in a way, really.

**EA-C** And do you think you made the right decision coming back?

**Mrs K** Oh yes, definitely, oh definitely, no qualms about that, yea. Oh yea, I think we are very fortunate to be able to do what we do, as long as we are in ... our health allows us to do that, we are very fortunate. A lot of people would probably like to do that, but can't do it. And we're lucky that we got this house when we did, because we couldn't afford to buy it now, but, you know, at that time it was a struggle, but we did it, and thank goodness we did, you know.

**EA-C** Do you have many grandchildren?

**Mrs K** Oh yes, we have twelve grandchildren, each have two except Geoff, and he has four, our youngest. And they are ranging in age, I think the oldest now is 32, I think, and then going down to ... I think 12 is the youngest – and then we have two great grandchildren, yes. A new baby, one has just had that baby about a week ago, and then the other boy is coming up to one, so, yea.

**EA-C** Looking back over your life, Mrs Kinley, do you think you've had a happy, interesting life?

**Mrs K** Oh I think we've been very, very fortunate. We've had five great children, even though a couple of them are divorced, which we're sad about, but we're still friendly with their ex's, which is good – and the children, I think that's ... we're very fortunate in that, you know, not everybody's that fortunate.

**EA-C** Thank you very much Mrs Kinley for sharing these wonderful memories with me today.

**Mrs K**     Okay, well, I'm glad to be able to do it. I just hope that they're good memories, you know, and whoever hears this thinks they are! (*laughter*)

**END OF INTERVIEW**