

1 **Supplementary Material: Edited transcript of interview with Grace**
2 **MacDonald conducted at Bourn Hall on 25 June 2013.**

3
4 Approved for publication by GM on April 19th 2014.

5
6 Speaker key

7 MHJ Martin Johnson

8 GM Grace MacDonald

9 KE Kay Elder

10
11 MHJ We are interviewing Grace MacDonald and its 25th June 2013. We're at Bourn Hall
12 and Grace is sitting with us, me and Kay Elder doing the interview. And Grace, I just want to
13 confirm, first of all, you understand the nature of the interview and that you've read the
14 ethical review form and you're happy with it?

15
16 GM Yes, I am.

17
18 MHJ Okay, good. So, maybe we could start right at the beginning, tell us something about
19 your early life as a girl and where you grew up and who was important to you then and so
20 on, these sorts of things?

21
22 GM Oh, I was brought up in Stirling and I had a very happy childhood. I was one of six
23 children and an older brother and I were both born in Egypt, because my father was based
24 out there and then we moved back to Scotland, where he was from.

25
26 MHJ So, your father was in the [*armed*] Forces?

27
28 GM In the... yes, during the War and after, and then we settled in Stirling and so I really
29 spent the rest of, you know, my childhood, and I'm very near Stirling again. That's where I
30 live...

31
32 MHJ So when did you move? What age were you when you moved back to Stirling?

33
34 GM Just, oh, about three. Three years of age, yes.

35
36 MHJ Three. And that was, that was what year?

37
38 GM That would be 1949.

39
40 MHJ 49, yes, okay. So, you didn't come across Bob Edwards when your father was in
41 Egypt did you?

42
43 GM I didn't even know that Bob was out there - isn't that strange?

44
45 MHJ And my father, my father was in the Air Force in Egypt and in Iraq and Iran during the
46 War as well. But I don't suppose he bumped into your father.

48 GM I doubt it. Dad moved around a lot; he was, actually, out there for 16 years. So he,
49 kind of, realised that there was a war coming, so decided that he would get in to the area
50 that he wanted... because he was an engineer. He, actually worked at, time served as an
51 engineer on the Clyde in the years of ship building, and, I think, in the 30s, he just realised
52 that rather than get called up, and go into a branch of the Military that he didn't want to, he
53 went into the Army Ordinance Corp, which became the REME.
54
55 KE Yes, my dad was in REME.
56
57 GM Oh, there you are; maybe they met. It's a very small world.
58
59 KE Yes, and I was born in 46 as well.
60
61 GM See, we're all, we're all the baby boomers, we're the baby boomers.
62
63 KE It was a good year, it was a good year.
64
65 GM It was.
66
67 MHJ Well, 1944 was even better than that.
68
69 GM Oh, yes. So, that's when Richard, my brother was born, in 44. In Cairo as well, in the
70 Military Family's Hospital, Abbassia, Cairo.
71
72 MHJ Have you been back to Egypt since?
73
74 GM I've been back to Egypt, but not Cairo. I'm hoping that - I've got... one of my cousins
75 has just, in fact, invited me to join them in September on a Nile cruise and I've still, believe it
76 or not, got relations in Cairo, although they're having a very, very hard time just now,
77 because they're Christian and they're not, they're almost scared to leave their house; one's
78 a doctor in the hospital in Cairo and she's having a terrible job of getting to and fro.
79
80 MHJ Is she Egyptian, or...?
81
82 GM Oh, no, she's, well, technically Maltese and Lebanese, because my mum was
83 Maltese.
84
85 KE Your mum was Maltese?
86
87 GM My mum was Maltese, yes. So, we've, that was all my cousins that... I was at the
88 wedding last week in Canada. A lot of my relations have moved to Canada. I've got far more
89 there than I have here. Well, my mum was an amazing person, very talented. Spoke seven
90 languages and just very, really...
91
92 KE What was her maiden name?
93

94 GM Funnily enough, it was Marozzi, which, I think, way, way back was from, they were
95 from Sicily. But they migrated, hundreds of years ago, over to Malta. So they're Maltese
96 going back a very long way. But, and they then, my grandfather or great grandfather built,
97 he was one of the chief engineers on the Suez Canal. So, he worked with de Lesseps, and his
98 name was, actually, on a plaque: Salvatore Marozzi was on the plaque, which was at the
99 canal.

100

101 MHJ Your contact with Egypt goes back that far, does it?

102

103 GM Yes, it goes back a long, long way. But then there were, it was under British mandate
104 and, of course, Malta was British, so my mum was born with a British passport. You know,
105 she was, she was British and very proud of it, you know, that the Maltese... and, as you
106 know, the island sustained a horrific bombardment during the war.

107

108 KE Yes.

109

110 GM But they weathered it the same as the people in London did; they were quite
111 amazing.

112

113 MHJ It's an interesting background. So, then you went to Stirling at the age of three and
114 you, and you then had another five brothers and sisters?

115

116 GM Well, I've got one sister and I had four brothers.

117

118 MHJ Four brothers, yes.

119

120 GM There were six of us altogether.

121

122 MHJ It's a big family.

123

124 GM Big family, and then, unfortunately, one of my brothers drowned when he was
125 seven, which was devastating for the family, and so that just left the, you know, the three
126 brothers and my sister and I; and you never get over that. You know, that a seven year-old.
127 My poor mum, and then, unfortunately, my brother Richard, he emigrated to Tasmania in
128 the 80s and then we lost him to cancer, which I can't understand, because he was – well,
129 again, it hits anyone doesn't it? And he was so fit and well, but then he got bowel cancer
130 and died. So, again, poor mum; she, you know, she was just devastated.

131

132 MHJ Is she still alive?

133

134 GM No, not now, but she was then, when we lost Richard in 97. So, I think, that to me, is
135 my worst nightmare of ever having to go through what my mother had to go through; you
136 know, losing two of her boys. But, I think, that, in a way, has also, has influenced me, that,
137 you know, I was so determined that I wanted to have a family too, you know, because I
138 grew up as part of a big, a big family, so it was important to me.

139

140 MHJ Yes, so when you, so when did you start to think about having a family?

141
142 GM Well, not long after I got married. I think, for the first two or three years I was quite
143 happy and quite content, because I was building up my career and my husband was a
144 professional violinist, so he was away a lot and busy and we had hectic lives.
145
146 MHJ So, can you give us a date? When did you marry?
147
148 GM I married in 1967.
149
150 MHJ 67, yes. So, then you were...?
151
152 GM I was 21.
153
154 MHJ 21, and your husband was...?
155
156 GM Mm-hmm. 20.
157
158 MHJ 20, and are you musical as well?
159
160 GM I sing; well, for years, 33 years I sang with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra
161 Chorus, which I love and I'm still singing.
162
163 MHJ Was that how you met your husband?
164
165 GM No, no, we were at school together. He was my only boyfriend, because my mother
166 was very strict. Being Maltese, she was very strict.
167
168 MHJ Yes. Well, I can imagine, yes.
169
170 GM And having four brothers, well, by that time, three brothers to, kind of, chaperone
171 you.
172
173 MHJ They're different days now aren't they?
174
175 KE Oh, yes.
176
177 GM Oh, it really was that, you know; I would go to a dance, and then, strangely enough,
178 Richard would be outside to walk me home. It was lovely, because then Jimmy, my ex and
179 Richard would walk along talking and I would trail along behind.
180
181 MHJ So, you were 21 when you got married; when did you leave school?
182
183 GM I left school when I was 18 and then went to study in Edinburgh.
184
185 MHJ The University?
186

187 GM Well, it was, at that time, Napier University, and then I did other postgraduates after
188 that. But I started off at Napier.
189
190 MHJ And what did you study there?
191
192 GM Hospitality Management and then went, started working in industry, which I
193 enjoyed, in hotels, restaurants, and when I got, when I was married and we moved through
194 to Glasgow not long after, about a year and a half after I got married, I took a job with the
195 School Meals Service because it fitted in better with, you know, Jimmy being away a lot. So,
196 I was a supervisor with School Meals and then got a job in teaching, which I always wanted
197 to do. But you needed to have industrial experience first and I wanted to teach adults
198 professionally.
199
200 MHJ Where were you teaching?
201
202 GM Well, I started teaching, 1970 in a college, a small college in Glasgow and I've also
203 worked in Clydebank College and Coatbridge College and then finally in Falkirk College,
204 where I was there for over 20 years, 25 years, and then as I was going through my teacher
205 training and then I did postgraduate certificates and diplomas in Guidance and Counselling,
206 because I was very interested in helping the, you know, the youngsters in the college, and
207 then, finally, I did a Master's at Edinburgh University in Advanced Professional Studies.
208
209 MHJ So, your husband, what was he called?
210
211 GM Well, I'm divorced, and have been for a long time.
212
213 MHJ Yes, I know, but was called?
214
215 GM Jimmy Montgomery.
216
217 MHJ Montgomery.
218
219 GM Yes, Alistair was Monty all through school; he still is.
220
221 MHJ Yes, and whom was he [*Jimmy*] playing with?
222
223 GM He started off playing with the SNO before it became Royal and then he played for
224 Scottish Opera.
225
226 MHJ That's had rather a chequered career, Scottish Opera, hasn't it?
227
228 GM Oh, I know. They've really come through the wars a little bit.
229
230 MHJ Yes, no, I heard that at one time, they were more or less going to be closed, or were
231 closed, weren't they?
232
233 GM They were almost. They were on the brink of being closed down.

234

235 MHJ Yes, they've done some really interesting things recently. I've never seen them
236 perform, but I've heard lots of good things about them in recent years.

237

238 GM I think, they're very good and, you know, I used to, sometimes go on tour with, you
239 know, if it was the summer holidays, because I got school holidays, which was great, we'd,
240 quite often, if the band were on tour with the Opera, we used to come to places like Snape,
241 you know, over in Aldeburgh, which was wonderful, and...

242

243 MHJ Yes, actually, I think, they toured The Flying Dutchman – I think, it was The Scottish
244 Opera – to Norwich once and I did go to that; they were very good.

245

246 GM We've done the stage version of that, with choir and the orchestra and it was
247 wonderful. We did that in The Royal Scottish, you know, the Royal Concert Hall in Glasgow.
248 It was amazing. There were some very, very good soloists. Really enjoyed that.

249

250 MHJ So, you're now married and you're working and want to have a family, but not
251 immediately?

252

253 GM Yes, I think, like most young couples, we had just bought a house and we were going
254 to wait for two or three years to get it furnished and carpeted. We had wooden floors for
255 quite a long time, bare boards; nowadays it's fashionable, but...

256

257 MHJ Yes, I remember my mother's great ambition in life was not to have linoleum, but to
258 have fitted carpets.

259

260 GM Exactly. Well, we fell heir to a lot of stuff, which was awfully nice, but we gradually
261 thought it would be quite nice to have our own stuff. So, that was the main purpose; we
262 wanted to save up and, you know, get the house furnished and we were living in
263 Bishopbriggs just outside Glasgow and I was travelling in to the south side of Glasgow, and
264 then, as I said, I then decided it was, maybe, about time I would start a family and then
265 that's when all my troubles started. I had a lot of trouble with ovarian cysts and adhesions
266 and that started in about 1972.

267

268 KE So, you'd been married five years then?

269

270 GM Mm-hmm. Yes.

271

272 KE And you saw a gynaecologist in...?

273

274 GM Glasgow. David McKay Hart, who was just wonderful. He was very, very supportive,
275 because I remember going to him to find out, you know, that I, why I hadn't become
276 pregnant, and he gave me an exam and said there's something wrong. So I was, I went in for
277 a laparoscopy, and he discovered that I was in a terrible state, and...

278

279 KE So, you had a laparoscopy in Glasgow in the 1970s?

280

281 GM Yes, 1972.
282
283 MHJ Yes, there was someone quite early on in Glasgow, who took it up, so maybe it was
284 him, yes.
285
286 KE He must have known Patrick then.
287
288 GM No...
289
290 KE No, he didn't...?
291
292 GM I told him about Patrick, because he, they didn't know, he didn't know anything
293 about the study, you know, where it's, what was going on and, in Oldham, and I...
294
295 KE I'm just asking, because laparoscopy was very new in those days.
296
297 GM Oh, he must have – oh, I beg your pardon – yes, he probably knew, but he didn't
298 know about the IVF bit, but he certainly...
299
300 KE He did a laparoscopy?
301
302 GM He did the, yes, he did the laparoscopy. I think, it was in 72 or 73. Yes, because...
303
304 MHJ Certainly, there was someone in Glasgow who was one of the earliest people to take
305 it up. There was a group there taking it up quite seriously quite early on before most, before
306 most of the rest of the country did. There was a group in London, there was a group in
307 Glasgow.
308
309 GM I didn't know that, right. Well, it might have been him and a chap called Bobby Low
310 who worked with him. At Stobhill Hospital.
311
312 MHJ So, when they did the laparoscopy investigation, what did they tell you?
313
314 GM Well, they said that my tubes were blocked, and he then said that he was going to
315 try his best to open them for me. So, he said something about putting in some kind of tiny
316 little tube or something.
317
318 KE Or stent?
319
320 GM Uh-huh. To try and open them, but, unfortunately, that didn't work either, so, you
321 know, he did everything he possibly could for me, but he was wonderful.
322
323 KE Over what sort of time period would that be?
324
325 GM That was from, I would say, 1972 to about 1974.
326
327 KE Okay, a couple of years.

328
329 GM Yes, and then he, kind of, said to me, there was nothing more he could do.
330
331 MHJ So, by that stage, you were 30, is that right?
332
333 GM I would have been 29 or 28 or...
334
335 KE 28/29, yes.
336
337 MHJ Yes, 28. Okay. So, then, how did you get to Patrick and when did you first see
338 Patrick?
339
340 GM Well, I, early on in 1975, I think, it was, well it must have been 74 that I first found
341 the article, because in January 75, I went back to see David McKay Hart and I told him about
342 this article I'd found.
343
344 MHJ Can you remember where it was?
345
346 GM I think it was in The Lancet. Because I had been visiting friends in Stirling, and Jimmy
347 and his friend's husband were busy playing, and Graham was playing the piano and Jimmy
348 was playing the fiddle and I got, kind of, bored. So I was, just on their coffee table, there was
349 a copy of The Lancet.
350
351 KE Isn't that incredible? Because you wouldn't have found The Lancet anywhere else.
352
353 GM Oh, no, exactly.
354
355 KE No, you wouldn't have known to even, it existed.
356
357 GM I wouldn't, no, exactly. But it said something about infertility and it just jumped out
358 at me and then...
359
360 KE So, that may have been The Lancet paper about the ectopic, maybe?
361
362 MHJ Was it by Patrick?
363
364 GM I think, it was. It was, it was, yes, well, yes, it must have been, because it was his
365 name and I took a note of it, because when it described what, as it turned out, I think, it was
366 P38, who I later was in with twice. It was explaining what this lady had, the problem she
367 had, and it described me to a T. and I thought, gosh, there's somebody, actually, doing some
368 work in this area to help people with my problem.
369
370 KE Yes, there, well there, so there was a paper about P38 [**Editors' Note: Steptoe, P.C.,**
371 *Edwards, R.G. 1976. Reimplantation of a human embryo with subsequent tubal pregnancy.*
372 *Lancet, i, 880–882. Wrong date – no reference in 1974 to Steptoe has been found in the*
373 *Lancet. In the BMJ, Steptoe did publish one paper in 1974 but this did not mention infertility.*

374 *Edwards and Steptoe did publish in September 1974 in Proc Royal Soc Med (67, p30-34),*
375 *which GM may have misremembered as Lancet. Alternatively Newsweek did publish a piece*
376 *on July 29th 1974 relating to Bevis' claim of three test tube babies having been born that did*
377 *cite Steptoe extensively. Possibly this is what GM saw?]*

378

379 MJ This is, this is the end of 74, you think?

380

381 GM Yes, I think, roughly about then. I, sorry, I can't remember exactly, but that was
382 when...

383

384 KE But isn't that amazing that you, just by chance, came across it?

385

386 GM Oh, I know. It was almost like it was meant. Sorry, can I just refer to something,
387 because I've got a brain, a memory like a sieve these days, that I've had this, obviously, for a
388 very, very long time, but I jotted down, I remembered gradually... I'll just refer to this; right,
389 [reads] 'antibiotic treatment for'... that was, sorry [reads] 'referred to Mr Steptoe in January
390 75, by David, Dr David McKay Hart.' But that was, so I, it must have been about end of 74; I
391 went to make an appointment with David in Glasgow and I said to him, look, I found out
392 about this. Can you, can I, could you please refer me, and David being David, stroked his
393 beard and said, oh, very interesting. Yes, yes, I think, this is a very good idea. Yes, yes, I
394 think, that would be a very good idea. I'll write, and you write, and so we did and it took
395 ages, before we heard back. Then I heard back and got an appointment to go and see him,
396 because I'd put here, as I said, I've just jotted these down: previous treatment by David
397 McKay Hart in 1974 for ovarian cysts, because I'd been back in again. 'Adhesions and
398 attempt to clear the tubes.' So, that was, again, in 74. Certainly, it was later on that year
399 that I found the article, and I was examined by Mr Steptoe on 2nd October 76, so it took,
400 really from beginning of January 75, when we wrote, till 76, but I've, the reason we were
401 told was that he was having trouble with his hips.

402

403 KE With his hips, yes.

404

405 GM So, everything had been put on hold.

406

407 MHJ Yes, he took time off for that period [1975-78; *Johnson and Elder, 2014, The Oldham*
408 *Notebooks: an analysis of the development of IVF 1969-1978. V. The role of Jean Purdy*
409 *reassessed. RBMO, this issue*]. Yes. So, you came down in October 76?

410

411 GM Yes, 2nd October 76.

412

413 MHJ And whom did you see then?

414

415 GM That was, we went to Patrick's rooms in Oldham and then he said he wanted me to
416 come in so that he could do a laparoscopy just to find out what kind of state I was in, and
417 unfortunately, again, I had got worse with adhesions and other problems and so in
418 December 1976, he did an exploratory examination laparoscopy and then within a week,
419 he carried out a major operation to remove ovarian cysts, septic adhesions and diseased

420 fallopian tubes. So, he did the lot. I remember it was Christmas Eve, because I had gone in
421 the week before and he thought I would be in and out.
422
423 KE So, it was Christmas Eve in 76, you had the laparotomy then?
424
425 GM No, that was the big operation. I'd had the laparotomy the week before.
426
427 KE The big operation in...
428
429 GM The big operation, yes, and then he said, after the laparotomy, he said, you're not
430 going home. I can't let you go. I've got to do this operation; and I said, well, that's fine.
431
432 MHJ Had you had any previous abdominal surgery prior to that?
433
434 GM Yes, I've had also cysts removed.
435
436 MHJ Would that have been before all of that, when you were younger, yes, or at that
437 time?
438
439 GM Oh, I'd had, I'd had, when I was at college in Edinburgh, I had peritonitis.
440
441 MHJ Okay, yes, so that would explain it.
442
443 KE Okay, so that explains it all, yes.
444
445 GM So, I was rushed into Edinburgh Royal.
446
447 KE Yes, that would have been the start of your troubles: probably with the blocked
448 tubes... yes.
449
450 GM Absolutely. The doctor said that. Mm-hmm. Yes, because then it was in a bit of a
451 mess.
452
453 KE So, that was from appendix? Yes.
454
455 MHJ So, that was Christmas Eve on 76, you had the major operation. And you stayed
456 there on Christmas day?
457
458 GM Oh, yes. It was so funny too, because Patrick came in with his family, which was
459 lovely. He came in with Sally and their son.
460
461 KE Andrew?
462
463 GM No, not Andrew, but, I think, Sally's children, and it was just so lovely; they came
464 round all his patients and wished us a happy Christmas, and he came to my bed and he said,
465 I've got, kind of, good news and bad news. I went, oh, all right, give me the bad news first;

466 and he said, well, I've had to remove your tubes and most, I think, I can't remember if it was
467 a whole ovary, but, certainly, he'd had to remove...
468
469 KE Part of... yes.
470
471 GM Like, most of one and part of the other one with the cysts. He said, but the good
472 news is, everything else is in perfect working order. So, if you want to, I'm happy to take you
473 onto the programme. So that was, that was my Christmas present.
474
475 MHJ And how did you feel about going onto the programme?
476
477 GM Oh, as if I'd been given, you know, a gold watch, really, because I knew it was my
478 only chance. So, at least I felt that there was still hope, there was still hope for me.
479
480 MHJ And did he explain to you what the programme involved at that point or later?
481
482 GM He had explained it very, very clearly the time before, when we'd come down in
483 October to his rooms and he explained the implications that there was no, up till then, had
484 been no success. He was, he was brutally honest.
485
486 MHJ He took you through the procedures and so on, did he?
487
488 GM Yes. Mm-hmm.
489
490 MHJ Yes, and you were happy with all that?
491
492 GM Oh, absolutely.
493
494 MHJ And the lack of certainty?
495
496 GM I'm a great believer in looking on the positive.
497
498 MHJ Did you ask him how many people he'd tried to help?
499
500 GM No, I didn't, actually; I just...
501
502 MHJ Did he, did he say that?
503
504 GM No, he didn't. I think, he just said that there were other girls on the, on the
505 programme; I'd probably meet some of them and I don't think, I don't think I even thought
506 to ask. I think, I was just single-mindedly thinking that, you know, it was, this was my chance
507 and that if, you know, if I could, at least, be given this chance, then along with other people,
508 we'd all, you know, we would all be successful. But, I didn't, actually, think at the time, oh, I
509 wonder how many others? I had, in my own naïve way at that time, I had, kind of, assumed
510 that eventually it would be very successful and there would be lots of, you know, other
511 women trying this and being successful. But we were also told at the time that it would be
512 very, very secret. You know, for the, for the children's' sake. So, I accepted that at face-value

513 that there may be loads of others out there and that we would never know – naïve, or
514 what?
515
516 KE No, no. For those days, you were quite right, yes.
517
518 MHJ And they explained why they kept it secret, didn't they?
519
520 GM Well, I think, because of that, all the adverse publicity, which was horrible, I mean,
521 how many innovative things have there been in history and nowadays we'll look back on
522 them and think, what on earth were...? And the same has happened with IVF, hasn't it,
523 now? How many people are there...?
524
525 MHJ but you were aware of the negative...
526
527 GM Press, yes.
528
529 MHJ Did that cause you any concern?
530
531 GM No. Not at all, because I believed totally in... I had met Patrick by that time and I saw
532 what a really nice ethical person he was – very honest, and I trusted him, trusted him
533 implicitly. So, I knew that there wouldn't be a question of...
534
535 KE I know what you mean; you could see that he was a man of integrity.
536
537 GM That's it. Mm-hmm. And then, of course, when I met Bob, that was it. I just realised
538 straight away, what a wonderful person and...
539
540 MHJ So, when did you meet Bob?
541
542 GM When did I meet Bob? Did I put that down? Right, it would have been '15th February
543 1977'.
544
545 MHJ So, that would, that would be 1977, so that was exactly eight years after the Nature
546 Paper was published describing the first IVF, which is 15th February 1969, exactly, to the day.
547
548 GM Isn't that funny?
549
550 MHJ Isn't that extraordinary? Yes, I still remember that day vividly. I was in the lab and all
551 the press started to try and invade the lab, and television cameras with great long cables
552 snaking up the stairs. And we were sent out by Bob - Richard [*Gardner*] and I were sent out -
553 to stop them and tell them to go out, because the rest of the department were really saying:
554 get the people out of this place. So that was when you saw Bob, again, at Oldham. Is this at
555 Oldham General, all of this, or...?
556
557 GM No, this was, by this time it was - I had the big operation at Oldham General and
558 what also gave me a lot of encouragement was because it was Christmas time, they closed
559 Kershaw's down, so some of the girls who were at Kershaw's came into the ward with me,

560 and I, and I'm still in touch with one of the girls; we're very close friends. And she never did
561 have a baby. But she, they were still at the tail end of the, kind of, month's cycle to see, you
562 know, they had had the implant done at Kershaw's, but they were moved up to the main
563 hospital. But, unfortunately, P234 and P233 who were on either side of me... and I didn't like
564 to ask them; you could see they didn't want to talk about it, but eventually I went over and
565 said to P233, excuse me asking, but, you know, are you, have you, by any chance, been on a
566 special kind of study with Mr Steptoe and they, kind of, looked and I said, why I'm asking is,
567 I'm now being told that I think I'm going to be accepted on it. So that was all right. So they
568 told...

569

570 MHJ And so they took the secrecy thing very seriously?

571

572 GM Oh, very, very, uh-huh, and then the funny thing was, P234, who was in the bed next
573 to me, she was back in the next time when I went in and, in February.

574

575 MHJ So, February, you met Bob and that was to go in for the first attempt, was it?

576

577 GM That was the first attempt.

578

579 MHJ Okay, you said that once you met Bob, all your fears disappeared.

580

581 GM Oh, totally.

582

583 MHJ What was the first meeting like?

584

585 GM Well, he was just, he was just so gentle and, again, just so down to earth about it and
586 just explained what was going to be happening; I wasn't to worry. I would be coming, well,
587 you know, in, coming in, for the blood tests and the carrying round the...

588

589 KE The urine samples.

590

591 GM Sample bottles, and orange bottles. Plastic orange bottle; and he explained exactly
592 what, you know, what was going to be happening and, but he was just so kind and just, as I
593 said, down to earth about it. Not, you know, he didn't talk in technical jargon and...

594

595 KE Yes, so he wouldn't talk down to you, would he?

596

597 GM Oh, not at all.

598

599 KE Never, yes.

600

601 GM No, he was, he was just wonderful.

602

603 MHJ He just talked conversationally?

604

605 GM Yes, just Bob, really.

606

607 MHJ And did he explain to you about the chances of success and so on, or...?
608
609 GM No, I don't think he really did. He just said that there were quite a few, well, there
610 were quite a few other girls on the programme by this time. There weren't going to be as
611 many and they did explain that, that time, but he hoped I'd be fine and I know, he was, he
612 said, I know you're away from home, and then we started talking about Edinburgh, because
613 he'd been up there and he said, oh, you studied there. I said I study, and – oh, and then... so,
614 it was just like a normal, kind of, conversation, interwoven with what was going to be going
615 on. So, it was just as if we were having a cup of tea and a natter. It was, it was lovely.
616
617 MHJ Mm-hmm. It was reassuring?
618
619 GM Oh yes.
620
621 MHJ Because you must have felt a bit tense going down there, did you?
622
623 GM Yes. And, uh-huh, yes, just getting the train down and wondering, you know, what
624 was going to happen.
625
626 MHJ Mm-hmm, and when did you first meet Jean?
627
628 GM Jean was, I should think, I didn't, actually, meet Jean until I had to go in on 23rd. I
629 was, actually, taken in by that time; obviously, I had peaked. So, that's when I met Jean, and
630 she, again, was just wonderful. You know, she made us all feel, you know, so, just relaxed
631 and, you know, that we, they were going to do their best for us and she was, she was just
632 incredible.
633
634 MHJ And on 23rd, why were you in there?
635
636 GM Well, I had gone down on 15th, but I started the hormone treatment and for the
637 operations, the egg was... because we didn't stay in at that time; you just came back in
638 when they told you to, that, you're, you know, you were reaching...
639
640 KE So, were you staying, were you staying locally then?
641
642 GM Well, when I had been down at Christmas time, I had almost been adopted by a
643 family, which was wonderful – one of the girls in the ward – and her mum was our, well, she
644 worked on the Gynae Ward with Patrick, and that I'm still very, very close to Denise, and her
645 mum lived, literally, across the road from Kershaw's.
646
647 KE So, they looked after you?
648
649 GM Yes. Well, I was booked into a bed and breakfast and Denise found out, because I
650 phoned her up and said, I'm back down. Where are you? And, I said, I'm in a bed and... you
651 just wait there and I'm coming for you. I went oh... they were just wonderful and they... so I,
652 well, at first, I was just staying with Denise and then Hilda, her mum said, oh you can't do
653 that, because you had to, I had to make my way up to Kershaw's everyday with my...

654
655 MHJ Sample, yes.
656
657 GM Yes. So, I stayed with Hilda and Harry ... across the road, so that I was able to go in
658 and out, so I don't, I, again, I said, it was almost as if somebody up there was smiling down
659 at me and saying, we're going to arrange it and make it easy for you. They were just
660 wonderful.
661
662 MHJ And was your husband with you through all this, or...?
663
664 GM No. He only came down when, it would have been on 26th, when they were going to
665 put... no, well, he would have, must have come down on 23rd, because, of course, it was
666 when I went into the little theatre – Mr Campbell, who was the anaesthetist, who was
667 lovely. He was a Scot, as you may have gathered, and he had to phone Jimmy to say you
668 have to come down now and so he came and stayed again overnight with Denise and then
669 came in first thing in the morning when they were doing the op.
670
671 MHJ So he hadn't come down with you on the 1st, on 14th or 15th?
672
673 GM No, no. I came down on the train. So, and then I was on, it was from 23rd and then
674 26th was when the ovum was replaced, but it, unfortunately didn't work.
675
676 KE That one didn't work, yes.
677
678 GM No.
679
680 MHJ Can we just talk a little bit about your husband? Was he as keen as you on the
681 procedure?
682
683 GM No. I don't think he ever really, in fact, he's quoted in a paper as saying, he never,
684 actually, believed it would work, but he knew how stubborn I was and just, kind of, gave me
685 my head. Maybe that explained a lot. Mm-hmm. But...
686
687 MHJ Mm-hmm. It's not uncommon, is it?
688
689 KE No.
690
691 GM Really? That's sad, isn't it?
692
693 KE Yes.
694
695 GM I found that really quite sad afterwards. But I've got Alistair. Yes.
696
697 MHJ So, that didn't work, unfortunately? That transfer?
698
699 GM That, no. I went home on 8th March, the day after my birthday. That was a great
700 birthday present; crying my eyes out going up on the train.

701
702 MHJ So, you stayed down for the testing and so on?
703
704 KE You stayed until you found out?
705
706 GM Well, you always, you always had to. You stayed until you either were successful,
707 which none of us were, or until, you know, your cycle started again. So, it wasn't successful.
708
709 MHJ So, you were there from 15th, to the...?
710
711 GM 15th February till 8th March.
712
713 MHJ That's quite a long time, isn't it?
714
715 KE Yes.
716
717 GM Mm-hmm.
718
719 MHJ And everyone was doing that?
720
721 GM Oh, yes. That was the, that was quite... that's how you got to know the girls so well
722 and how we became like a family. You know, because we were sharing something.
723
724 MHJ And in that time, how much do you see of Bob, Patrick or Jean? Very much, or...?
725
726 GM Well, yes; poor Bob. I don't know how he did it. He used to be up and down that
727 road in his old car. That's what Alistair was laughing about, you know, and Bob was sharing
728 with him his memories of when he was a teenager. He loved... he and Bob, as you know, got
729 on like a house on fire; the same sense of humour, but he was saying that what he loved
730 was Bob explaining about the air conditioning in his car and he said to Alistair you can wind
731 down both windows in the back of this car, and Alistair's never forgotten that.
732
733 MHJ It's a great Bob remark that, isn't it?
734
735 GM It's very much a Bob remark. He was an amazing man. So, I, so that, I went home and
736 then...
737
738 KE But did they, did you have a discussion with Bob or Patrick or both when, just before
739 you went home about what had happened, and...?
740
741 GM That was, actually, Bob.
742
743 KE It was Bob? Yes.
744
745 GM Mm-hmm. Yes, he came and he was just so compassionate. You know, he just came
746 in, came into the little room in Oldham and said that, well, I knew that he... he just said
747 unfortunately, this time hasn't been successful, but that doesn't mean, you know, you can't

748 try again. Please, you know, please do, and he was just very, very supportive, and Jeannie
749 too. Because Jeannie used to always pop in, you know, when they were, they were coming
750 up and down the road. I mean, they would arrive, sometimes, late at night and were straight
751 in to the little theatre, which was just opposite where we were.

752

753 MHJ And all of this, you weren't having to pay for any this, presumably, no?

754

755 GM No, it was... We were so lucky.

756

757 MHJ You just had to cover the cost of your travel and your accommodation?

758

759 GM We paid for all of that ourselves. But we didn't have to pay for the treatment. No, at
760 that time, of course, it was out of the goodness of the, or the foresight of Oldham or did
761 they? I mean, they donated the facilities, didn't they?

762

763 KE The facilities, I guess.

764

765 GM But I know that Bob and Patrick, I think, had to buy the, a lot of the equipment.

766

767 MHJ Mm-hmm. Yes, they did. They had a lot of money from a wealthy Californian Heiress.

768

769 GM Isn't that wonderful? What an amazing person, that she had the foresight to see that
770 this was something so important, and out of a philanthropic attitude, not because, I doubt if
771 she would...

772

773 KE Do you know how she, how she heard about it, then?

774

775 MHJ No, I don't know any of that at all. Anyway, that's as an aside. So, yes, so, when did
776 you then, so what was your feeling? Did you talk about it with your husband when you went
777 back?

778

779 GM Oh, yes, and, I think, he just, sort of, said, oh, that's a pity. But then, unfortunately,
780 we had a wee bit of a hiccup ourselves, whereas things weren't going well, and, probably,
781 again, partly to do with the stress and my anxiety about – obsession, if you want to call it –
782 of having a baby. But we, actually, split – I have, I haven't told this, really, to anyone – but
783 we split up for a while, because it was just impossible. He was, unfortunately, drinking too
784 much and other problems. He'd had, almost, like a, well, he'd had a nervous breakdown. So,
785 he wasn't well. And I went back, went back to my mummy, back to Stirling, because I just
786 realised that I, it was better that we had some space, but eventually, we got back together
787 and we talked things through and we came onto a much, much better, into a much, much
788 better place. So, that was when, that was why there was a big, quite a big gap.

789

790 KE Oh, before you came down again?

791

792 GM Before I came down again, yes. So that was in, on [reads] '18th May 1978'. 78 was
793 when I came down for the second attempt.

794
795 MHJ So, by then, you were 32; is that right?
796
797 KE 32, yes.
798
799 GM Yes. Uh-huh.
800
801 MHJ Okay, yes, and during the time, so that was how long ago? Between... how long...?
802
803 GM Well, that was 8th March and then it was over a year.
804
805 MHJ Yes. Did you ever think, in that time, about having donor sperm, or did that not cross
806 your mind?
807
808 GM No. No, I don't think that that even entered my head.
809
810 MHJ No, I'm not sure it would in those days.
811
812 GM No.
813
814 KE No, there wouldn't have been any reason for you to even think of it, I'm sure, yes.
815
816 GM No.
817
818 KE It wouldn't have been something that... no, it wouldn't have been discussed with you
819 even.
820
821 GM No.
822
823 MHJ So, you wanted to have a baby with your husband?
824
825 GM Mm-hmm. But in the meantime, we had put our name down for adoption, because
826 he had agreed to that, because, you know, he realised how important it was to me, so we'd
827 been, we'd started on that process as well.
828
829 MHJ Yes, and then you came down again?
830
831 GM Mm-hmm. On 18th May 78.
832
833 MHJ 78, and what happened that time?
834
835 GM Well, it was, again, it was, it was different, because I didn't, there weren't... Bob
836 came and I remember him grinning and he said, you don't... because I was really not well at
837 all on the hormone the year before...
838
839 KE Yes, the Pergonal, yes; the injection.
840

841 GM Yes, uh-huh. Oh, I had a, it unfortunately had an adverse effect on me; I just kept
842 being sick with it and not feeling well. So, didn't surprise me that it didn't work, but the next
843 time he came down, and I remember him. I was saying, oh, and are we going to have to,
844 Professor Edwards, are we going to have that awful hormone? And he laughed and he said,
845 no. We're going to try it just normally this time, and I went, oh, really? I said, how are you
846 going to manage that? And he said, we will take in blood; so there was blood-taking every
847 few hours. I can't... and, he said, that way...

848

849 KE And then the urine samples every three hours?

850

851 GM Yes, uh-huh. So that was fine. That was fine, as long as I wasn't going to have the
852 hormone treatment, because I thought how can you become pregnant if you're feeling so
853 ill? You know, but, so that was 18th May – went down. 20th May was the operation, but,
854 actually, again, it was sheer luck, because I'd remember a Miss Mann, Diana Mann had
855 phoned me up and she – well, I phoned her first, to say that I was... could I get back on the
856 programme? Oh, yes, that's no problem. And she said, just do your usual, and, of course, it's
857 in the diaries – where did I put them? – you know, checking off and, but I went down,
858 actually, a day early, which, thank goodness I did, because that's what they were saying they
859 would have missed. We would, actually...

860

861 KE You would have missed the surge.

862

863 GM We would have missed the surge.

864

865 MHJ So, did you have regular, sort of, cycles, did you at that stage?

866

867 GM Well, regular for me, which was about every three weeks. Because I'd, I've always
868 had... because I remember if... I wrote a diary. Where, when was that? [reads] '18th May'.

869

870 KE You're a treasure, Grace.

871

872 GM No, that's the wrong one; that's 77. That must have been when it was the year
873 before 8th March, I think. What did I even put there? Oh, that's all the names of all the girls
874 that I'd made friends with when I was down there. Oh, P38, P244, P237, P246, P245 and
875 P233, because that was, she was my friend, who's a writer, she said, she was the one that
876 I'd met at Christmas time. Isn't that funny? oh, so I keep my diaries, as you can see. So,
877 when was that, May? What did I put then? I love this [reads] 'Icing. Make' – I was doing a
878 cake, a cake decorating demonstration on the Sunday – 'make the icing for the cake.
879 Homecraft Centre demonstration, 7:30 (scored out) – train, 12:10; hospital for 6pm; staying
880 with Hilda and Harry; Doctor's line for one week and then urine test every three hours.'
881 Absolutely right. Operation at 9am; you see, I'd just about missed it, because if I'd come
882 down the day later...

883

884 KE They would have missed it.

885

886 GM It would have been too late, that. I just knew, myself; Diana said to me, Diana Mann
887 [PS's secretary], said, right, come down on the Saturday. So I said to her, do you mind if I

888 come down just a wee bit earlier? So, I actually, came down on the Thursday myself,
889 because I knew what my cycle was like for being very short. So then...
890
891 KE Mm-hmm. That was so smart.
892
893 GM Well, I just knew that, I know, I knew what I was like.
894
895 KE Yes, but you were quite right, yes.
896
897 MHJ Women know their own bodies better.
898
899 GM Oh, yes. Uh-huh.
900
901 KE No, in the natural cycle, if you'd, if you'd been a day later, it would have been, it
902 would have been gone, yes.
903
904 GM It would have been gone; that's what I keep just saying. Somebody up there's
905 definitely...
906
907 KE Somebody looking after you.
908
909 GM Looking after me, uh-huh. Then I've put here, that Jimmy, Denise and Philip [*the*
910 *friends I had met on my first trip down*] came in to see me, so that was the operation in the
911 morning, and then, of course, Jimmy had to be there and then Jimmy came in and he'd gone
912 home. So that was on 21st May. [*reads*] 'Nothing yet. Denise came in to see me; blood test in
913 the morning. P234 sent home: no luck. I'm done at night; lie still all day. Hilda came in
914 twice.' She was so good, just from across the road. 'Up today, but take it easy', and then,
915 Jimmy came back down at the weekend and then I moved to D2 in Oldham District General
916 Hospital, because there were so many girls coming in at that stage that there was no room.
917 So I was moved up to, up to the big Hospital and had more blood tests.
918
919 KE Yes? Because Lesley [*Brown*] was pregnant by that time. She was, she was...
920
921 GM Oh, yes. I think, she was, practically...
922
923 KE She was, she was already in Oldham. She was, she was there since April.
924
925 GM I think she was, because I remember somebody saying to me...
926
927 KE No, she was. She was there from April.
928
929 GM Yes, so we, actually, were in the same place, but in different wards.
930
931 KE And did you know that she was pregnant?
932
933 GM Yes. I had heard from somebody who was in with me, who had been in with Lesley,
934 and because that time, there were, instead of there being just the half a dozen of us, which

935 had been the year before, there was 21 of us. You know, so at that time, obviously, coming
936 and going, because, you know, that...
937
938 MHJ Mm-hmm. Because that was the time when they were just running up to finishing,
939 weren't they?
940
941 KE That's right, yes.
942
943 GM It was the last, because Patrick was retiring. Yes, we had a big party for him and we
944 all signed a card from The Ovum Club to Patrick. Oh, it was, it was wonderful, and I was the
945 first one down at that time, and I was, obviously, the last to leave; I was still there on...
946 walked down to Dr Kershaw's to see the girls.
947
948 MHJ What day is that?
949
950 GM That's 21st, and 'P237 and Diane [*Mann*] yesterday'. So, P237 had come down from
951 Glasgow, my friend that I still... my good friend. She had been in with me the year before,
952 and again, she'd been referred by David McKay Hart after I, you know, I'd started the ball
953 rolling. 'Went to Dr Kershaw's again', and I used to walk down. 'Taking things easy, and then
954 I started bleeding [*break through bleeding*] So far, so good; no signs of period starting. Can't
955 dare to believe it's worked, but pray it has' – oh...
956
957 MHJ Which day was that?
958
959 GM That was 3rd June, uh-huh; 'back to Dr Kershaw's. 21 girls in now. Blood test. Bob
960 came in to see me in my room, told me that other girls are going home and I must not get
961 upset. Things looking good for me, though. Very difficult to not be upset.'
962
963 MHJ What day was that?
964
965 GM That was 8th, 6th June.
966
967 MHJ And why was it very difficult not to be upset? Because the other girls were going?
968
969 GM Were going to be going home and he knew how close we all were.
970
971 KE Yes. At that point, you were still having blood tests, weren't you?
972
973 GM Yes. Uh-huh.
974
975 KE Yes. I think, they were every day, if I remember.
976
977 GM I think so.
978
979 KE They were just near enough every day.
980
981 GM Yes. You'll have, you'll know.

982
983 KE Yes, I've got all, I've got all your results, so yes.
984
985 GM Oh, I'm still, all I've written here is, 'still okay. Gone off coffee – good sign? 8th June.'
986
987 KE They didn't give you any other injections or medicines or anything after the transfer,
988 then?
989
990 GM Absolutely nothing.
991
992 KE Because they did, they did the previous time. The first time they did a few injections,
993 maybe.
994
995 GM Uh-huh.
996
997 KE But I was just noticing that when they started the natural cycle, they didn't give any
998 luteal support. I just realised that recently, when I was going through it for the millionth
999 time. Yes, so you, yes, I couldn't see any evidence that you were given anything after the,
1000 after the... yes.
1001
1002 GM No, it was literally nothing and then...
1003
1004 KE Just lots of blood tests.
1005
1006 GM Yes, blood tests, I think, and just kept there, and then I've put here 'lots more girls
1007 coming' and unfortunately going', because there was one more batch that they'd decided
1008 that I... we thought that was the last batch, the one that I was on. But they'd decided that
1009 they would have another batch, which was into June.
1010
1011 MHJ What day, do you remember?
1012
1013 GM That's '9th June'.
1014
1015 KE That's right.
1016
1017 GM And then 'started to seep, to bleed slightly. Please God, don't let me lose my baby.'
1018
1019 KE Yes, that's in your notes.
1020
1021 GM Is it really?
1022
1023 KE Yes.
1024
1025 MHJ 12th is it?
1026
1027 GM 12th yes. 'P237 has gone home – not worked again. So disappointed for her. All clear
1028 again; thank goodness. Must be careful.'

1029
1030 MHJ This is on 13th.
1031
1032 GM 13th. Obviously, having days when I'm bleeding again: 'Sent to bed to lie flat.'
1033
1034 MA That's on 16th.
1035
1036 GM 16th June. 'Mr Steptoe came in to see me; he is very happy with results so far.' And
1037 I've put up here '42nd day,' and that's into 19th June. 'Jimmy and I went out to The Turk's
1038 Head for lunch; Bob joined us. We had to walk; he wouldn't let me go in the car. Bob said,
1039 we'll walk up to the Turk's Head and have a pint; you can have an orange. Went out again to
1040 The Turk's Head; Bob came with us, had a very nice time.'
1041
1042 MHJ That was on 22nd.
1043
1044 GM 22nd, yes. 'So nice to get out of Kershaw's for a while. So sad to see the other girls all
1045 going home. 21 girls together so far.' So I must have written that twice. 'Pregnancy test
1046 done. Hospital for positive – can't believe it.'
1047
1048 MHJ Mm-hmm. That was on 2...?
1049
1050 GM That was on 23rd, but I knew already, because I'd gone off, by that time, coffee and
1051 cucumber, which...
1052
1053 MHJ Mm-hmm, coffee and cucumber.
1054
1055 GM Oh, just the, even the smell of cucumber made me throw up. So, I thought, this is...
1056
1057 MHJ Cucumber's weird, isn't it?
1058
1059 KE Certainly is weird.
1060
1061 GM And, thing is, I can't, I can't get over that – coffee, cucumber.
1062
1063 MHJ And you still can't eat cucumber or are you okay now?
1064
1065 GM No, funnily enough, it took me years to get back on to it. But coffee, I still, I don't
1066 really drink coffee very much. But isn't that funny? Just, I couldn't, even the smell of coffee;
1067 and that was the first sign. Oh, I've gone right off coffee.
1068
1069 KE So, how much longer did you stay down there?
1070
1071 GM 'Got to be very careful and not overdo things', and I've put, written up here – don't
1072 know why – 'watch', and that's 28th June. 'Home; Jimmy came for me and we drove back.'
1073
1074 MHJ So, that was on 29th.
1075

1076 GM That was 29th June.
1077
1078 MHJ Yes. All right, which year are we in now? 7...?
1079
1080 KE 78, yes.
1081
1082 GM Yes, 1978.
1083
1084 KE So, that's just a month before they finished completely, and it was...
1085
1086 GM Yes, because the girls were already starting to come back in and one of the girls that
1087 I'd become very friendly with, P268...
1088
1089 KE Mm-hmm, she had a miscarriage.
1090
1091 GM Yes. She was in that second batch.
1092
1093 KE She got pregnant, yes. That's right.
1094
1095 GM And she, in the book, this book (*A Matter of Life*), it says she came, she was pregnant
1096 before me. She wasn't because...
1097
1098 KE She wasn't, no. She was after you.
1099
1100 GM I've persuaded her, because she said to me, I'm giving up Grace, and I said, P268, I've
1101 got a feeling about you; please don't give up. Come back. So she came back in and I saw her.
1102 She came back in and she, when I left, she was still there, and she did become pregnant, but
1103 she lost her little boy at five months. It was tragic. Then, but she's got her two little girls and,
1104 well, they're quite big girls now, and...
1105
1106 KE What, did she have...?
1107
1108 GM Two girls here [at Bourn Hall].
1109
1110 KE Oh, here?
1111
1112 GM She came back to Bourn, but she doesn't, unfortunately, she didn't want any
1113 publicity at all, but I will ask her, if you want, to see if she would speak to you.
1114
1115 MHJ Mm-hmm. Would be quite nice if she could, and even if she wants to be interviewed
1116 anonymously.
1117
1118 GM Oh, yes, well, I'll say that to her, if I can...
1119
1120 MHJ Because, obviously, any names on this, we'll delete or put some way of indicating.
1121
1122 GM Yes. Oh, yes please. I never asked you about it; I forgot.

1123
1124 MHJ Yes. No, no, don't worry. No, don't worry.
1125
1126 GM Because she does not want any... the girls don't even know.
1127
1128 KE Oh, really?
1129
1130 GM Well, that's what I always found; well, its her, you know, it was her choice.
1131
1132 MHJ No, it was very common in those days. It was very common, because it was almost a
1133 stigma to be an IVF baby.
1134
1135 MHJ Did you find this with Alistair?
1136
1137 GM Well, I wasn't, I didn't tell anybody. I mean, even my parents, I was told not to tell.
1138 That was part of the agreement that... and I think Bob and Patrick did it in the, with the best
1139 of motives, but they didn't want to stigmatise the children and so it was a, I mean, it was a
1140 real shock to me when I, first of all discovered that I was the second, because I didn't, I had
1141 no idea. I thought there, with going by the number of other girls coming in and out, I
1142 thought, between when Leslie became pregnant and I did, surely there must be a lot more.
1143 But, it was a reporter from a newspaper who came to my door, from Lennoxton when we
1144 lived there and said to me, you know, are you Grace Montgomery? I went yes. Do you, you
1145 were having the second IVF baby and – well, test-tube baby, he called it, test-tube baby, and
1146 I said, no. You know, and he said, oh, yes you are.
1147
1148 And I went, well, I don't know where you've got your information, and he, actually, was
1149 quite honest about it. He said, well, it was a nurse at the hospital who'd told him. I thought
1150 that was horrific. So, he, actually, came in. We, I invited him in and we begged him. We said,
1151 look, we don't want any publicity. You've given us news of something we didn't even know.
1152 So, can you not understand what it feels like to suddenly be put in this goldfish bowl? If
1153 you're going to put this in the paper, and by that time, of course, we knew what Lesley
1154 and... what they'd been going through. So, I just, I couldn't live like that, and then it was, he,
1155 very graciously – I don't know how, for a newspaper reporter – he agreed to hold the story,
1156 and he didn't publish until...
1157
1158 KE After Alistair was born.
1159
1160 GM Well, there was a, no there was an article, about November or something like that, I
1161 think.
1162
1163 KE There was an article on him.
1164
1165 GM Because I know we had to leave home. We, you know, we, actually, had to go away.
1166
1167 KE Really?
1168

1169 GM Yes. Mm-hmm. So, there was quite a lot of that. You know, it was stressful, because
1170 we couldn't stay in our house, because of the press.
1171
1172 MHJ That was in the local paper, was it?
1173
1174 GM No, it was the Sun Newspaper. But he was very good; he did hold off, but he printed
1175 because he said that there was, it would come out and it was going to be in other papers
1176 anyway, so someone else had...
1177
1178 MHJ So, this came out in the Sun in November of...?
1179
1180 GM It was, I can't remember but it was something like that.
1181
1182 MHJ 78
1183
1184 KE November 78, yes.
1185
1186 GM Uh-huh. So, we were, we immediately got hold of Patrick and Bob and said what do
1187 we do? And they suggested that we sign an exclusive...
1188
1189 KE Agreement.
1190
1191 GM Agreement with the Mail at the... don't talk to Alistair about The Mail; he, absolutely
1192 hates them, because he feels that they've, you know, they treated Bob and Patrick very
1193 badly. You know, but they, that was the agreement: that we would do that on the
1194 understanding that it was just, really going to be, like, a one-off article. So, there was one –
1195 well, not a one-off article, but there were, there was an agreement that would, they would
1196 keep the rest of the press at bay, really – so, there was an article, came out I November...
1197 because I was still teaching. I was still working in Glasgow, and I remember they arrived at
1198 my work, which I was horrified at, and then they interviewed us, and, of course, then it was
1199 in the papers; so then we couldn't go home again, because there was, there were so many
1200 other press from all over the world. That was in about the November...
1201
1202 KE So, what did you do? Where did you go?
1203
1204 GM Well, I, again, poor Steve, my best friend, she's still my best friend, Stephanie – I call
1205 her Steve – lived in Glasgow and nobody would have... so we stayed there, and what made
1206 us laugh really was, one of their neighbours about three doors up was the Editor of The
1207 Glasgow Herald. His reporters were looking everywhere for us and we were just down the
1208 road. But I don't think, I don't think George would have said anything anyway, because he
1209 knew us, but so we stayed with them for about a week and then I went to my mum's
1210 because it had quietened down there and then eventually we were able to go back home.
1211 But I remember that from November; I had to, then I gave up my work, because it was, it
1212 was six months, supposedly. Then, because Alistair was due on 14th February... but that
1213 seemed to... that whole month was really into December was very stressful and then my
1214 waters broke on Hogmanay, so, but David McKay Hart managed to keep it...
1215

1216 KE For another two... yes.
1217
1218 GM Well, that stopped me for another two weeks.
1219
1220 KE Yes, for another two weeks, yes.
1221
1222 GM Mm-hmm. You know, because I was rushed into the hospital from Lennoxton in a
1223 snow blizzard in my next-door neighbour's Land Rover because it was the only car we could
1224 get out the street.
1225
1226 MHJ Story of high drama.
1227
1228 GM It's like, how are we going to get out of here in, you know, three-foot drifts of snow?
1229
1230 MHJ So, did the reporters come to the hospital and so on?
1231
1232 GM Yes, but, again, there were, the staff and everybody were wonderful. Even the other
1233 girls in the ward were really protective and, I mean, I couldn't fault, you know, that nobody,
1234 not one single person talked; none of our neighbours gave away anything. When I think
1235 what Lesley and John, poor souls, went through. You know, like, people camping out. Our
1236 *cul de sac*, our next-door neighbour blocked it off with his car. They were so protective of
1237 us. You know, because they...
1238
1239 MHJ How long did the press interest go on?
1240
1241 GM Up until, well, I think, it, kind of, eased off a little bit once Lesley and John and Louise
1242 came up and stayed with us in the... well, Alistair would have just been about a month old,
1243 and then we had, they had one big article with the, this one here.
1244
1245 KE With the two babies, yes.
1246
1247 GM With the two babies, you know, the one.
1248
1249 KE Yes, I've got that one upstairs.
1250
1251 GM Yes. Good, is it round about here that... they, you know, when the two of them, you
1252 know... when you see them now. Gosh, when you see that she's only, what? Just about, not
1253 quite six months older than him and he...
1254
1255 MHJ Tiny.
1256
1257 GM They were both exactly the same weight: 5 lb, 12 Oz, but, I mean, he, there was this
1258 amazing doctor that I used to have to... when I went in for my checkups at the hospital: Dr
1259 Amoa from West Africa. Great big bloke with a great sense of humour and he used to do the
1260 scan, and he would say, I think, you've got your dates wrong. This is going to be quite a big
1261 baby. And I said, no, I don't think I've got my dates wrong, Dr Amoa. Oh, well, you know, I

1262 think, this baby's bigger than you're... Oh, right. And he came in the day Alistair was born
1263 and he went, I suppose you think that's funny? The date's wrong indeed!!
1264
1265 MHJ Wonderful, yes.
1266
1267 GM It was, it was great.
1268
1269 MHJ So, then, after that joint photo, the press interest...?
1270
1271 GM Eased off every now and again, but then, we decided to move house. It would be
1272 easier so that, you know, because there, it was a bit like being in a fish bowl. So, we moved
1273 to Denny, where I still am, but in a house, which was in the country. So, kind of, isolated,
1274 and there was only once, when Alistair was really quite young, when a reporter – well, he
1275 was, actually, the editor of a newspaper – came to the door and he said, oh, he'd just found
1276 out that we were here and could he do this article? So, again, we invited him in – have a
1277 whisky – and the weirdest thing was, we eventually ended up as his neighbour. He lived
1278 across the road from us when we moved to where we live now, and, well, I have been living
1279 in, you know, for the last 20-odd years. But he was, he was the Editor of, by that time, The
1280 Herald, and when we explained everything about it, he said, don't you worry; leave it with
1281 me, and he looked after us. He was our guardian after that and he kept the rest of the press
1282 away. So, but that was, we had peace for, you know, a very long time, because I think, he
1283 just put it out that, don't bother them, because you're not going to get, you're not going to
1284 get an article from them.
1285
1286 MHJ So, when we were talking informally last time, you said you didn't, explicitly say
1287 anything to Alistair?
1288
1289 GM No, I didn't.
1290
1291 MHJ But he, in fact, raised it with you?
1292
1293 GM Yes.
1294
1295 MHJ Can you tell us about that?
1296
1297 GM Well, I didn't see the need to explain to Alistair, because he was just my little boy
1298 and then, of course, we then went through the trauma of, when Alistair was only four, of
1299 Jimmy and I splitting up. I hadn't realised – by that time, he had somebody else, so he'd left
1300 and we then had, we moved house and Alistair had to move school and we moved where I
1301 live now, or we both live, and I just thought, he's a very... I had enough on my mind to try
1302 and keep him as a normal, happy little boy with just one parent.
1303
1304 KE As a single... Absolutely, yes.
1305
1306 GM So, and he seemed to be settling in at school and all the rest of it, and then in 1988,
1307 when Pat, when, unfortunately, Patrick died, I heard Alistair, you know, went, no! And I
1308 thought, oh, my goodness, what's happened? And he came rushing into my room in the

1309 morning and said, Mum, I now know why I'm a special baby. Because my mum always called
1310 him, where's our special baby? Or where's our special boy? But she never, he never thought
1311 anything of it; it's just his gran, you know, and grandfather, because he adored them. And I
1312 said, what do you mean Alistair? And he said, Mum, I've just seen on the news, Uncle
1313 Patrick – because he'd called him Uncle Patrick, when he'd seen him and Uncle Bob – he
1314 said, Uncle Patrick's just died and I've just seen Louise on the, on the television and I now
1315 know why Gran calls me a special baby, and I went, what do you mean? And he said, well, I
1316 must be the same. So, he'd worked it out. He'd worked it out for himself. But he was
1317 distraught, you know, about, you know...

1318

1319 KE Mm-hmm. So, he saw Bob and Patrick a few times when he was growing up? Yes.

1320

1321 GM Yes, uh-huh, and, but although, obviously, as, because he was, as he got older, he
1322 could... he looked on Bob as, like another grandpa; he just loved him to bits. He thought the
1323 world of him. But that was how he found out, and then, of course, it then broke in the press.
1324 But he took it all in his stride. You know, his pals at school would say things like, you know,
1325 how the heck did you climb out of your test-tube? Were the walls not awful slippery and did
1326 you...? Were you sponsored by Pyrex?

1327

1328 MHJ Oh, it's like Louise's story that when she used to say people thought she should be
1329 long and thin, with her hair sticking up out of the tube, you know.

1330

1331 GM I know, I know, but his pals were, as Alistair often said, his pals were great about it,
1332 but they were just interested. They didn't call him names or anything. They just said, you
1333 know, what is this all about? So, it really gave Alistair such an interest in finding out as much
1334 as he could about I... which has been, you know, a real interest of his since he was a child.
1335 So, no, he's taken it all in his, in his stride.

1336

1337 MHJ I think, kids will do if they get to know about it in the right way, at the right time and
1338 are given a lot of support and love.

1339

1340 GM Mm-hmm.

1341

1342 MHJ That's my impression, that... I mean, in a sense, you weren't keeping it secret,
1343 because you were, you were just not saying it.

1344

1345 GM That was it; I didn't see the need.

1346

1347 MHJ It was, and you were relating to Bob and Patrick.

1348

1349 KE Yes, you didn't see the need, yes. Absolutely, yes.

1350

1351 GM Uh-huh, I'd almost forgotten – well, I didn't. I would never, ever forget, because I
1352 was so grateful every morning I woke up, but I just thought, well, it's there in the back of my
1353 mind, but I don't, it doesn't have to be...

1354

1355 KE Yes, it's not a big issue. It's not an issue, yes.

1356
1357 GM No, it was, from the point of view, it was a miracle and, but the miracle was Bob and,
1358 Bob and Patrick's miracle; they were the ones that performed it. I mean, I was just blessed,
1359 in that I was able to have my own, my own child, thanks to them. So, that was the way that I
1360 always looked at it; I don't have to keep reminding Alistair.

1361
1362 MHJ Did you ever think about having a second child through IVF?

1363
1364 GM Oh, I would have loved it, but I've been on my own ever since, so I couldn't. But I've
1365 just thought I was so grateful that... and so lucky to have Alistair.

1366
1367 MHJ Can you...? You've talked a little about your egg club, The Ovum Club, or whatever?

1368
1369 GM The Ovum Club.

1370
1371 MHJ Yes, do you want to just talk a little bit about how that functioned and what you gave
1372 to each other and how it all worked and so on?

1373
1374 GM I think, because, obviously, there were, we had that bond and everybody, as they
1375 came in, whoever was there before, immediately made the next girl coming in so welcome;
1376 it was a lovely feeling. The first time I went down, P38 took me under her wing and she was
1377 already in and she was just wonderful, and she was like the mother hen and explained, oh,
1378 this, you know, this'll happen and that'll happen, but you'll be fine, you know. And she was
1379 there the next time as well, you know, with, when I went down again. But in between, I
1380 don't, I can't think how many times she must have gone through that, but you could almost
1381 see that... oh, my goodness. I mean, she was amazing. What a girl she is, and it was so sad
1382 that she never... you know, after her...

1383
1384 KE Yes, after the first one.

1385
1386 GM After she lost the first one, she never, it never happened again. But, I think that she
1387 was, as I said, almost the instigator of, this is what we do: we look after each other. But it
1388 was, became very natural. You know, we were all in the same boat and we supported each
1389 other, we commiserated with each other, you know, when you knew that it wasn't, you
1390 know, wasn't working. But there was, there was lots of fun as well, because you always had
1391 to try and keep, you know, keep the morale up and we would all sit round and tell stories
1392 and try our best to have a laugh and it was, as I said, it was just a real club. You know, the...

1393
1394 MHJ I mean, some of the women must have been a bit bitter; did you ever pick that up?

1395
1396 GM Not while they were there, because when they were, they were going, they were in
1397 shock, quite a lot of them and very upset, and also upset because they were, we were, you
1398 know, we were, we were going to miss each other, because when you're in for quite a long
1399 time together, you become very close.

1400
1401 MHJ Well, especially under those circumstances.

1402

1403 GM Yes. You know, so, that was the, I wouldn't say, I, there wasn't one person that I
1404 would have said was bitter. Some were distraught. You know, they were just in such a state
1405 and we were, that's why, you know, Bob had said to me, you mustn't get - or Patrick -
1406 mustn't get upset, but it's very, very difficult when you, you know, you become really close
1407 to people and you're seeing them going out and, you know, you're left behind. Yes, but it
1408 was amazing, the number of girls who, when, I think, they had guessed, with me, and they
1409 all, they all said, you know, we're thinking about you or praying for you and - I'm trying to
1410 think - was it P268 that said, do it for us, Grace. And I said, no, no, you come back, and she
1411 did.

1412

1413 MHJ But did you pick up the sense or did you feel yourself, that even if it hadn't worked,
1414 you contributed to it working?

1415

1416 GM Well, we hoped that... yes, that was what, that was the one thing, I think, that made
1417 us feel, kind of, good about it, was that, well, it was the one saving grace, really, that at
1418 least, if it wasn't going to work for us, hopefully, it was going to work for someone else. It
1419 was a very generous, I would say, all the girls were very generous about that, you know, that
1420 feeling. They didn't resent anyone else, if they thought that they were going to be
1421 successful. It was more a case of, well, we've done our best; maybe it's going to help
1422 someone else. That's, certainly, the way I looked on it, and when I saw what P38 went
1423 through; when she knew, when she started, there was no way it was going to work for her,
1424 she was still doing that and when she was back in with me and she was hoping that it would
1425 work. But she still had that wonderful positive attitude that, well, maybe not this time, but
1426 maybe next time and if not me, for someone else.

1427

1428 MHJ Are you still in touch with her?

1429

1430 GM Yes.

1431

1432 KE Well, you can tell her from us, that she, certainly, she certainly did contribute.

1433

1434 MHJ Mm-hmm. Well, we've, well, I mean, we've kept you quite a long time, as it's been
1435 fascinating. Is there anything else you want to tell us or anything we should have asked you
1436 and we haven't?

1437

1438 GM I can't think of anything. Not really, no. I think, we've covered, really, the whole...

1439