

In assembling the Voices record some people gave video interviews only some of which were completed in time to be included in the Remembrance 2018 Exhibition. The following pages are not verbatim transcripts but give an impression of what they told us at the Farmers Market in June 2018 and at other times. All of the video interviews were included in the series of short films including 'Voices at the Market', in which George Burt, below, was the first interviewee.

George Burt

George's grandfather John Gray signed up in 1914 when he was only 15 years old. He survived the war.

George's father served with the RAF in the Second World War as a radio operator. His uncle was a bomber pilot flying Lancasters over three tours, after which he trained new pilots. Both survived the war.

George remembered being told that the crew seats in Lancasters were far from luxurious and were nothing like the armchairs in American fortresses.



Donald Chadwick

I was on a family holiday in Redcar when war was declared. I was just about to start school and I wasn't happy when we had to come back to Edinburgh immediately. I remember helping to dig the hole for the Anderson Shelter in our back garden, and then I was evacuated to Ettrick Bridge for about nine months.

Later on I became a 'salvage warden' which meant I had to push a 'guider' or 'bogie' around with a large bin on it collecting veg peelings and unused porridge for pig feed.

My father came back at the end of the war, and within forty eight hours he was back at work managing Burton the Tailors in Leith in his striped trousers and Anthony Eden hat, as if nothing had happened.

Bert Miller

Bert and Elsie Miller both grew up in Falkirk. Both Bert and Elsie's fathers were wounded in the First World War; Elsie's father recuperated in London while Bert's father recovered in Malta.

Bert's father was in the navy and Bert thinks he may have been wounded at the Dardanelles. He went back to war but he along with all his seven siblings came home from the war, which he says was most unusual.



Bert's mother worked in a munitions factory during the War.

(ICI Nobel Division manufactured detonators at a factory at Redding. When it was set up in the 1870's Alfred Nobel spent a considerable amount of time in the area living in Hawthorn Cottage in Main Street, Laurieston. During World War I over 800 workers supplied the military.)



Margaret Pringle

Margaret Pringle grew up in Edinburgh but was evacuated to Fort Augustus in the early part of the Second World War whilst her father was in India.

Her late husband, Bill, was also evacuated and did not see his father for the entirety of the war.

John Stirling

John's grandfather was with the Black Watch in the First World War, while in WW2 his father, being in a reserved occupation, served in the Home Guard. He said that it really was like Dad's Army.

He tells of being told of there having been an old tram car up at the reservoirs from which the waterkeeper's wife sold sweets. Unfortunately however there was a searchlight unit nearby and they got all the sweets meaning there weren't any left for the children



Alistair Weir

Alistair grew up in Edinburgh but his father evacuated the family to Balerno because 'they weren't going to drop bombs on Balerno'.

Bombs fell on Balerno on three occasions during the war including shortly after the time when Alistair arrived.

Barry Crawford



Barry works with Edward Collin Fish Merchants who attend the monthly Farmers Market. He comes to Balerno most months. His father was a bomb aimer in an Avro Lancaster along with Danny Blanchflower who played football in his later years for Spurs and Northern Ireland. His grandfather on his mother's side survived being mustard gassed in the First World War and told lurid some stories which seemed lurid. Although Barry is not sure ho true they might have been.

Helen Webster



Helen remembers being in London during the war and in particular seeming to have been in an air raid shelter every night.

Ian Hynd



Ian's grandfather was regular in the Royal Scots and was on the Somme before being demobbed in 1921, following which he emigrated to Canada to join the Mounted Police before returning in the later 1930's and joining the Metropolitan Police. During the 2nd World War he transferred to the City of Glasgow Police where he remained until the 1950's when he retired. Ian's father was with the Catering Corps attached to the Royal Artillery during the Korean War although he never went overseas. That was partly following an accident which killed most of the gun crew to which he was assigned.

Gordon MacDonald is MSP for the Balerno area. Gordon's great grandfather John Maclauchlan was killed at Arras in April 1917, while serving with 7thBn Cameron Highlanders. He and his unit were resting at the Grande Place in Arras when a solitary shell came over, exploded and killed him and one of his friends. The only way in which the precise circumstances are known was because it was unusually recorded in the Regimental History. Unusually because ordinarily the names of Private soldiers were not recorded, but in this case because the unit was resting only two soldiers were killed in a five day period, and unfortunately my great grandfather was one of them.

Cllr Ricky Henderson

I know that my mother, her brother and her sister were evacuated in WW2; my grandfather was working in the docks at Leith at the time, and it was thought that Edinburgh might be subjected to bombing. My father did National Service after the war although I think he didn't go much further than Catterick. But I do think that, especially at remembrance time, that we should think about the sacrifices which people have made so that we can enjoy the freedoms which we take for granted today.

