



No. 14908

Real Gone Kid

Patient: Pete Grafton

Two Months in a Psychiatric Hospital

1 Before the Bin

It's 1990. I'm living in Maryhill, Glasgow. I've been through two years of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. My sons, Robin and Martin live in Knightswood, four miles away with Martha their Mum. Robin is 13, Martin is 11. We'd all lived together as a family on Arran since Robin was 10 months old. I'd done a byre up to live in. Martha did some graphic design and I was a jobbing gardener. But things went wonky between me and Martha. Because of the holiday homes on the island, finding a place to live in, to rent, on Arran was near impossible. That's why I was living in Glasgow. Meanwhile Martha had met someone who was visiting the island and they became a couple. His work was in Glasgow, and Martha, with the boys, moved there.

My Chronic Fatigue Syndrome was so bad that when brushing my teeth at night I had to sit on the edge of the bath, using my left hand because my right hand was so knackered with the little it had done during the day. (I was right handed.) But as I got better from the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome I began to have something so frightening - something I'd never had before: psychosis.

I'd see streams of blood running down the flats across the way. On another occasion I was so distraught I had to ring the night-time Emergency Services. An Indian Doctor came out, giving me a strong valium capsule. He told me to see my GP first thing in the morning. The GP - he was a good bloke - prescribed me Mellaril, to calm me down, saying their effect was variable depending on the individual. Take between 2 to 6 a day, he said. I'm gushingly grateful to him, he says 'It's alright, we just need to get you through this patch'. I was to discover that Mellaril would stop an angry rhinoceros in its tracks. It would slow down. It would stop, and a cartoon question

mark would hover over its head, and then it would keel over, with a massive thud as it hit the African steppe.

In my case, I would open my mouth to speak, but nothing would come out. It was if someone had stuffed my mouth with two handkerchiefs, and I had no way of getting them out. Months later I was to discover that Mellaril was an anti-psychotic drug. This is late September, 1990.

2 In the Bin

FOR SOCIAL SECURITY AND STATUTORY SICK PAY PURPOSES ONLY

NOTES TO PATIENT ABOUT USING THIS FORM

You can use this form either:

1. For Statutory Sick Pay purposes - just fill in Part A overleaf and give or send the form to your employer or
2. For state benefit purposes - To continue a claim for state benefit. Fill in Parts A and B of the form overleaf, sign and date it and send it to your local social security office QUICKLY to avoid losing benefit.

NOTE: To start your claim for State benefit you must use form SC1 (Rev) if you are self-employed, unemployed or non-employed OR form SSP1 (E) or SSP1 (T) if you are an employee. For further details get leaflet NI16 (from DHSS local offices).

NOTE TO HOSPITAL STAFF

For guidance on the completion of this form see notes on the back of the pad

HOSPITAL IN-PATIENT CERTIFICATE

To be filled in by an authorised person on the hospital staff

I certify that:-

1 Mr.
Mrs.
Miss Peter Grafton
Ms.....

has received treatment as an in-patient in this hospital continuously since

D	M	Y
2	11	90

and

2 (Complete (a) or (b) whichever applies)

(a) is expected to remain an in-patient for at least a further

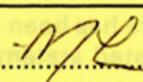
8	xx	XX
weeks		

(b) was discharged from hospital on

D	M	Y
-	-	-

Is the patient a private patient? (YES or NO)

No

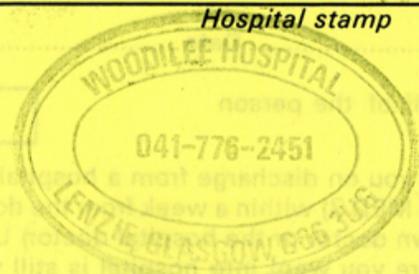
Signature of certifier for Mrs I M Stewart 

Qualification or status Medical Records Officer

Date of Signing

D	M	Y
5	11	90

Hospital stamp



Form MED 10
3/83

It's now November, 1990. I'm 45. And I'm in a mini-cab, driving out of Glasgow. I've got a small rucksack. In it are pants, spare t-shirt, toothbrush and photographs of Robin and Martin, and one of Jean, my girlfriend.

We're driving along a quiet road, through dreary November countryside The part I remember was looking back over my shoulder, and in the distance seeing the Water Tower of Stobhill Hospital, a General Hospital in the east side of Glasgow Six days I'd been in there. I could even make out the window of the Male Psychiatric ward where I'd been. I was admitted as suicidal. Six days later I'm discharged ... The Psychiatrist's diagnosis was that there was nothing wrong with me that a holiday wouldn't cure.

And now here I am, four weeks later in a taxi, on my way to a Psychiatric Hospital.

The cab driver had been silent during the journey, but knew where he was going, and once in the sprawling grounds of the hospital, he knew his way to Acute Admission Wards 1 and 2. He pulled up outside them. Paying the fare he asked me if I was admitting myself. I nodded. He nodded back, and was away.

A sign says "*Welcome to Woodilee Hospital*". It's attached to the entrance of the 1950s prefab type building that houses Wards 1 and 2. I was to learn that Ward 1 was the Male Acute Admission Ward and Ward 2 the Female Acute Admission Ward. It's a one storey building sitting amongst the Victorian three storey buildings, some boarded up, some still used, remnants of the Woodilee Asylum. I read later that it was opened in 1875 and that its grounds covered 167 acres.

The steps up to the entrance are plastered with dog-ends. The cement rendering's coming off, showing the brickwork underneath. Stunted berberis and cotoneaster bushes are also covered in dog-ends. There were, I was to find out on a nurse escorted walk, more of these single story 1950s buildings scattered around the Hospital grounds. And some were Locked Wards.



Through the entrance swing doors at the top of the steps and into a polished linoleum floored corridor. There is an immediate rise in the temperature, radiators everywhere.

There must be quite a heating bill, windows and doors are open and this is early November. In days to come on nurse escorted walks through the Hospital grounds I passed what seemed to be a giant hanger for Zeppelins. The entrance was wide open revealing a mountain load of coke, and a parked tractor with a plough for shovelling it, but where to?

The first closed office door I passed had 'Social Work Office' on it. In the two months I was in Woodilee I never saw anyone going into it, coming out of it, or its door open.

A few more steps I come to the corridor crossroads. Left for the Women's Acute Admission Ward 2. It's a short corridor, with a public pay phone, padlocked to the wall. Very soon I learn that this lone padlocked payphone is for all us Acute admissions, in both Wards. Fifty people. (This was before mobile phones.)

Turn right for the Male Acute Admission Ward 1.

Go through the swing doors. It's a quiet, welcoming ward. No patients in it. I didn't take in that there was a large Day Room off to the left of the Ward, and that's where they were, mostly curled up in chairs. The Ward Office is by the Ward entrance, with internal observation windows giving the Nurses a view down to the end of the ward, and into the Day Room. I knock on the half open Ward Office door. Two male nurses in civvies look up. Give them my name. I'm given a bed by the ward entrance, opposite the Ward office. I later learn that this is the Observation Bed every new admission is put in. It's here that they keep an eye on you. Usually for two or three days, and then you're moved to another bed in the Ward.

A student nurse makes an inventory of the things I've brought with me, including the money in my wallet... the money is taken away to be kept in a safe box... Some time later I'm taken into a small side room with chairs and an examination couch to be interviewed by the doctor on charge - a small attractive Indian woman, who is never seen again. I can't remember anything of the interview, except it was perfunctory... I remember the admission interview at Stobhill - do you bite your nails, do you hear voices, do you use

drugs, describe what's happening to you. Then explaining the discharge procedure if you are voluntary - officially known as an 'informal' patient. The latter in response to my asking about it. A Charge Nurse can keep you for two hours until a Doctor sees you. If you want to discharge yourself you have to sign a Discharge Book, that you're leaving against their advice.

At Woodilee, unlike Stobhill, they make you have a bath on admission. The bath is in the Toilets and Washhouse area which is directly off the Ward, through an open space. It's on the opposite side of the Ward Nurses office. I'm shown to it by the student nurse who tells me to undress and put my clothes on a chair. He has a key to unlock the taps of the bath, and leaves me to it.

There's a small moveable plastic table and a couple of stackable chairs and a modern cupboard - minus its door. Inside are ping pong bats. Later, I find out there was no ping-pong table in the small 'Games' room. The room was at the bottom of the Ward.

High on the wall, in the window, is an air extractor. There is no door into the bath area. For privacy, of a sort, a thin off-white plastic curtain can be pulled around. There's a safety point to this 'openness'. Observation. Keeping an eye on a patient who is suicidal or self-harming. "Duty of care". As a patient, though, you don't know that.... It's a bit forlorn.

I run the lukewarm water which even with the tap turned fully open has a slow trickle. The plastic curtain doesn't reach the ground. During my two month stay in the Ward it was common to see trousers, pants or socks on the floor when someone was in the bath.

I pulled the plastic table into the bath area and, naked, piled my clothes on it. Tested the water with my foot, in case it had become

boiling hot. I needn't have bothered. I got into the bath. I then realised that there was no block of soap and the tepid water was still trickling in at a snail's pace. I felt very exposed. And alone.

After the Admission bath I return to my bed, a bed which could be seen by the Nurses in the Ward Office. It's the New Admission bed. I take a framed photo of Robin and a framed photo of Martin from my rucksack and put them on the bedside cabinet.

I can't remember much about the first days. I do remember sitting on my bedside chair and rocking myself backwards and forwards. Later I heard that this was noted in the Daily Observations that the Nurses had to write up... We are not allowed to lie on our beds, once we are woken up after 8 in the morning. The exception is after the mid-day meal we're allowed to lie on our bed, for an hour. In the evening after 8 pm you can lie again on your bed. Some would get in their bed after 8 pm.

It was a 24 bedded Ward, 12 on each side and a wide aisle running down to a smallish recreational room with a Pool Table. To the left was a bedroom for one or two patients. I never looked in it, or knew what qualified you to be in it.

On the left, running all they way down, in parallel from the Ward Entrance to the bottom, was the Day Room, which had windows looking out onto the manky dead grass on one side and windows on the Ward side. The Day Room had comfortable well worn chairs, and at one end, a TV. Nurses had a view from their Office into the Day Room.

I do remember one of the Night Nurses, known as the Fat Controller, telling me it could be a bit noisy where my New Patient bed was, and to pull the curtains 'round the bed. I had trouble

sleeping, but he wasn't keen on giving me sleeping tablets. And he didn't. It was part of an admittance procedure of being taken off whatever medication you were on, depending on the nature of the illness, for observation purposes.

On the third night the Fat Controller said he couldn't understand how I couldn't get any sleep when I had ME. My file from Stobhill was now definitely in the Ward Office, and would be read by Nurses coming on the Ward, reading up about the new admission. For some it was as much as having a nosey about non-medical items about yourself. A bit of tittle-tattle. The Fat Controller's ignorance about ME pissed me off. Although he had been alright on my admittance, over the weeks he ended up not liking me, and me not liking him.

I cried a lot on the first days of admittance. Some staff member needed to interview me (about what I never knew) and Antonia a nurse said 'He's pretty upset at the moment'.

I'd sit on my bedside chair and cuddle myself, rocking myself backwards and forwards. I had this terrifying fear that I'd never see Robin and Martin again. I wrote to Martha, their Mum, telling her when the visiting times were. I was to get a letter back saying that for various reasons she wouldn't be coming in, either herself or with the boys. Tackled about it on the Patient Pay Phone she said a Nurse had said not to come in. This may have been true, but it may not. Martha had a flexible approach to what truth was.

A few days after I was admitted I jumped at the chance to go on an Escorted Walk, thinking it was in the Hospital grounds. I started getting panicky when I realised, as we walked out of the Hospital grounds, that we were heading for 'Kirkie' - Kirkintilloch. I didn't let on how I felt. There was a cluster of us male patients and two



nurses. I thought we would just walk up the road, until we got to the proper Kirkie, and turn back, but we were still heading for the town. Sweating with anxiety I told the nurse nearest me that I was done. (When he was next on shift he told me he'd worked in insurance but got the sack for calling his bosses wife a 'whore', so he took up Psychiatric Nursing instead.)

He told the other Nurse I was 'U/S'. He stayed with me as the rest went on. I did some deep breathing and took my overcoat off, I was sweating so much. As we entered the Hospital grounds again, he pointed out the 'condemned' buildings: hospital buildings. He said it was a scam to avoid spending money on them. The word was - off the record - that the hospital was going to get closed and that the acres and acres of lucrative grounds were going to get sold off for private housing. Off the record he was 100% right.

When the group returned from Kirkie, one of the patients, a young guy, came up to me and asked how I was. I was touched by that. It

was an indication of how us patients could be concerned for each other.

I had another walk with the ex-insurance nurse, this time within the Hospital Grounds. Looking back, he was the Escort, probably because I was still on a suicide watch. I got as far as the Hospital Shop, a depressing small detached 1940s building. Tried to go on a bit, and then saw a sign pointing off to the right in the forsaken afternoon grey: 'Mortuary'. My body temperature's shooting up. I couldn't go on. The Nurse asked why I couldn't go on. I just shook my head. He accepted that, and we about-turned, back to the safety of the Ward



In the grounds of Woodilee Hospital. The shop.

I also remembered going swimming with the ex-Insurance salesman trainee Nurse, and another nurse. Fellow ward inmates

Don, Ian and Frank made up the party. It was a van with windows we were in, not an ambulance, heading out to the countryside. The two nurses were talking about trying to give up smoking, one saying he'd wait until he got his exam results before he had a go. When we got to the Baths it was closed. There had been a cock-up: this was the day of the week that it closed in the afternoon. Close by there was a canal, a hump backed bridge over it, a lorry driving fast over the bridge, and fields, and this closed Municipal 1960s 'Sports Centre'.

The first two nights I tossed myself off. There was something quite deliberate about this - a way of proving to myself that I was still alive. But as my condition worsened, any sex drive I had went. And that loss of a sex drive was true for the other lads.

After two or so days in the Observation Bed I was moved down the Ward, with the rest of the guys. This seemingly was standard procedure.

At first I didn't participate in the Ward social life - I was observing, but not part of it. That came later. But I did realise that the guys in Woodilee were different from the guys in Springburn. The guys in Woodilee were mostly in on six month Sections, or year long Sections, and many were 'old hands' due to the recurring nature of their illness. And it was going to be their friendship that was going to be part of my recovery.

I still hadn't seen a Doctor after a week of being admitted. I was pissed off. I asked to see a Doctor. It was a slightly plump, pasty woman Doctor with glasses who didn't seem to like me, very cool and curt. Neither did I like her. I asked why I had been taken off an effective non-addictive sleeping pill (Zimovane). She responded saying it wasn't certain that Zimovane was non-addictive. I also

asked what kind of medication I would get if I discharged myself. Five days supply was the answer, but she didn't go into details about what it would be.

3 Wakey-Wakey! Out of those Beds!

It's Winter black outside. In the Ward there is dim overnight lighting. But spot on 8 am there's a slightly sinister noise within the Ward - it's the hum of the starter units on the ceiling fluorescent strip lights, as they stutter into sterilised light. It was this noise, every morning, that penetrated your half sleeping being. It was the start of the daily Ward routine.

The sterilised lighting meant: time to get up. At 7.30 am the day shift nurses have come on, taken over from the night shift. And at 8 am it's their job to walk up and down the Ward. 'Morning, morning, time to get up' they'd say. Some of the patients are already up.

And every morning the nurses go through the same routine with one patient - Jamesie. They're threatening him with a bath if he doesn't get up quickly enough. Big Michael, Big Stewart, and occasionally Dougie got the same treatment: threats, sometimes good-humoured, sometimes not so good-humoured, and rarely, some patients getting tipped out of their bed by nurses grabbing the mattress and tipping it, and them, out.

The Toilets and Washroom

In our Ward toilets and washrooms there are three toilet cubicles. None of the doors have a lock. One of the cubicle doors isn't hanging properly. To get it open and closed you hook your foot

under its bottom, and yank it up. There's no graffiti on the cubicle walls, or the doors.

Halfway through the week the toilet paper runs out and paper towels for hand-drying are used. There are three sinks in this part of the washrooms. White, and sometimes red blocks of soap are in the sink and they also run out during the week. Sometimes a sodden dout is looking up at you from the its bottom. Mirror above each sink.

Adjacent to this area, at the end of the corridor is a second bathroom, with three modern sinks, each sink in a partitioned area. Chained sink plugs missing in some sinks, in both wash areas. All the wash and bath areas are brightly lit by fluorescent lighting.

Off the second wash area is a linen store where hospital pyjamas, shirts and trousers, towels, sheets and pillowslips are on wooden shelving. The floor here is cluttered with mops, brushes, industrial cleaning machines. They're for sweeping and polishing the Ward and Day Room.

In a locked cupboard on the wall of the second wash area are toilet bags hanging from hooks, with shaving tackle in each bag and plastic throwaway razors for each patient, their name under their bag. I had an electric razor, so did two others.

Opposite the first wash area, across the corridor, is the bath and shower. There is a recently erected partition between the bath and the shower. The bath has handles and a rubber non-slip mat. A key to operate the taps is chained to the plug. This is kept in the Ward Office, when not in use. There's a round plastic table and a couple of stackable chairs and a modern cupboard - minus its door - and inside are ping pong bats. (But no ping pong table in the Games

Room). High on the wall, in the window, is an air extractor. There is no door into the bath area. If you want privacy a thin off-white plastic curtain can be pulled across. It doesn't reach the ground and you can see trousers, pants or socks on the floor when someone's in the bath (if they haven't put them on the plastic table).

The shower is also screened off by a similar plastic curtain. The shower is inside a plastic cubicle, part of the plastic moulding is cracked and the shower head won't stay in its bracket and slowly rotates until the water is showering out of the cubicle onto the floor. There is a stackable chair next to the shower to put clothes on.

Just after eight in the morning, after the Ward white sterilised fluorescent lighting hums on the wash house is congested with us - monitored by nurses and student nurses. We're standing in line to use the sinks. At this time in the morning it takes at least ten minutes before hot water comes through. It comes a long way from somewhere else in the Hospital grounds, but no-one knows from where. Two student nurses stand sentinel-like in the washroom, issuing out and receiving back the toilet bags with the razors. The nurses also check that you have combed your hair, etc. The majority of us don't need to be told to shave or comb our hair, apart from the usual one or two. Difficult to know whether it's a form of silent sullen rebellion, or they can't be arsed. Some of the younger guys have spray-on deodorant, which they keep in their bedside cabinet.

The WC cubicles are fairly clean. They're cleaned everyday by contract cleaners - usually stocky, black dyed frizzled hair Anne. But by night-time there are pools of pee on each cubicle floor, that doesn't stop barefooted guys still coming in to piss, edging their way around the pools. Occasionally a turd, monster in length and in diameter would be stubbornly stuck in the U-bend for days. They'd have to get in a plumber to remove it.

At 2 o'clock in the morning the toilets take on a different atmosphere, usually deserted. But after 5 a.m. there's a chance of bumping into old John as he bumbles around the sinks area. Also after tea - that is, the evening meal - Don would be in the toilets area corridor doing pull-ups: his feet hooked up under the radiator. He'd be lying across the corridor, pulling himself up by his shoulders, hands behind his head. Backwards and forwards, backwards and forwards, backwards and forwards.....

After the morning wash and brush-up most some of us sit on the edge of our bed (no-one is allowed to lye on their bed), or some trudge into the Day Room. The early risers have already bagged and curled up in the best seats by the warm Day Room radiators. Cigarettes are lit. The first of the day. Coughs, gurgles. Every morning Eddie - I'll write about him later - coughs up on his first one. it's a sort of persistent rumbling chuckle of a cough.

As said earlier, the Day Room runs parallel to the Ward. Beside seeing what's happening in the Ward there are windows running on its other side, looking out onto wild grass. This time of year it's the colour of yellow piss. You can also see the single story Locked Wards. From outside, in design, they look just like ours and the womens.

4 Grub Up!

After the morning wash and brush up we're all waiting for a nurse to shout to us from the open door of Ward Office that breakfast is ready... Some of us are hanging around that end of the Ward, by the double doors that lead out to corridor, waiting for this daily morning announcement. It comes via a phone call from the Canteen

to the Ward Office. There's never a frantic scramble through the double doors. It's not the medication that's making us slow. It's a mixture of 'What's the hurry for? The food's usually shite'. It's a routine that a newcomer first views with contempt... As an outside observer you're thinking - "Look at them, I'm no going to be like that" - but after a week or two you start to become part of it, part of the community, your community.

Turning right-ways, along the corridor to the Canteen we tramp along on the right side, and the ladies shuffle along on the left. It'll be the same for those who are allowed to walk in the hospital grounds: shuffle, shuffle. No-one's going anywhere.

I found the food uneatable the first weeks in Woodilee, but I'd noticed in the distraught four weeks between discharge from Stobhill and finally getting a bed at Woodilee, that food tasted sub-standard. I was 11 stone 6 lb. when I entered Woodilee, down from a more or less usual 12 stone 7 lb. (Part of Woodilee admission procedure was getting weighed).

At breakfast during my first distraught week I sat at the table nearest to a warm radiator in the Canteen which was as you came into it Three women used it. One was tallish, early thirties. Slacks and a top. Her name was Janis. She nearly always carried a big shoulder bag which had her belongings in it. She was afraid to go to the Guy Fawkes Firework Display she told me, in case she got 'one in my eye'. Guy Fawkes was three days off.

The second woman mentioned that she had had a nervous breakdown six years before. The third woman said how good Dr. Campbell - the Consultant I was to see - was. She said she had been coming in and out of Woodilee for fifteen years. Fifteen years? Jeezo! This is my future?

The men tended to sit separately from the women and vice versa.

Breakfast was watery salty porridge... or cornflakes... or bran flakes, followed by rolls and portion control packs of Flora, and marmalade. The porridge was served with a ladle out of an aluminium urn, and was warm to hot. Quite a few patients because of unsteady hands (a side effect usually caused by long term psychiatric medication) or poor eyesight, had trouble opening these portion- control plastic packs, and opened them by stabbing them clumsily with their knife, or a fellow patient at the table would open the pack for them.

All cooked food was prepared in the kitchens of Stobhill - five miles away - and sent in NHS lorries to the hospital, which partly explained the strange quality of the chips, and of the fried fish.

In a corner of the canteen were two small half dead plants, with plant supports three times higher than them. They looked as if they'd last been watered in 1967, when Celtic beat Internazionale in Lisbon. There was also a drinks vending machine (Maxpak - General Foods) which the patients operated themselves. This could vex new patients, who would be shown by experienced patients how to get the cardboard cup out, how to operate the hot water dispenser, and so on.

At first I ate bran flakes, determined not to get constipation. Why this was a priority I don't know. I'd never ever had constipation in my life. There were also small glasses of orange juice, made up from powder. It tasted artificial. It was said it was Vitamin C enriched - told this by a fellow patient. After a few weeks I tried the porridge and found it uneatable. By the time of my Discharge I was eating and enjoying two bowls of porridge, and up to three rolls with

marmalade. We were allocated one roll each, but I'd take the uneaten rolls from other tables. At the end of my stay I even found the Maxpac tea drinkable, provided you could find some real milk to put in it, not the milk substitute powder.

Lunch rotated from macaroni cheese to 'roast meat' (difficult to tell if it was pork, beef or what), to lasagne - served with chips and tinned peas to shepherds pie to fish in a kind of cheese sauce to mutton pie, or chicken pie, 'stew', or turkey breast. On Fridays we got fried fish, but in limited quantities, so if you were halfway down the queue you got macaroni cheese. Curiously this didn't cause any argy-bargy within the queue, of some patients making sure they were near the front. There was a reason for this: the fried fish looked golden and succulent, but when you got into it the dressing/batter was leathery and the fish was dry.

Vegetables were mostly mashed potatoes, and tinned mixed vegetables. Other vegetables that turned up were baked beans, carrots, cabbage (boiled white and served twice in two months), brussels sprouts (boiled yellow and served six times in two months). Occasionally there would be salad, served with gammon or tuna fish balls. Something else was in the balls to bulk them up but I could never work out what it was. The salad was about once a fortnight, if you were lucky.

Afters, which we only got with the mid-day meal, was usually sponge with pineapple pieces in it and custard, apple cake, more than tart, also with custard and red jelly and ice cream. Red jelly always, never ever any other colour. The ice cream had hard icy lumps in it. Rarely, cartons of yoghurt made an appearance. Potatoes also came as roast, and chipped. I don't recall plain boiled potatoes. Once, in two months, potato croquettes were served - this

aroused comments from us, the patients. Glasses of milk were available from the counter.

The five o'clock Tea in the canteen was soup, usually vegetable - mixed veg, or pulse based - occasionally tomato and, rarely, minestrone. At first I found all the soup too salty, but with the exception of tomato, as time went on I could eat them. There was no afters. Two loaves instead, one white, one brown, would be on the counter, and portion control packs of jam. The first two weeks it was apricot, and then blackcurrant for the next six weeks. Milk as a drink was in short supply at Tea. 'You're not supposed to have milk at Tea', said one of the Dinner Ladies, before taking my offered glass to the milk dispenser.

Food was served by 'Daisy', grey haired, quite tall and sprightly, or by another woman with dark hair, whose temper was unpredictable, and was always suspicious of those asking for 'vegetarian', asking them their name, as if someone was trying to con a vego meal out of her who shouldn't have it. She was shorter than 'Daisy', slightly plumper. A nurse would often help with dishing the food out from the counter, particularly at the 5 o'clock tea when often only one dinner lady was on. The food was served from stainless steel holders - Bain-maries - heated from underneath by hot water.

Four chairs to a Formica topped table in the canteen was standard. A few had wobbly legs. Besides the cutlery there were plastic bottles of brown sauce, tomato ketchup, a bowl of sugar, and a plastic miniature vase of plastic flowers. It was a one plastic item, melded together. The earth was a light brown rippled plastic effect.

Throughout the meal, until the last lingering eater, we were watched over by nursing staff. Two or three from our Ward - Ward 1, the Men's Acute Admission Ward, and two or three female nurses

from Ward 2, the Women's Acute Admission Ward. The canteen radiators couldn't cope with the high ceiling so it was cold and the nurses would hug or sit on the radiators, arms crossed. Most were trainees, and most of the women were stocky. One used to sit with her legs carelessly open, dangling, black stockinged. This might have aroused some interest in me if I was not ill.

The staff were there to make sure no-one started a rumpus or got in difficulty, *so I thought*. Or perhaps to observe patients' feeding habits - whether they ate enough, for instance. But it struck me that they rarely did. If they had done they would have noticed that Ray usually asked for, and got, a plate of mashed potato - he wanted nothing else, ate nothing else. Or that Alec would take a mouthful of food and then regurgitate it, letting a chewed mess drop from his mouth back onto his plate, sometimes to partially re-eat it. Once one of the older women was choking on her food, and despite this being pointed out by patients, it was a minute before the chatting-amongst-themselves nurses heard - realised - and slapped her back.

Teddy would usually have two plates of the main meal, and second helpings of afters. Big Michael would also have second or third helpings of afters. After five weeks I got to having second helpings of afters too.

But at first, the first few weeks, I found the food disgusting. Mince on a plate looked like dog diarrhoea. Another time, it was a very fatty grisly something. "Stew" a student nurse said. I stormed out, saying the food was a fucking disgrace. But by the end of my stay I was enjoying it, even having second helpings of the main meal. I'd take the fish in cheese sauce, or cold chicken, besides veg, or even 'roast meat'. And I'd tuck into the custard and sponge, two helpings. I was a bit self-conscious of this in case the nurses noticed and

thought I was being greedy, particularly at breakfast when I took a roll off another table.

There was a fair amount of pot-belly's amongst the male patients - Bonzo, Micky, Big Michael, Big Stewart.

But not all the patients were passive about what they were given to eat. Big Stewart once complained loudly when what looked like lasagne was about to be served up. 'That's fucking terrible that, we had that yesterday, now we get it again today. That's fucking terrible! I'm no eating it!' The inexperienced Canteen lady thought it was lasagne too. ('Daisy' and the other one were off.) But when the yellow crust was ladled to one side it turned out to be shepherd's pie, but by then Stewart was over where the nurses were, and looking very darkly at them... When put right he got even more angry - 'What! You mean to say I've made a fucking fuss about fucking nothing!?'

The men tended to sit separately from the women, and vice versa. Micky might sit at a table if there was a youngish woman sitting there - 'Do you mind if I sit here... You've got lovely eyes, so you have.' Teddy, improbably, befriended an older woman, in her late sixties or early seventies. 'Alright Ma?'. He'd jokingly pretend she was his Mum. She gave as good as she got. 'Aye, that'll be right'.

I'd try to avoid the table that Edward sat at. He'd take his teeth out and they'd be staring at you, up at you, putting you right off your food. Three others in the Ward also avoided the table with the staring false teeth. 'I hate that' Walter would say, doing a body swerve to a vacant seat at another table.

Towards the end of my stay Teddy would say 'Sit here, Peter'. I also ended up opening the breakfast portion control marge for John at the same table.

People would mostly ate in silence.

Big Stewart had an interesting way of holding his eating irons, particularly his fork, almost spooning it into his mouth. He held the handle in a clenched fist, and instead of bringing his food towards his mouth from the side, he'd bring it and the fork in from the front, as if his fist was going to punch him, not feed him.

Danny, who came into the Ward about two weeks before I was discharged, had the loveliest smile when he comprehended he was getting something nice to eat. Most of the time, he seemed not able to speak, but could after a fashion if he was moved, i.e. something he did or did not want. He was thin and frail, and kept his arms bent up, with the wrists drooping down, like a dog begging. He had a special beaker, like a young child's beaker, with a spout for drinking, like the ones Robin and Martin had when they were very young. If there was a pancake at tea time he'd help himself, and drop it by accident on the floor, pick it up again, drop it again, etc, it getting more dirty and crumbly, but no sign of irritation or frustration. One of us would pick it up and put it on his plate, and you'd get a lovely smile.

Don and Dougie, and then myself, ate vegetarian. Don and Dougie out of conviction, me because the vego meals were slightly less worse than the carnivore meals. Vego meals were cheese salad, macaroni cheese, scrambled egg, greasy pizza, non-meat lasagne, sweet and sour beans, chilli con carne (without the meat) and vegetable curry.

Sometimes there would be upsets at the tables between the men. Edward caused a stir when he calmly spat out a bone embedded in his mouthful of food, spitting it out onto the floor. Stewart stood up and shouted he was a dirty bastard.... Nurses had to intervene. Other disturbances... Bonzo started pushing and shoving Frank at the Tea Trolley, Frank protested, Bonzo was led away... Ian once got agitated in the queue as we were about to reach the counter and fell out with the staff. He was escorted out. Another time John and Brendan stood up, facing each other across the table, to sort each other out. The women patients got agitated noticing what was happening, noticing before the talking-to each-other-nursing staff did.

Paul was the only person from our Ward who only occasionally came into the Canteen. He was on a special diet - fried fish mostly, and had fortified milk drinks and fortified chocolate puddings out of the Ward kitchen refrigerator. He'd eat it in the Day Room.

At night, and especially at weekends (when some of the men and women were out on weekend passes) there was a forlorn, lost, empty feeling in the canteen, particularly at 5 pm reinforced by the clicking and shimmering, jaggy lighting from a malfunctioning fluorescent tube.

Besides ours, there were other canteens for patients, spread over the 167 acres. And there could be up to 1250 patients. Most were long term, some very long term residents. The hospital was their home.

Apart from the meals in the Canteen, looking forward to the Ward Tea Trolley was the other daily highlight. The choice was black or white tea, black or white coffee, chocolate, hot orange, and soup. Chocolate was popular in the evenings, but quite often they'd run

out of it. These drinks were in dispensing packs - cardboard cups with powder in. Underneath the trolley was a wire basket with plastic holders in, holders for the cardboard cups. A bowl of sugar and a jug of milk would also be brought in, and be sat on a table nearby the trolley.

At three in the afternoon there might sometimes be packets of biscuits, digestives, etc, sometimes even a cheap assorted packet: pink wafers, and thinly covered choc digestives, and Jammy Dodgers. These would get cleaned out quickly.

At seven o' clock cakes or scones or pancakes would make an appearance. Rarely, they'd be a tray of brown spotted bananas. With the cakes, it was difficult to know whether they were bakers seconds, or the previous days.

The source of the sandwiches that would turn up on the last Ward trolley - around 9 pm - was a mystery. Often they came two to a plastic bag, as if they were made up *pieces*, surplus to requirements, which we in the Acute Admission Ward got. They'd have chicken roll, or turkey or pork in them. Don, a vegetarian, would take the meat out and eat the bread. Big Stewart would take the bread out and eat the meat.

The tea, coffee and chocolate was served to us by the nurses who put the hot water in. Never clear why - something about danger of boiling water - but we were allowed access to hot water in the Canteen.

Sometimes there would be agro in the Ward queue - like someone accusing someone else of pushing, or pushing in. Sometimes there'd be agro between the patients and the staff. 'What do you want Brian?' 'Tea... What's this?' 'Coffee'. 'I asked for fucking coffee'.

‘Watch it, Brian.’ ‘Watch it yer fucking *sel*’. How far it escalated depended on how much patient and nurse got on with, or didn’t get on with the other. Or, other, unknown reasons: hadn’t had a visitor that afternoon, lost at Pool, the medication was wearing off, or the nurse was a good enough substitute for having a *rammy* with, instead of his Doctor, who’d he sincerely like to ‘Do’ as in ‘I’m going to fucking do you. You’re a fucking dead man’ But unless you really wanted to be put in the Male Locked Ward - and Big Man Dave said the good thing about the Locked Ward was they let you lie on your bed all day - you sat on it.

Loudly outside in the dark, at seven in the evening, came an ice cream jingle. One of the patients would shout ‘Nurse - Van!’, and a nurse would come out of the Ward office with a key to a side door in the Day Room and unlock it, and un-jacketed and shivering, out into the black night some would go, forming a queue at the van, lit up Technicolor like, surrounded by the darkness. An enterprising local entrepreneur, a man in his forties, with a girl assistant in her late teens serving. Main items bought were, first, cigarettes - *Berkeley, Embassy, Club*, then second, *skoosh*. - *Irn Bru* and *Coke* mostly - then sweeties. Micky would buy three Bounty Bars, followed by wee tubs of ice cream with raspberry sauce bloodied over them. The nurse with the key would stand guard at the Day Room door.

I’d tell Micky in the side room that the van was there - he’d have his radio on, and not hear the jingle. Towards the end of my stay I’d join the queue buying a *Biscuit Boost*. The enterprising local entrepreneur added a penny, or so, to the outside price.

All transactions would be over in ten minutes. The door’s locked again, as the ice-cream van reverses and drives off to the next ward. Back in the Day Room cellophane would be removed from the

cigarette packets, as Dougie, for instance, would get a *Berkeley* out. Others would be putting their bottles of *skoosh* in their bedside lockers.

After the Ward lights were turned off at 10 pm some of the patients would organise a late night carry-out. An outside line was used in the Ward Office, with a nod from a night nurse. Dougie usually organised this, asking any folk if they wanted anything from the chip shop or from the 'Chinky'. Around five patients usually ordered: Tommy, Dougie, Teddy, Big Michael, Big Stewart, sometimes one of the Night Nurses. Around 11.30 pm there'd be a knocking at the locked Ward doors. (The Ward doors were locked every evening at 8 pm.) Knock knock, that's the carry-out being delivered.

The ordering was never done quietly, haggling over money, change, or changing one's mind. Teddy often got confused about change, or wouldn't have enough money and say he'd pay back the morrow, and Tommy would say 'That's no good to me, man, give me the money now.' - 'I've no got it.' But Tommy wouldn't get stroppy with him.

5 First medication of the Day and Day Activities

After breakfast, on returning to the Ward two nurses roll out the medicine trolley at the head of the Ward, and medicine is dolled out. An orderly queue of us, slowly moving forwards. A pill and a small paper cup with some water. What pill you get depends on what your medication you're on. One of the nurses will watch

carefully that you swallow the pill, not hold at the back of your mouth, to be spat out in the toilet area.

Those who are going to Occupational Therapy (OT) leave the Ward after 9.30 am. Some *have* to go to OT, it's part of their treatment. It's a dismal walk through the early Winter grounds of the hospital, past the abandoned Victorian buildings: the disused Church, the disused Wards, and high, disused three storied buildings that are now difficult to fathom out what they were ever used for.

Only a small number from the Acute admission wards go to OT. The rest are already curled up in an armchair in the Day Room, several dozing, others chatting. Some looking at the telly. I'd curl up in an armchair. At ten the Tea Trolley is wheeled out of the Ward Kitchen, through the Ward double doors, into the Day Room. Lunch is at 12. We can rest on our beds between 1 and 2. That's official, no-one gets a row from the Nurses. The Tea Trolley is wheeled out again at 3. Evening meal, in the canteen, is at 5 pm. Tea trolley wheeled out again at 7 pm.

The Nursing Shift changes at 7.30 pm, the night staff come on. There is a head check - body count - by the day staff when they go off, and by the night staff when they come on.

The tea trolley is out for the last time at 9 pm. Medication is dished out after lunch, then after the evening meal, and lastly, at 10 pm. Who gets their prescription when depends what medication they're on and for what illness. Most of the guys in the Ward had a psychotic illness, and this usually meant they'd get more than one medication during the day.

Because I was diagnosed as having 'agitated depression' I got one medication in the morning, an anti-depressant, in the fifth week I

was in. What I didn't know, was that I was on a brand new anti-depressant in the UK: Prozac. In America Prozac (fluoxetine) had started being prescribed in 1989, the previous year. It was the first of what is known as an SSRI anti-depressant. Before SSRIs, anti-depressants from the 1950s were known as Tricyclics, and had the disadvantage of being fatal in overdose. The singer-songwriter Nick Drake died of a tricyclic overdose. You couldn't, and can't die on an SSRI anti-depressant. But I didn't know this, nor that, in my case, it was to be effective.

Since the Spring of 1990 I'd had a mass of psychiatric medication: Diazepam, used for severe anxiety and panic attacks; chloral hydrate, an anti-anxiety medication; Gamanil, a tricyclic anti-depressant; Zimovane, a sleeping pill; Tamazopan, a sleeping pill; Mellaril, an anti psychotic drug; Half Inderall LA, a beta blocker; Fluanoxol, an anti-psychotic medication and now it was Fluoxetine (Prozac), an SSRI anti depressant.

I didn't have that high hopes for Prozac, given the lack of effectiveness of the tricyclic anti-depressant Gamanil. And like all anti-depressants it would take up to 5 weeks before it would start to help. If it was going to work. Doctors would say 2 to 3 weeks for it to work but 5 weeks was nearer the mark for it to fully work

From 8 pm onwards we are allowed to lie on our beds. Ward lights go out after the 10 pm medication, and red night-time lights come on in the Ward and in the Day Room The telly is turned down, but left on throughout the night. The Ward doors out to the corridor are locked at 8 pm. It was, said someone, to keep people out. I wasn't convinced.

Note to Ward Routine

When I was first in the Ward, the first few days I was detached from the others - an observer - and I observed, like an outsider the way the other guys would, mostly, voluntarily queue up for their medicine, after breakfast, after lunch and at 10 pm, and would follow the tea trolley into the Day Room; and would hang around the doors, waiting for the word about lunch or tea being ready. Quite soon, however, I was no longer the observer, and for me, like them, these became high points in an empty day, points you focus on, took your bearings from, familiar contour lines relieving the day.

6 The Consultant Sees Me, Finally

It took three weeks from when I was admitted that I finally got to see a Consultant, the Consultant who was going to see me. Doctor Murray. I'd been in a pretty positive state about seeing him. I had the naive belief that serious work was going to be done on my 'problem'. That buoyed me up.

It was after Breakfast and I was curled up in a chair in the Day Room when a Nurse came in and beckoned to me to follow him. I followed him to a side room off the Ward. It was reassuringly crowded mostly with people I had never seen before. I recognised Murray from the previous week when he'd briefly been in and out of the Ward, and was identified by the one of the guys.

I'm looking at the faces, as Murray introduces himself. There's a male Indian Registrar, a couple of the nurses, two youngish types I hadn't seen before, a CPN - Community Nurse - over time I got to

know all the mysterious abbreviations of the different specialities. OT for Occupational Therapist/Occupation Therapy. The Community Nurse came to my bedside some weeks later, and I never saw him again, either in the hospital or back in the 'community'.

The folk in the room were paying attention, or pretending to, as the boss Murray discoursed forth. 'He quite clearly has a sense of Self.' Then the penny dropped. I wasn't 'me' he was talking about, I was a psychiatric specimen. The people in the room weren't gathered to help me, but for the Boss Expert to fill them in, with his wide knowledge of psychiatric identification to categorise me. It was like James Robinson Justice in one of the 'Doctor' films, with a young trainee Doctor played by Dirk Bogarde. Murray has a knitted multi-coloured scarf wrapped around his neck, one end almost reaching the ground. Knitted by his grand-daughter? He was a controlling bloke, alternatively talking to the group, and then asking me a question.

Although my head was down, and my eyes were closed - most of the time - I did take in a youngish woman who was looking at me with sympathy, with concern - the only person in the group who was relating to me as a human being. She wore a white dress, buttoned down the front, tanned face and long straggly hair. At the time I didn't know it, but she was to be the one professional who really helped me during the weeks I was in Woodilee. Her name was Louise and she was an Occupational Therapist.

Meanwhile from somewhere in the room I hear Murray asking me how I'm feeling. My eyes closed again - and crying - I told him about this appalling feeling of utter helplessness. He talked of me being a 'car in a garage' (Do cars have a Heart, a Soul, a Being?); or, a partnership between myself and those who were here to help me.

At this point, still looking down, I squinted my eyes open enough to see the Registrar looking, well, a mixture of bored and impatient, throwing the ceiling an exasperated look.

Murray asked if I would like to add anything. My eyes closed I blurted out about this terrifying gulf between being well and 'unwell'; that he or anyone else in the room could be sitting across from me, three foot across from me, but the distance between us was as wide as the Grand Canyon. There was no way to span it, to get across to the other side. He, meanwhile, suggests that Group Therapy could help me and that I would be seeing Louise - the woman in the white dress - whilst I was in hospital.

Despite his manner, I was buoyed up by his suggestion I would be in Group Therapy and that I would be seeing Louise, having one to one sessions. Meeting over. Back to the Day Room.

After a few days the penny dropped that nothing was happening. That the left hand didn't know what the right was doing, or cared for that matter.

When Jackie, my previous girlfriend, visited me at Visitors time on the Sunday I was sitting with my head down. She asked what was wrong. 'Nothing's happening.' - 'Were Minutes taken at the meeting?' she asked. 'No.'

It took me two days to go into the Ward Office and ask what was happening about this Group Therapy. There were two two Charge Nurses. I asked one of them what was happening about the Group Therapy. (At this point I still hadn't been given any medication to help me.) I asked one of them why I hadn't been given notification about the Group Therapy. He frowned, looking at Pat, the brilliant Charge Nurse. 'Ah', said Pat, 'Ah, I forgot to tell you' - looking at me

- 'not enough numbers in the Ward suitable for a Group'. My shoulders slumped, slumped even more than the round shouldered posture I already had. ' - but you have been assigned a Key Worker'. I didn't have a clue what a Key Worker meant. Turns out she was a nurse. The other Charge Nurse looked at Pat, filling him in: 'She's just gone on holiday. Two weeks off'. 'Oh' says Pat. 'but things are moving: Dr Murray noticed you just wear a t-shirt and that you seem to be over-heating, so you're down for a thyroid test.' 'What's that?' 'One of the nurses takes some blood, it'll be sent off, and checked.' I didn't say anything, but I had a phobia about needles, so much so that Dentists refused to see me because I usually passed out. As a result my dentistry was done at the Glasgow Dental Hospital with a good dose of intravenous valium. It acted so fast I was usually stoned quickly and 'out'. In the state I was in I didn't sleep that night, not that I'd been sleeping that well.

In the morning nothing seemed to be happening. I was on edge, waiting for the Doctor. I went into the Ward Office and asked about it. The Charge Nurse said they knew nothing about it. I was furious. I went into the Day Room, kicked a chair over. I was seething at the organisational shambles, seething and frightened and alarmed. Alarmed that kicking the chair over would get me transferred to the Male Locked Ward.

Nearly everyone in the Ward had similar feelings to me, waiting for the Doctor they were told would see them and the Doctor not turning up. 'They fuck you around. They're playing fucking games with you. This place is no real' would be the average patient reaction.

The feeling of being fucked around - the left hand not knowing what the right hand was doing, or cared for that matter - was reinforced when one evening I'm told that from now I'm to join the morning Ward medicine queue.

So next morning I'm in the queue. 'What's this?' It's a white capsule. 'Anti-depressant' 'But I've had anti-depressants, they didn't help.' 'This is a new one, a SSRI. Brand new'. I didn't have a clue what a SSRI was. Was this on my 'Care Plan'? Murray must have authorised it, but he hadn't told me at the group meeting he was going to. The other thing he didn't tell me was that he considered I was now not seen as a suicide risk. A big benefit of that was that I could now move around the grounds without a nurse escort.

7 The Hospital Buildings

It's a dismal walk through the early winter grounds of the hospital, past the abandoned Victorian buildings: the disused Church, the disused Wards, and three storey disused buildings that are now difficult to fathom out what they were once used for.

When I was allowed to walk around the grounds without a Nurse Escort I saw that the Hospital was surrounded on three sides by countryside, and on the fourth side by a high speed rail line. That, and the derelict buildings and the crowing of crows sitting on the bare tree tops was the topping of the Despair Trifle.

I'd see the trains and wonder at the people inside them, as they whizzed past. They could have been in a different world. They *were*

in a different world from the one I was in. Seemingly in the past patients had deliberately killed themselves on this track and in the old days it was the nurses who had to pick up their remains.

The hospital was built in 1875 - that was the date chiselled into the stone on the Gatehouse. 1875. The gatehouse led two ways. To the right, out to the countryside, to the left, up to Lenzie. It had been on my second day in Woodilee that I was part of a Nurse Escorted walk up to the beginning of Lenzie and got panicky and had to return with a Nurse Escort.

As I was to find out, taking the turn to the left, you'd soon start to walk past solid Victorian detached sandstone houses which looked very inviting with their cozy lit living rooms in the November dusk.

Walking in the dead winter hospital grounds there is a feeling of dereliction ... decay ...neglect. Most of the original buildings have been boarded up. Structural engineers had declared them unsafe. But the word was that it was a device to avoid upgrading the buildings, the word being that the hospital was going to close in ten years.

The depressed, despondent feeling was reinforced in the grey weather by plants growing out of the gutters of an abandoned building, which had long rust stains down from the top storey to the ground level. There was one patch of ground where a building had once stood and all that was left after it had been pulled down were broken and smeared floor tiles.

Near this patch had been the Hospital Church. Abandoned, it was still there. A side door was open. I looked in. It seemed in good nick, radiators still intact, but some broken chairs, and pigeons in the

vestry. A second time I walked past the church the door had been boarded up.

Scattered around the grounds, bits and pieces of the original hospital were still used, including the boiler house with its tall chimney, a landmark seen from miles away. A sinister plume of smoke came from it. And steam puffed out of pipes at the hospital laundry building. There was also a detached Victorian house, still used, used as an administration building, with an ugly monkey puzzle tree outside.

As the Hospital covered a lot of ground there were signs every where. They'd point in the direction of so and so Ward, or so and so buildings, like the Mortuary. One sign pointed to Craigie House. Craigie House was three storied, which looked more Edwardian than Victorian. It was used for long stay and rehab cases.

Up near the Pharmacy - also an old building - was a small, new Ward. A student Nurse told me about it. It had been opened by the Secretary of State for Scotland. Prior to the opening, landscape gardeners were brought in to lay turf and plant bushes, make it look good, and then came back after the opening ceremony and take the turves and the bushes away.

It took about seven minutes to walk from the the Acute Admission Ward to the OT (Occupational Therapy) building. My first time in the OT building - can't remember why - there's an enormously fat guy in a t-shirt and olive green parka walking from room to room .. all the doors are open ... a sewing room ... an old woman ... an art room, a man sitting in a chair rocking himself backwards and forwards. In the Common Room, a large older man with grey crew-cut hair, cowboy boots, jeans with a big buckle, and a metal pendant hanging from his neck. There's a wood-working room where you

can make picture frames. There's framed photos of patients hung in the hallway, next to a Coca-Cola vending machine... a radio from the Art Room its blaring out very, very loud...

Our Ward and the group of 1950 Army-style buildings were clustered down at the Lenzie end of the grounds. From the Ward windows we looked out onto grey squirrels in the trees. The trees were in a jail of tall gone-to-wild rhododendron bushes. There was a tarmac drive, a service drive for the blue Greater Glasgow Health Board lorries, bringing clean laundry to the Acute Admission wards. (And the ice cream van at night).

At first I'd take short walks past the Locked Wards, Wards 5 and 6. In a hall between them was the ECT (electro-convulsive) Suite. And a telephone booth. You could get the key from one of the Nurses on duty in the Locked Ward when the phone in the corridor between our and the Women's Acute Admission Wards 1 and 2 was broken, or stuffed choc-a-bloc with coins, waiting to be emptied.

On my night walk (had to be back in the ward before 8pm, before the night time locking of the doors) I could glimpse better inside the other Wards, with their lights on, the locked wards excepted. The Women's Acute Admission Ward was more homely than ours. There were flowers and a few pictures pinned up. The Mens Acute Admission burned light into the darkness and you'd see the back of bedside lockers and a lone player at the pool table. Jaqui when she visited, commented on the lack of homeliness in the male ward.

It was a short walk down the tree lined drive, with the sleeping policemen, then over a bridge that spanned a woodland burn to the Lodge Gate House. On the front door was pasted a hand-written sign *'This is not an Enquiries Office or a Public Toilet. It is Ward 25. Please wipe your feet'*.

It was a small Rehab Ward, about ten men in there. Then the big open metal hospital gates that lead out to another world. Not our world. The gates are permanently open, rusted on their hinges, rusted from goodness knows when.

8 Us, the Patients

Twenty-four of us. Give or take. Twelve beds either side of the wide ward. Most patients are on Sections. A Section is a legally binding action to confine a patient to a psychiatric hospital. The maximum length of a Section is 12 months, but can be renewed if medically thought necessary at the end of these 12 months. There are also 6 month lasting Sections, and very short Sections of 48 hours, giving Doctors time enough to hold the patient in hospital until, if necessary, Sectioned for the longer periods.

Many of the patients have recurring periods of psychosis. I was a 'voluntary' patient, the name for someone who has not been Sectioned. At any one time, roughly, 25% of us are voluntary patients in the Male Acute Admission Ward. I was diagnosed as having 'Agitated Depression'.

Us, the patients Working from the ward entrance and starting down the left-hand side...

Teddy spent a lot of time sitting on his bed, body on it, legs off it. That way the nurses can't get you for lying on your bed. But Teddy wasn't a stropky person. He was likeable. He was the sort of guy no-one - patients, staff - could take a dislike to.

He was a shortish guy, sort of stocky. He said he was 40, but I thought he was younger. He had dark blonde hair and a goatee beard that suited him, but it came off when there was a rash of beard shaving - Paul and Maurice too at the same time, none of which suited them. Despite what the Staff said, they all looked better with their beards.

Teddy smoked roll-ups, communicated fine with others, but didn't speak much. He had a nice smile, and would always acknowledge you: 'Alright, Tony?' He always got my name wrong. He would always acknowledge the cleaning woman: 'Alright Agnes?'

He walked like a gunfighter - his body slowly lolling from one side to the other. Everyone commented on this. Lolling from one side to the other, his hands in his pockets, as if he was about to draw.

He wore slippers - down at the heels - jeans, and a well ironed shirt. Once a week he'd get the iron out of the Office and on the square formica table outside the office he'd methodically iron a shirt or two. He once offered to do mine, which he did, in the same methodical way, obviously proud that he could iron a good shirt. I asked him where he learnt this, he said Approved School, and then said he was kidding on about the Approval School. I wasn't so sure about the kidding on. After he ironed my shirt and handed it to me he told me he'd iron my shirts for me. 'Just tell me. I'll iron them'.

First thing in the morning, after a perfunctory wash, he'd spend five minutes with a rumbling cough in the Day Room as he drew on his first fag. Although he usually had baccy (unlike quite few who had run out) and cigarette papers, often he didn't have matches. This was a problem for quite a few guys. Why I could never work out. It had nothing to do with a patient trying to burn the Ward down.

He didn't really watch the Day Room TV but he sat in a chair more or less in front of it. It was a favourite of Don's too. He was good tempered on the whole, kept himself to himself, and could enjoy a joke, whether it was wrestling with Big Man - twenty two stone - Dave. 'Let me feel your tits' he'd say. Other physical things he liked was getting a piggy back from one of the Night staff.

He could appreciate the humour of the situation where he wanted a light and Don could give him one from his almost finished fag. The problem for Teddy was that Don deliberately put the burning stub in an ashtray some distance away so Teddy would temporarily have to leave his chair to reach it, allowing Don to slip into it. In the end he went without his fag, rather than give up his chair.

Teddy never went to OT, swimming, or to the gym, nor played pool. He'd either be sitting sideways on his bed, or on his favourite chair by the TV in the Day Room, if someone hadn't already grabbed it. His only other activity would be to help the cleaner Agnes move beds and bedside cabinets when she cleaned under them every Monday morning.

Once I noticed Teddy sitting on his bed, reading a book. But I realised half an hour later he was still on the same page. He was looking at it with concentration, as if he was trying to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphics. The suspicion he couldn't read was confirmed near Christmas when he received a solitary Christmas card, which he asked Big Michael to read. Michael brusquely said 'Read it yourself'. 'No you read it' 'How?' But Michael did. "All the best Teddy for Christmas, your pal John. Phone me if you like. Number enclosed. Big Michael handed it back. 'Can't you read?' Teddy mumbled something and Big Michael clumsily, rather than maliciously, asked again 'Can't you read?' I went over later and said

‘That was nice.’ His mate had enclosed two Pound notes. ‘I’m no going to ring him’ said Teddy, flushed, dead chuffed at getting this bit of contact. ‘I’ll dial the number for you’ I said, suspecting he couldn’t work the Pay Phone, but he declined, which was a pity.

Like Micky (*his story to come*) he never got visitors or personal mail, with the exception of his mate John. But unlike Micky he never complained. Micky would say ‘No-one loves me. I’ve got nae one’.

Very rarely did Teddy talk at length. Just twice in the two months I was in Woodilee. The first occasion had to do with something called ‘*Patient Representation*’ and a nurse humouring him about it, rather than listening to him. The second time was when me and him were walking up and down the length of the Ward - one of our regular walks, from the Ward Entrance Doors, down to the open door into the Pool Room, about turn, and back up to the Ward entry doors. It was a strip that several of us did, by ourselves, or with someone else, sometimes in silence, sometimes having a quiet blether. He was talking about how he shouldn’t be in hospital. It wasn’t right.

He was a little slow on the uptake, he’d get the punchline of a joke two minutes after everyone else, and once tried to tell Don and Dougie a joke, Dougie quietly taking the piss, so that Teddy stopped telling it, but a few minutes later Dougie returned and persuaded him to finish it. He liked the ‘*Fat Controller*’ Night Shift Nurse, and the student nurse Estina. He liked me, and Big Man Dave.

Like his shirt ironing, he methodically stirred his tea, which I’ve mentioned, and I think he got through his food in the same methodical way - he’d efficiently clear a plate and be up for more

before others had finished without the impression he was rushing it down.

Latterly he borrowed the radio/cassette player that Jean had lent me, but it was difficult to know what he was listening to. He rarely went out of the Hospital, apart from once before Christmas with a Nurse escort, when he went to Kirkie and when he came back some of us stood around his bed as he, with the Nurse standing there, showed us the two shirts he'd got - very cheap. The Nurse let the cat out of the bag that they'd come from Oxfam. He'd also bought an electric razor, a hair dryer, but no plug for it and six - or was it nine? - pairs of socks, all the same colour, on a special offer.

Don Don was sort of swarthy, full beard, longish wiry hair, stocky. Quite good looking. He had nice brown eyes, smiling eyes when he was enjoying a private joke. He was in on a Section, something to do with a bust-up with his wife, she was shacking up with another guy, or had been with other guys, seemingly. Although he wouldn't talk about it, there was a feeling his Section had something to do with aggro towards her. He seemed to be on a Section, pending a Court case. Don's complaint was that he shouldn't have been in Woodilee as long as he was. He said he been led to believe it would be just for two weeks, and eight weeks later here he still was. Some days he got very pissed off about it, but he wouldn't ball and shout, just say he was as sick as a parrot, or other times, curse his Consultant.

He indicated he was doing things by the form so that they wouldn't have anything on him - going to OT, and he did other things to show he wasn't a mug - his own man - like sit-ups in the toilet area after tea, when he'd change into black trainers and vest and put on a big leather support belt that had his name etched into the leather. He'd go with Ian up to the gym, with Ernst, when Ernst was there. How often you went to the gym depended on the number of fully

qualified Nurses that were on (there had to be a minimum number left in the Ward, the Student Nurses didn't count).

I went up to the gym once, as a diversion, a break in the evening. It was past the Canteen, up the same corridor, on the right. It was a small room, with weights, a rowing machine and a treadmill. I was still pretty fragile, and watching Ernst walking on the treadmill, going nowhere in a small room in a mental hospital, freaked me out. Big Man Dave had come too, with me, to have a look.

Colin would draw the curtains around his bed when he changed into his training gear. He was from Drumchapel. He was a vegetarian. He once sported a bow tie. Also wore a white mac that any French 'tec in an early '60s movie would have worn. But there was nothing effete about him. He had social graces that belied his background, and intrigued me. Like once when I went to Kirkie, he asked at the Word Office if he could come with me. He wasn't as closed watched as others on longer Sections.

In Kirkie we went into a bookies and he put money on a horse that he watched get beat on the TV screen of another bookies further down the road. After getting my messages - Christmas cards out of Woolworths, we went across the road for a coffee. (Walking to Kirkie he'd suggested having a coffee, and said what a welcome break it was, going for a walk, getting out the Ward.) It was a bakers with a coffee cafeteria at the back. Cafeteria described it better than 'coffee shop'.

It was self-service. 'Are you going to have anything to eat, Peter' he asked. I said No, at first, then decided I did want some cake so had a slice. Colin didn't, and I cut the cake in two and pushed it towards him, but he shook his head, as he lit a cigarette. (I never saw Colin give anyone a cigarette, at the same I never recalled him asking

anyone for a cigarette. He kept them in a drawer in his bedside cabinet.)

He asked me if I would like living in Kirkie. No, I said. He said no as well, 'funny kind of place' he described it. When we got up to go he felt in his pocket and slid a ten pence coin under the saucer of his cup. This was another example of his social graces belying his background, and given the place, not necessary, but maybe a connection to all those who have to clear the tables in cafeterias.

That night there was a sequel to our daytime in the cafe. British Rail workmates of Tam's - two women still in their BR clothes, either going on, or coming off their shift had called in that afternoon and given Tam a box of real cream cakes. Tam couldn't eat them all or didn't want them and gave them to Teddy and Don. Once I had seen how good they were once Colin had bitten into it I asked if there were any more in the box. There wasn't. Colin disappeared, and then re-appeared, having cut his cake in two and gave me a piece - a classic case of 'mutual aid' amongst many of the patients. I was touched.

First thing in the morning Don would break a few balls at the Pool table. He enjoyed the few outings to the swimming baths at Bishopbriggs. He had a curious habit of covering his lap with one of the cellular blankets in the ambulance, though it was warm in the ambulance. You could tell he was really enjoying the view out the windows - his eyes were alert, smiling, taking in the passing countryside, cars, houses, shops, pedestrians. We'd stop at a red light and looking out, here were these people on the pavement going about their normal life. This really cowered me. This normality I had once been part of, and couldn't believe, couldn't imagine ever being part of again. It was almost if the people outside

were abnormal. And here I was in an ambulance full of 'loonies' but felt safer with them.

One or two nudged each other as the ambulance drove past Low Moss Prison. It was surrounded by twelve foot high wire fencing with barbed wire on top.

Colin had no problem being direct. Once, without asking, I lowered the volume of the radio in the Pool Room (Noise from the Pool Room radio often disturbed myself, Dougie and one or two others, depending on the time of day, and what the music was). 'What'd you do that for, Peter?'

On Sundays and Tuesday an orange Strathclyde double decker came from Maryhill to Woodilee. Maryhill was a catchment area for Woodilee - it was a long way from Woodilee and most families/friends/visitors didn't have a car. On a Sunday afternoon Don's Mum came on it, bringing his two daughters, about thirteen and ten, same age as Robin and Martin. They'd sit in the Day Room playing dominoes or whatever, he seemed at ease and seemed pretty attached to his children, not that he was demonstrative, that wasn't his style. At one point before Christmas a school photo of one of his girls, like my photos of Robin and Martin, turned up on his bedside cabinet, and then disappeared.

On that walk back from our outing to Kirkie I was talking to him about Sicilian men cutting the balls off men who had cuckolded them. Colin muttered that in that case, because of his wife, he'd have his work cut out. It was impossible to know if his wife had slept around, or whether this was part of an over-wrought imagination.

Like Teddy he would once a week carefully iron a white shirt and a couple of t-shirts. I've mentioned how he would take the meat out of a sandwich, and eat the bread at the Ward tea trolley. He was pally with Dougie. They'd both walk up and down the Ward - from one end to the other, chatting. Dougie did most of the talking. One of them had paced out how many yards it was from the the top to bottom of the Ward and worked how how many times you needed to cover it to do a mile.

Don sort of took a liking to Rab, for a while. I never quite could. More about Rab later.

Don would sleep after lunch - the allowed one hour to lie on your bed. He'd get into his pyjamas at 8 in the evening, and partially screen his bed. If anyone was making too much noise after ten he would say so, but he must have gone into a deep sleep by eleven because he never complained about the noise there usually was after then.

Mervin Mervin was in the bed next to Don. He was a slim guy in his twenties, wore well fitting trousers, and jacket, a sort of snappy dresser. He had a permanent frown, not a scowling frown, but the frown someone would have if you asked them a difficult question, and they are working out the answer.

Mervin was in his own world. Rarely talked to anyone, except to ask them an off-beat question. One day he started asking me what the capital of Argentina was, what the capital of Nice was, mixing up cities and countries. Other days he would ask me if we were at war with the Argentinians. This would be a reference to the Falklands War which happened eight years before. For reasons I never knew, nor did the other lads, he was allowed to lye on his bed out-with the official times. Only occasionally did he sit in the Day

Room. Now and then he'd erupt into a strangled sort of laugh, and talk to an unseen person. 'I'm going to get you, Mr Waddle. 'You'd better watch yourself'. The voice sounded older and twisted, not coming from him, like something from *The Evil Dead*, something non-human.

Some nights he'd burst into a strangled laugh, followed by silence followed by 'You'd better watch yourself. You'd better watch that wall. It's going to fall down'. One night he was going on so much I went over to try and quieten him down, but there wasn't a chance of getting through to him.

When he asked one of his questions about capital cities his eyes would frown even more, really trying to look into your eyes, beyond your eyes. Like Teddy he never participated in OT, swimming or watching TV. Occasionally he'd have a game of pool, playing as if he was heavily sedated, which he probably was, often hitting or aiming at the wrong ball. Also when he hit the ball it was with such force it would fly off the pool table. In one shot he hit a ball so hard, right off the table, out of the Pool Room and halfway down the Ward, which was some going. There'd be no aggression on his face, just his usual frowning expression as he aimed the cue. There didn't seem to be any extra effort hitting the ball - but still it would fly off the table.

Sometimes he was allowed out on a Weekend Pass. He had a girlfriend with short red hair, and she was devoted to him, and would sit by his bed, holding his hand as he slept between one and two. Or sit in the Day Room with him, talking in a quiet monotone, holding his hand. Sometimes they'd go for a walk in the grounds. Once I saw him at the Hospital road end, waiting to see her off on a bus.

Ernst Ernst was a lean, blond haired, blue eyed German, slightly dry and serious, in a sort of heavy-handed way. He could show warmth, as with the Chinese lady (from Ward Two) at the mid-day patients Canteen meal. But he could clearly indicate distaste, when someone was talking to him, and he didn't want them to. There was a feeling, which he voiced occasionally to me, that he didn't feel that he was amongst equals, criticising the inmates for not watching serious programmes on the TV. It was just a sentence or two, but seemed to speak volumes.

He noticeably got regular visitors, and had a bowl of fruit on his bedside cabinet. He'd clearly been in Scotland a while - he had no trouble understanding the broad Glaswegian accent, and at first, by his dress and manner - cords, etc, I thought he was a teacher. In fact, he had worked for ten years on nights in a psycho-geriatric ward at another hospital; had had a breakdown before, and this was him in again. He'd been attending some weekend spiritual/religious group when he got high and a Doctor gave him Largactil to calm him down. Ernst felt the Doctor had behaved unethically by giving him too much, and he seemed to blame his present problems - being in Woodilee - on this large dose.

He felt it was time for a career change - being ten years constantly on the go, changing wet beds and cleaning 'shitty patients' was too 'negative'. It was time for a change, he said, but didn't indicate in what direction, when I asked him.

Like the rest of us patients, he'd get worked up - tense, agitated - on the day his Consultant was in, whether you'd be seen or not. 'They just like to fuck you around' - 'I've waited all morning, and wasn't seen'. His Consultant was the same as mine - Murray. Ernst had an air ticket for Germany in mid-December and was bothered that it looked as if Murray wouldn't let him go. (He did.)

Amongst his visitors were a late middle-aged Glaswegian couple, lower middle class. The guy was arranging for Ernst's car to be repaired. Another visitor was a late middle aged woman, a very kind faced woman. By the way she dressed she struck me as a teacher, which was why I first thought Ernst was a teacher too. She'd come in the evenings and at weekends.

Ernst didn't play pool but watched a fair bit of TV, mostly the news and documentaries. And he sat on his bed reading a Jane Bronte novel. He was into 'alternative' 'New Age' stuff, the healing power of crystals, etc. though he didn't ram it down your throat - just oblique references.

Big Man Dave The thing about Dave was that he was big, 21 stone, though to me looked a little less. He was 5' 8", 21 years old, sociable guy, and was pissed off with the boredom of Ward life. He'd play pool, talk with people, particularly Big Stewart. He was a fish fryer by trade who took an OD. First time in his life, he said. Got done by the police for driving without a licence and insurance. The two not necessarily related. He wore snazzy t-shirts - he must have found a good outsize outfitter in Glasgow. He wore loose fitting trousers - track-suit type bottoms. Playing pool there'd be a glistening sweat on his forehead. He seemed a self-confident bloke, and not self conscious about his weight, despite Teddy calling him Fatso. Or asking him if he could feel his tits.

He was supposed to be on a reduction diet, but it wasn't enforced particularly. He'd get bottles of skoosh, etc, when the van came. He'd go to bed late, midnight or so. In the morning you'd see his form, a stranded whale entangled in a sheet. He slept in a t-shirt and boxer shorts. He chatted to me quite a bit and we'd play pool. He'd ask what I was in for, say how bored he was.

His family would visit, parents, aunties, his brother, who was shorter, normal size and bought a tasty black-stockinged girlfriend along with him. She was noticed by the more sexually alert of us inmates. The other time she was in she was in tight fitting jeans. She had a rather nice bum.

The only time his self-confidence faltered and a vulnerable side was seen was over his nervousness about what time and from where the bus into town went. I was going away that weekend too, and he was keen to accompany me, either on the bus or the train from Lenzie, but wanted to remain seemingly indifferent about it. I could understand this nervousness about venturing into the outside world, as I'd experienced it too, just didn't expect it from Dave.

He'd ask several times about the time of the bus, and whether I was definitely getting it too. At the same time he was anxious to hear whether Dr. Murray was going to give him a Pass. (Dr. Murray was at his Maryhill Clinic and the Ward nurses were trying to contact him by phone.) I left late afternoon and Dave still hadn't heard, but he did get out, and apparently spent his weekend frying fish in the family shop.

One day, with no build up, he asked to be discharged. Dr. Murray happened to be in the Ward Office and I think this prompted his sudden request to the Charge Nurse. He was taken into the Office, interviewed by Murray, who gave his permission. 'He shook my hand', said Dave. One of the family was going to pick him up.

Jim Jim was in his forties, heavy stubble if he didn't shave for a day. His hair was greying. When I was first admitted he was clean shaven, but he let his stubble grow as if he was growing a beard, then shaved most of it, leaving a substantial moustache. He was

stocky, sort of stocky flab, and had a big bum. He'd wear jeans, shirt, and if he ventured out to the Hospital sweetie shop would put on a black leather jacket. He was round shouldered, very slightly pot bellied and had a heavy shuffling walk. Although he appeared gruff I think he was a big softy at heart. In the last weeks I was in the Ward he was allowed to spend his day in the small side room down by the Pool Room - a privilege, apparently. Not anyone could go in the side room and close the door. In the same way, the Pool Room double doors were NOT to be shut, for Observation purposes.

In the small side room he would take a radio - a *trane* - and mostly listen to oldies and country and western. Because he played his music loud one of us would knock on his door to let him know the Tea Trolley was out, or that the ice cream van was there.

When Rab was first admitted he attached himself to Jim. He'd walk up and down the strip with him. Every now and then, with no build up, Rab would get upset and accuse people of stealing his baccy - 'Some thieving fucking bastard's away with my baccy'. Once, out of nowhere, he shouted 'Deutsche scheisse' to the back of Ernst, who was further up the Ward and had been nowhere near him. That he knew the German for 'German shit' suggested he'd been stationed in Germany, in the Army. Ernst either didn't hear, or pretended not to hear, but one or two of the guys - the patients - quietly ticked him off about that.

Interestingly, later that evening, after lights out, in his bed, I heard him talking to his bed mate, saying he was sorry, that he was sorry for shouting, it was nothing personal.

In the first or second week I was in the Ward, after I had been moved down the Ward from Office Observation, I woke from a night-time restless sleep to find him standing over me, at my

bedside. I mumbled/asked him was he was up to. And in the heavy red night-time Ward lighting he shuffled away. I didn't challenge him the next day, but I did think of complaining to the Nurses, and was apprehensive for the next night or two, but then forgot about it. It didn't happen again, I think. But I was sleeping.

He rarely went into the Pool Room. One time he did, and advised me to get my chin closer to the cue when I was potting, suggesting he used to play once.

Very rarely that he'd talk for a sustained time with someone else. Once it was with Micky, after lights out. It was about previous work experience. He'd been in a stonemason's yard, cutting stone.

I had a vague memory of him being man-handled into the gents/wash area one evening by the Staff because they thought he was getting stropo - which in his case would mean shouting. He'd sometimes mutter to someone 'I could fucking take you on anytime, don't you worry about that'.

He'd sometimes fart as he walked down the Ward. He'd leave his radio on, after lights out, and usually Big Stewart, Dougie or myself (summoning up the courage) would go over and ask him to turn it down. 'Must be something wrong with your fucking ears', but he would turn it down.

The only indication that Jim's mood might be turning belligerent was that his heavy shuffling walk would quicken down the Ward. Same with some of the other guys, that there was a mood change coming on. Brendan, getting into a manic phase; James, getting angry. With Ray, it was a give-away: late at night he'd walk down the Ward with a military precision, smartly turn at the end and walk back militarily. Paul walked up and down the Ward distracted by

his Voices, often quietly addressing his outstretched hand, palm up. Rab would walk slowly up and down the Ward, a cigarette tucked behind his ear, once doing a beautifully executed back somersault roll. He repeated it when I and Brendan asked him to, but would never again.

Jim never went to OT, or the swimming outings or play pool, despite him giving me experienced advice on how to hold my cue. I think, now and then, he went on escorted walks. He seemed so absorbed in himself that it was a touching surprise that one day when someone was getting upset with someone else in the Ward, Jim said 'Leave the man alone. He cannae help it. He's no well'. He'd rarely smile. One of the nurses, Dougal, the brilliant Day Shift Charge Nurse, who was into Harry Connick Jnr, could get him to smile. He joked with Jim that Lewis's in town were looking for someone with lots of 'effervescence' for the job of Santa Claus, and he was going to put his name forward. Jim smiled.

He also wiggled him about him over-staying his Pass - in the eight weeks I was there, he was let out just the once on a Day Pass, and over-stayed, was collected late evening and brought back quietly, by the Police. The Charge Nurse wiggled him that he, the Nurse, was going to be on the Carpet because of this. This got a good natured smile from Jim. Jim said of the Day Room the day after he was brought back from Pass 'My place is tidier than this'. He never had any visitors, but got a couple of cards at Christmas, one from his brother. The printed front read 'From your Brother a Christmas Greeting'.

Micky Micky had a low brow. Seemingly at a Special School or later he'd been nick-named 'The Mad Monkey'. He was about 5' 5" and had 'dead' eyes. They were a sort of faded blue, opaque. They

gave the impression of being unfocussed, and like the rest of his facial expressions, they moved slowly. When he smiled it was like someone in a School Play acting that they were smiling. He'd put his head on one side when he went to smile.

He had an impressive pot belly, looked very solid, not flabby, and because of it had trouble doing up the zip of his jeans. He wore a greyish cardigan type top. When I was admitted to Woodilee he had his hair long. He kept it well shampooed, and combed it regularly. One day he came back from the Hospital barbers with a short back and sides, which did not suit him. He said the effort of shampooing his long hair made him decide to have it cut off. The idea of him having his hair cut was put into his head by a patient who was in for only a week. A tall guy, who wore a shiny jogging shell suit, and his hair was a cross between a Rod Stewart and a crew cut. He was a bit lippy, and one early evening when Micky was watching a Soap this guy starts telling him, unasked, that he should get his hair cut, it would suit him better, and he went on about it for a couple of minutes. Micky didn't respond one way or the other, as he concentrated on the screen. He kept a large 2 litre bottle into which he'd put orange syrup, and dilute it, shaking it up to mix it. This was a regular routine, every other day. He said he did it as his throat got 'sare' otherwise. He also suffered, he said, from 'sare' arms and dizzy spells, and his arms were 'weak' too. A numbness, he described it as.

Once or twice he would say his shoulder was 'sare' too. A nurse would take his blood pressure now and then. He was lined up for a brain-scan at Stobhill - 'to have a look at my brain, to see if it's working right', he said. He waited all day on the Ambulance that never turned up. He didn't get angry, just defeated, something else that life threw at him.

He had a strangely stiff way of sitting on his chair - sitting on the edge, leaning forward slightly, head slightly down, eyes up - watching his favourites which were the two Australian Soaps, *Home and Away* and *Neighbours*, plus *Coronation Street*. He didn't watch any other TV.

He was one of the regular pool players. He latched onto me as a playing partner as we were both at the same level. If he had a run of being beaten he wouldn't play - 'Ach, I don't feel like it'. When he was cueing up a shot he'd take a long time before he hit the ball, the cue tentatively going backwards and forwards, backwards and forwards, before he'd finally shoot.

He had a good knowledge of pop music, stretching back to the 60s. I'd noticed this talent before, in the Pool Room, when the radio was on. Playing Trivial Pursuit, which we'd persuaded him to join, to take a Nurse's place, he got all the pop questions right.

His favourite singer was Meatloaf, and he would sing - accurately recalling the lyrics - Meatloaf songs. He had a voice that would pass OK in a pub microphone, but more importantly, it was through his voice he really expressed himself. Meatloaf was his hero and he said he'd love to see him live. He once saw Stevie Wonder, and The Who, at concerts at the Lewisham Odeon, when, years before, he worked down London way, on the dustcarts.

Micky came from Ardrossan. 'It's alright in the summer', and was beaten by his one-legged Dad as a child, and was a bed-wetter. He was sent to a Special School in Saltcoats. The only family he had left was a sister and a brother, one in North Berwick, the other in Birmingham. I heard him recounting to Estina, the student nurse, a story of him winning money on the horses when he was once staying with his sister and she robbed him of a substantial part and

put it down her blouse - 'So I couldnae get it'. He also told Estina about an incident in Saltcoats when he went into a shop where a half or step sister worked, and another woman assistant shrank back when he came in, as if he was something less than human.

It seemed that he had luck with the horses, also that he had been a good darts player in his time. This was before his eyes got weaker and his arm got weaker.

Micky wasn't interested in sex - 'I don't like that sort of talk', but he was interested in romance, and was never shy about chatting to a woman, telling her that she had lovely hair, or nice eyes. He said to me, after Jean had visited, that he liked to see that, the two of us walking down the Ward, holding hands. He said I was lucky - 'You've got somebody. I've got naebody'. This sounds self-pitying, but it didn't come over like that. You felt he had reasonable grounds for beefing about his life. 'I'm just a poor boy.' He hadn't worked for 13 years. He'd been staying in a hostel in Anderston, and had thrown himself twice in the Clyde, but both times had started swimming once he hit the water.

He was in on a Section. He heard voices sometimes, but not on a regular basis. At Christmas he didn't get one single card, and like Teddy and Jim he never got a visitor. He had a habit of sitting in with other folks visitors and talking to them. He'd done this when the middle-aged woman visited Ernst.

The exception of never getting a visitor was when the middle aged woman with the lovely warm face who used to visit Ernst once came into the Ward after Ernst had been discharged when he was allowed to go over to Germany for Christmas. She went over to Micky. She had bought him a carton of tangerines. I heard Micky saying to her he liked Ernst but he didn't think it was very nice that Ernst didn't

talk to him. She explained that Ernst had his own problems. She asked him what he liked doing, singing he said. She suggested he maybe got involved with a choir, singing with a choir, or group singing. When she went he came round the Ward handing out his tangerines, saying he didn't like tangerines. He then came over and told me about the visit.

He'd often come over to the foot of my bed and look at me with a 'I'm feeling sad' look, and would wait for me to ask him how he was, before he'd tell you he was fed up, or bored, or 'no well'.

He was keen to get out - his Section was up in January, but he was fed up with the amount he got on Social Security. 'You couldnae buy new clothes with that kind of money.' About a week after I was admitted to Woodilee he'd been into Kirkie with a Nurse Escort, and came back with new jeans (that he had to have shortened) and new boots. These for when he got out. Never wore them in the Ward. The jeans he wore finally split at the crutch and he then wore a pair of grey polyester trousers out of the Ward Store of pyjamas, shirts, trousers, etc.

He was sensitive to how other people behaved towards him. He asked Dougie if he could lend him a cigarette (me and Dougie were playing pool) and Dougie heard him but didn't reply. Later Micky came up to me and said 'I don't think he likes me'. I said not to take it personally. And then later still, unasked, Dougie explained to me, brought the subject up, saying he had none to spare and his relatives got pissed off with him handing out ciggies, that they had bought in for him.

When Micky had to sign for his mail, which was his Giro, he did slowly, a beautiful executed signature that you'd never associate with him. He could be very direct, not aware he could be

insensitive. He told the sympathetic student nurse Estina that she was very nice, but too fat. She took it OK, with a smile. Once he asked me if I believed in God. I didn't, I said. 'Me neither. I know that's a terrible thing to say, but that's how it is'.

Micky had a lot going for him, a lot of unrealised potential. I felt he never ever got any remedial attention, apart from medication. He was discharged back out to a homeless hostel in the January, where apparently he got pissed, and had his new jeans and boots stolen.

Eamonn Eamonn looked as if he had just been transplanted direct from a town in County Clare into Woodilee. It was the face and build. Fairish, sandy coloured hair that stuck up like a hedgehog when not combed, ruddy complexion. There was something about his round face that you could just see him coming out of the Church on a Sunday. It was a butchers face, rosy. He could look very presentable, with his glasses, and his gleaming, though slightly bad fitting dentures. At other times Eamonn could be like a wild man that would even send the feared head hunters of Borneo running for their lives.

The first day I was admitted to the Ward, the first time I saw him, here was this guy grinning at me, close up, with his startling white face - thanks to it being covered in white talcum powder - as if he had showered in it. Hedgehog hair, a crimson face underneath the talc where he'd miss bits when applying it, and the whites of his eyes a startlingly red.

Being in the Ward for eight weeks I soon got to know the signs when Eamonn was regressing - the face started to go crimson, the eyes red and he'd noticeably have dry sore skin between his eyebrows. And he'd walk maniacally, very heavy footed, the heaviest

footed of anyone in the Ward, stamping down the Ward, the pace speeding up as he went. He'd also loudly be singing Irish ballads at five in the morning. He had a good singing voice, very Irish. Songs that were sentimental, the sort of songs that Jim Reeves or Sidney Devine or an Irish Show Band singer would sing. Eamonn was a convincing argument for the - on the whole, or now and then - effectiveness of medication.

When I was first admitted, the first week, he'd come up to me and ask if I would hear his Confession. He thought I was a Priest. This confusion that I had something to do with Holy Orders persisted for a fortnight. Sometimes he'd come up to me and shake my hand, thanking me for all I had done for him. As he got better his confusion about me wore off. Some of the guys would get concerned on his behalf about the dry red sore between his eyes. - 'That's really bad, man.' - 'It's the medicine.' - 'I'd tell them about it.' - 'They know.'

He was a decent pool player. Don was put out by being beaten by him. 'He was a vegetable when he came in here, couldn't feed himself, and he's just gone and beat me!'

Four or five weeks into my stay, Eamonn was presentable in his glasses, hair slicked effectively down, quietened down, assisting the nurses, wiping the wee plastic beakers at the trolley, when the medicine was dolled out.

He'd go out for a walk in the Hospital Grounds with his parents, who were both smaller than him - wizened - and in their seventies. Once he got a weekend pass to to see his wife and 14 year old daughter, who were back from the Florida Disneyland. They never visited him in the hospital. If I remember right, he said he'd being coming into Woodilee since his teens. It was difficult to imagine

him with a wife and a daughter. He did have older Aunts who'd visit him. He was in his 40s.

He had a playful side, particularly when he was playing pool.

Once he asked me to sew a button on his car rally driver's type coat. 'Show me how to do it, so I can do it myself next time. Are you hungry? - Here.' And out his bedside draw he'd hand me a roll with processed cheese. His aunties had brought it in.

His downfall came before Christmas. I was coming back from a weekend pass on the Sunday, around quarter to five, in the dusk here was Eamonn coming down the Hospital Drive. He was going to say some Rosaries and see a Priest, he said. He was never back for tea and came in later that evening, slightly merry. Seemingly he'd had a few drinks. I'm not sure if the Nurses realised this, and it may have had nothing to do with it, but from then on, during the week he started to slowly deteriorate. I assume the booze upset his medication, or he had already started to deteriorate and because of the mood change, decided to have a drink. Either way, by the end of the week he was thundering up and down the Ward, almost rushing, and into his bedroom, slamming the door.

His hair was sticking up again, his face was brighter red. At the end of the week, one night, he'd been going in and out of his room a lot after lights out, thumping down the Ward and one of the night student nurses, a prick who didn't have the right touch, tried to keep Eamonn in his room as he was about to emerge yet again. I heard this in the dark, lying on my bed, unable to sleep. In the end poor Eamon started *greetin'*. 'I need to do a shite.' And the Student Nurse let him out but headed to the toilets with him, presumably not believing him.

The weekend of the following week I was out again, and when I came back there was no Eamonn. Apparently he had deteriorated further and had been put in the Locked Ward. There was a happy ending to this, even if it was a temporary happy ending in his hospitalised life. I'd been discharged in January but I had returned to say 'Hello' to some of the lads in the Ward. And here he was, coming down the steps outside of Ward 1 and 2. He was back on form. 'Alright then, fella - (he called everyone fella) - I'm back in the Ward'.

Big Stewart Big Stewart was about 6'. He was 21, had jet black hair, cut tufty short, black eyelashes, blue eyes. He walked like one of the goons in Popeye - sloping walk, the head further forward than the rest of the body. His right arm and hand down, like the shovel of a JCB, the hand bent back with the palm up. He usually wore a bright kingfisher blue shiny jogging bottoms, and a white t-shirt. I've mentioned how he'd eat his food, bringing his fork from in front of him, into his mouth.

He was in on a Year's Section. Vague stories of him chasing his Dad around the house, with or without a weapon was never clear. He came from Possil/Hamilton Hill, and none of his family visited him, which included a brother and sister. He seemed to have had a troubled adolescence, talked of being in a spike in Perth, which he didn't like - or was it Stirling? Didn't like it because of all the *teuchters*, saying 'ken' and 'yon' all the time.

It would be easy on superficial acquaintance of Stewart to underestimate him. You could see he had a quick temper, and would mouth off, but you'd think it was all mouth and bravado. The quick temper was usually focussed on the Nurses who he was generally suspicious off, though he could flare up sometimes with a fellow patient.

One time, after he'd been getting upset about something, two of the Nurses were trying to get him in the side room at the bottom of the Ward. He was standing at the open door, refusing to go in - 'I'm no going in there, you're going to beat me up.' Other times he claimed you got beaten up in the Locked Ward. 'How come when you wake up in the morning,' he said, 'you're covered in bruises?' He liked the Locked Ward though, as seemingly you could lie on your bed all day.

He never went for the Staff when I was there, and as I say, you could be lulled into thinking it was all mouth. But you got glimpses of Stewart if he did go out of control. A couple of times you sensed he was on the brink - once with Jamsie in the Dining Room. His temper would flare up and his face would become distorted, nostrils flaring - literally, and mouth twitching. He would flare up at the Staff. - 'See when I see you in *toon*, you're a fucking dead man. I don't care if you send me to Carstairs. (*The State Hospital for Scotland.*) - Fuck you. Fuck the lot of *youse*.'

'It's the fucking drugs they give you' someone else would chip in, 'they mess you up'. Stewart had it in for Davie, who was a good Nurse. Why I don't know. Stewart would be standing over him at the medicine trolley, giving him verbal *laldie*, but Davie didn't flinch, was calm on the outside, (even if he wasn't on the inside) and stood his ground. - 'That's just playground talk, Stewart. Here's your medicine'.

Like a lot of other patients in the Ward, he was very sensitive to what others were going through. There were some exceptions. I think he would particularly identify with those if they were on the receiving end of discipline, containment. He got very, very agitated when Rab did a runner and was found in the grounds, on his way

out to the Big World. Rab was frog-marched by three nurses back into the Ward, crying and shouting, struggling to break free.

We, the patients were quickly and efficiently ushered into the Day Room as he was held down on his bed - four nurses now - and the curtains around his bed being drawn. He's screaming 'Save me! God save me!' A Doctor is hurriedly coming into the Ward with a hypodermic needle at the ready.

It effected us all. Stewart is pacing up and down the Day Room. 'Poor wee guy. That's fucking terrible.' Rab wasn't that wee. The brilliant Charge Nurse who was into Harry Connick Jnr (and recommended Jim put in for the Christmas job as Santa Claus at Lewis's) put a soothing arm around Brian's neck. Stewart, still breathing heavily, didn't pull away. Seeing the out-of-breath flushed prick Student Nurse enter the Ward, with a shirt sleeve ripped off and tie yanked out of his collar, he muttered 'Good'.

Another time Stewart got upset was when he slipped out of the Ward one evening for a walk in the Hospital grounds. Seemingly the Nurse on Duty reported him missing to the Police. They went to his parents house, to see if he was there. When Stewart came back into the Ward from his time in the grounds he was called into the Office, and emerged pissed off. 'Fucking bastards, can't even go for a walk without them ringing the police. This fucking place...'

Once when Paul was arguing the case for staying in the bin he and Big Michael were trying to persuade him being outside had things going for it, like having your own place, get a job, get a car.

He had an accurate ear for accents, how people talked. He could use it teasingly, some might say cruelly, for instance with Iain from Argyle way. Once he did a spot-on London accent, then seeing me

lying on my bed, said, meaning it ‘Sorry Peter. Nothing personal.’ It never bothered me. Never did. I’d left that part of the world 27 years before.

Big Stewart had an impressive knowledge of schizophrenia, outlining to me and Dougie different types, and the medication. So and so really fucked me up, stupid bastards, they should never have put me on it. He said ECT helped him. He’d taken street drugs in the way you tried different sweeties. ‘Took Acid, man. It was alright, didn’t do much for me.’

A couple of times he asked me if I had an apple. ‘I like apples, never get any fruit because I don’t get visitors.’ Just as a way of explanation, not self-pityingly. I gave him apples when I had them.

He didn’t have long until his Section was up, and he’d also been given a flat to go to when he was discharged. He went out one day to see about getting furniture for it, and those that were closest to him were concerned he’d blow it by losing his temper, and get put on another Section, so we’d calm him down. ‘I don’t fucking care’ he’d say.

It seemed to me he was totally unprepared for ‘outside’. A few days before he was due to be discharged he was proudly telling everyone in the dinner queue how he’d cooked a pizza at OT, pizza and beans. ‘I didnae want it, no at half nine in the morning but that John from Craigie House ate it. It was alright, man. Pizza and beans.’

He felt fairly positive about ‘outside’.

Came the day his Section was up. I think there may have been some problem with moving into his house (which turned out was in

the same street as his parents) - still needed some furniture, I heard. But by the evening he was cheesed off with Ward Life and started packing his clothes into a black refuse sack, that he kept under his bed, half full of clothes.

There was something sad about his departure, something anti-climatic. 'I'm going, I've had enough of this place' but he didn't get the response that you felt he was looking for, which was one of guidance, or at least some kind of reaction from friends and Staff. His black refuse sack packed, it's coming up to 8 at night, the doors will be locked soon 'I'm going now. What do you think?' Big Man Dave shrugged, felt awkward it seemed about committing himself either way.

I told him to wait until morning. It's late, it's dark, I said. Wait 'til the morning, but he starts to make a move down the Ward with his black sack. At this point a Nurse happens to be coming out of the Ward Office. 'That's me away', says Stewart to him. - 'OK, Brian'. No 'All the best' or 'Take care mate' or 'Good Luck' - just 'OK'.

The Nurse continues about his business, leaving Brian standing at the double doors. Stands there. 'Shall I go, or no?' I say no. Big Man Dave shrugs his shoulders. Stewart hesitates. 'Ach, I'll go tomorrow, might as well' and he walks back down the Ward with his sack.

He left early in the morning, not even waiting to get some food in his stomach. - 'Stay for breakfast.' 'I'm fucking going man, rang for a taxi.' In fact, he was standing in the inter-ward corridor, ringing the taxi firm up from the Pay Phone asking where his taxi was when I walked back from breakfast.

I last saw Stewart through the Ward window, holding his black sack, getting into the mini-cab that finally turned up. The cab drove off. Never saw, or heard, what happened to Stewart.

Dougie 'I'm talented me, I shouldn't be here. I can write, I can sing, I can play the drums.' Dougie was late 20s, a stylish dresser, good looking, in that he had those sort of eyes Elvis had when young, that looked as if they'd been mascaraed. Long eyelashes. His hair was cut slightly two-tier: sides cut shorter than the top, as had been fashionable for the past year or two. He was from Knightswood, but had lived in Italy - Turin, I think. And then Cornwall. - 'I've been around, know what I mean?' I was too involved in my own illness, my own pre-occupations, at that point, to ask him what he was doing in Italy. He had friends in Cornwall - stories of working in a mental hospital, of being ill in Cornwall, his friends (who were into New Age stuff) trying to look after him.... It was difficult to know exactly what was wrong with Dougie.

When he was standing he'd move his weight from one foot to the other, constantly, whether talking to you or standing in the Canteen queue. It may have been a side effect of whatever medication he was on. He had a personal stereo that he sometimes lent to Stewart when he was out on a Weekend Pass. 'Look after it, man.' - 'Sure, that's brilliant by the way, ta.'

Towards the end of his stay it emerged that Dougie did hear voices, but he claimed it was because he had the potential to be a Medium. He said it was his Granny he sometimes heard. The medication he was on caused a side effect, something called Cogwheel Rigidity, and he had to be given medication to counter it.

He was a dapper dresser, from his Christmas motif boxer shorts, to his grey long-johns, his dressing gown, to his baseball type sweat-

shirt, moccasins, jeans, brown boots with straps, his oiled dark green coat, to his corduroy cap. When I first came in he walked the Ward a lot with Don. Like Don, he was a vegetarian. Other times he'd chat with Stewart, or give a pep talk to Mervin. He could be sociable, but other times he'd withdraw, sitting or, when he could, lying on his bed, listening to his personal Stereo. Deacon Blue were his favourite band.

He wasn't quite as bright, or as talented as I first thought - Micky, for instance, sang better than him, and on the basis of his singing I wasn't so sure of his drumming or writing skills, but that didn't take away from his 'style', or character.

His parents, elderly but energetic, came in to visit him. His Mother seemed to blame bad influence of friends - in Italy? - on his illness. I heard his Mum telling a nurse that he was alright before he went to Italy.

He was good at geeing people up. 'How you going mate - alright mate? You've got to laugh haven't you, mustn't let this place get you down.' - 'I'd like a croft in the country, how about you?' - 'You and me Stewart, go down to Cornwall, see a bit of the world when we get out of here'. He could get ratty, though - sometimes with the Staff, talking early in the morning - which they did, before the Ward lights went on and one time at 7 in the morning went into the Ward Office to tell them to pipe down.

Occasionally he'd get pissed off with Jim's Country and Western music. Sometimes he'd have a slight run-in with a Nurse about getting up in the morning, though usually he was cheery first thing. Sometimes, though, you felt his chirpiness was a front, as much a way of keeping his own spirits up, as anybody else's. Once when he, Don and someone else were talking about infidelity, and revenge,

Dougie suddenly said ‘This is getting too heavy for me, know what I mean? - You guys talk about it, but it’s too heavy for me’.

On outings to Kirkie he’d buy Q magazine, and a bottle of Aqua Libre from Peckhams. If he had oranges or tangerines he’d offer you one. Talked of having a flat in Maryhill with a girlfriend, before he went to Italy. Our beds, him and me were next to each other. He left before Christmas.

Peter (*Me, the writer*) Peter got more mail than anyone else in the Ward. Almost every other day he had to sign the Book for mail, and his bedside cabinet was covered in get-well cards, and a photo of his two sons, and a photo of Jean, his girlfriend. He was mid-40s, about 5’ 10” and walked with a slight stoop. He wore a grey Levi’s Western style shirt with mock mother of pearl stud buttons, (he’d bought it in an Anniesland charity shop), jeans, and tan brogues.

He mixed well with most of the guys in the Ward, apart from when he was first admitted, when he was still badly ill, with suicidal depression. He would sit on his bed, not talking much and his body temperature would be high. He’d regularly go to the wash-house to wash under his sweating armpits. At night he slept with a sheet half over him, pushing the rest of the bedding down to the bottom of the bed. Because he was distraught he not only didn’t sleep properly but hardly ate the first week.

Because of his body temperature it was decided he was to get a thyroid jag, to see what was doing. For two nights he had alarming fitful dreams of his body, including the head, covered in giant gleaming stainless steel hypodermic needles, including the eyeballs. He thought he was going psychotic, on top of everything else. That freaked him out. He kept that to himself for a while, but one of the

guys in the Ward noticed something was up. 'You alright, Peter?' He told him he thought he was going psychotic, told him about the dream.

'Aye, we've been watching you. You have'nae slept or eaten properly for a week. That's why that's happening man. It's like they guys who'd sit in a dark cave and no eat, and see visions of God. It's sensory fucking deprivation, man.' As this came from one of the guys who was in because he was having one of his recurrent psychotic episodes, this was a great relief to hear his diagnosis.

At first he found the food disgusting, and hardly touched it. But after about two/three weeks he started eating more. As he got less distraught over the weeks, he went swimming, though the first time freaked him out. He played pool, Trivial Pursuit, and dominoes with the other lads who were up for it. He was rarely awake to midnight like Edward, Teddy, Michael, Dougie were. When he was no longer on suicide watch he was allowed to go on unaccompanied walks in the Hospital Grounds, and eventually given week-end passes. He had a flat in Maryhill.

He hated getting out of bed in the morning but told Don he wasn't going to give any of the Nurses the chance to pull him up, or write it up in his Medical notes/observation.

He had several women visitors. A former girlfriend for one. His former wife didn't come in and refused to bring their sons to see him. In a letter she said a Psychiatric Hospital wasn't a place for them to be in. Robin was 13 and Martin was 11. He missed them very much.

Jamesie Jamesie looked like an evil hobbit. Five foot nothing, he had cross-eyes, which were alarming as you never knew which

was the good one and which the squinty one. They both seemed squinty, so you never knew which was the one that was on you, not that he directly looked at anyone, apart from when he was asking for a cigarette. 'Got a cigarette?' - and even then both eyes would be looking to the right and the left of the person he was asking.

When he asked for a cigarette he'd stand in front of whoever it was, waiting for a reply, often the person not responding, but he'd stand there, and ask again, until he got a response, which usually was a shake of the head. He'd roll up dog-ends

He had a particular way of walking: shoulders hunched up, hands in pockets, kind of insolent. He was possibly the smallest guy in the Ward, not so much skinny as lithe. He had dark hair and dark eyebrows that seemed to meet in the middle. He'd often walk around in his trousers only, no top, particularly in the evening. When he had a cigarette he'd sit blowing perfect smoke rings. When he wasn't on patrol for a fag he'd be curled up in a chair, sleeping by a radiator in the Day Room. Most guys wouldn't give him a fag or a light. He'd roll up dog-ends.

At one point he was in the bed next to mine, and he'd put his anger into banging his beside cabinet drawer or its door, looking for a match, or getting in and out of bed, with his trousers on, pulling the covers over his head. His anger also went into his feet, particularly late at night, as this small person banged up and down the Ward, looking for a fag.

He had a dreadful way of slurping his tea. Very characteristic of Jamesie. No one else drank like him. You'd hear slurp, slurp, slurp, and look up and see Jamesie. But he had an interesting habit of cleaning the spoon very carefully before he put sugar in his tea,

which given his general disregard for cleanliness was curious. Maybe he thought the spoons were poisoned.

His Mother was in her fifties or sixties, a sour-faced looking woman, as sour faced as Jamesie. She once went into the Ward Office, voice loud enough for me to hear her whining that no-one had told her Jamesie had been moved from the Locked Ward back into Ward 1. Her point was legitimate, but it was the whining way she complained.

There was a pretty heavy-duty relationship between Mother and Son. She'd come in once or twice a week with a shopping bag, and give Jamesie fags, skoosh, and cake or biscuits. The fags were the most important for Jamesie. He'd sit half lying on the bed, enjoying his smoke, blowing out a jet of smoke, whilst she'd sit on a chair by his bed, sour-faced. Neither would talk to each other. If Jamesie was now eating a cake and still hadn't spoken she'd sometimes get up and go to the Ward Office and complain. 'I've come come all this way and he's no speaking to me'.

One weekday she said she wasn't going to come in on the Sunday. One of the Nurses got him and repeated what his Mum had said. He stood there, said nothing, and his Mum cut her visit short. Later that day he ran away from the Hospital 'back to his Mammy', and had to be brought back in by the police. Wasn't struggling, just had a twisted smile.

He was on a Section and his Section expired. He left the letter informing he was now on a new Section (for a Year) lying in the Day Room. Most of us in the Day Room saw it, glimpsed it. But no-one went up to him and said 'That's a bummer, man. Sorry to hear that.' It was difficult to like Jamesie. He'd spit food out, in the Canteen and onto the Ward floor - 'Dirty bastard' would be a response from

Stewart. He'd be lying on his bed, having a smoke and would tap the ash onto the floor and then drop a burning fag end under his bed.

The one time I saw Jamesie genuinely happy and outward going was when he'd been out with a relation and her family. It may have been his auntie. When he came back in I was in the Pool Room and he came in and offered everyone a cigarette - 'Want a fag? - Want a fag?' And one of the decent Nurses says to him - good humouredly - 'You never give me a smile as you gave your auntie'.

Once or twice he was moved into the Locked Ward, not because he was 'unmanageable' but because they were changing his medication, and maybe anticipated difficult behaviour.

Paul When I first saw Paul he was walking up and down the Ward wearing a rimmed army camouflage hat - Malayan Campaign style - and a long white Aran sweater, jeans and bare feet. Thin bodied, but not skinny, sallow skin, eyes half closed, a few short hairs that ran along the line of his jaw bone to form a kind of beard. I suppose Paul was the most obviously 'disturbed' of us patients.

Paul was plagued by voices. He was in a constant acrimonious relationship with someone who couldn't understand that Planet Earth was threatened: the Pope was sending out his Agents, that Jesus Christ died for our Sins. He'd patiently explain this to the open upturned palm of his right hand, but his patience would run out and he'd get angry. 'You big fucking balloon! How many times do I have to tell you? Right - Planet Earth is threatened. Do you see! Do you fucking GET IT!!'

Other times he'd say 'FUCK OFF!! FUCK OFF!!' - whether to the same voice or another voice. The voices frequently plagued him. For a few quiet moments, he might watch Star Trek, but his

concentration wandered. Or he would see a fish on the telly and suddenly sit up and take notice. Fishing was his hobby. Fly fishing.

When he had moments of peace he'd sit at a table in the Day Room, patiently making a fly, choosing from an assortment of hooks, cotton and coloured threads. He had a copy of *Trout and Salmon* magazine, a keep-net, three rods, and a fisherman's collapsible stool cluttered around his bed, encroaching into the space of the beds next to his. Once he started casting in the Ward, until cautioned by a Nurse. Another time Dougal, the brilliant Nurse, took him fishing on a cold Saturday.

He'd walk around the Day Room shouting in a kind of sing-song way 'Anyone got a light'. He smoked ready-mades. And he'd sing 'Yabadabadoo, you're a Gnu', but never got beyond that line. Also wandering around the Day Room he'd say 'H - e - l - l - o' in a deliberately daft, Bernard Bresslaw type voice. 'Ee-orr' was another favourite.

It was easy to communicate with Paul, in some ways easier than communicating with people 'outside' because it was so undemanding. If Paul said 'Hello' to you in his deliberately daft voice, it was the most natural thing to reply 'Hello' to him in the same manner, and he'd smile. Same with 'Ee-orr' and the interesting thing was you felt there had been a meaningful exchange. You felt good.

There was something about him that you sensed he had been 'well brought up'. Despite being in the world of his illness, he would apologise in a particular way - a way difficult to explain - if he forgot, for instance, to return Jean's cassette player to me.

He'd listened to a tape he had. It was the heavy metal band *Saxon*, which was startling as you suddenly felt you were in touch with the Paul before he became ill. He could, and would, mount a convincing case for not leaving hospital, saying how difficult it was to be 'outside'. People expected you to be 'normal'.

Now and then you'd see him writing down, or drawing, on a piece of paper. And when he left it on his bed, or in the Day Room, you'd have a passing look, but none of it was coherent.

Sometimes he'd come up to you and say 'Supposing you had a big tit on your head', and laugh. He had the ability to enjoy himself, as when he got the Ward water-pistol off Dougal, the nurse, and was squirting Dougal's back and other people in the Ward. Or when he was chucking an apple around, with Big Man Dave, me, Stewart and Teddy, or when he and Teddy got a piggy-back off one of the Nurses.

He occasionally got visitors - an old woman who may have been his Grannie or an Auntie. She'd sit knitting, neither speaking to each other. He had an attractive sister who came in with her husband, and the three talked, in a way that seemed comfortable.

When Paul removed his hat you saw that his hair was short/thin all over, it never seemed to grow, and it had bald patches. I assumed it was a side effect of his medication. Thinking about his face and high cheek bones and almost lack of hair I thought he could be cast as a modern day Christ - the hair reminding me, too, of the close-ups of Joan of Arc, in Carl Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc* film.

He'd usually be in the Day Room, sitting by a radiator and near the telly. His special food diet stuff would be scattered around the floor by his chair: half eaten cartons of fortified chocolate pudding and

vitamin fortified carton drinks that were kept in a fridge in the Ward kitchen.

I have a memory of him running back in from the sweetie van in the evening, half-laughing, half-shivering, as it pissed down, out in the dark. By the evening he'd sometimes be walking around with just his jeans on, lean and lithe. There was something attractive about his body, his hairless body - the skin smooth, and a kind of latin brown, not a peelie-wally white.

John Entering the Ward, half way down it on the right hand side you'd often see a white haired, jowly faced man with glasses kneeling by his bed, saying his Prayers. This was John. He'd tried to do himself in, apparently. His life seemed to revolve around his 85 year old Mother, who was in a psycho-geriatric Ward in Gartnavel, and his time on a Navy Patrol Boat during the Second World War. Some of the Staff nick-named him 'Commander'. He walked with a kind of dignified shuffle, head slightly up, mouth slightly hanging down. There was just the suggestion he had a breathing problem. He and I never chatted though latterly I sat at his table and opened his marge for him. He'd joke with Big Michael, and could communicate with the deaf and dumb guy. He knew some sign language.

He'd go 'round the Ward emptying ashtrays and collecting the beaker holders, and would keep himself occupied in the Canteen clearing the tables of plates that hadn't been returned to the hatch.

He'd be one of the first up in the morning, 5 or 6, dressed, and had a sort of access to to the Staff Ward kitchen. Once or twice he went to see his Mother in Gartnavel. Apart from his Mother, he voiced a low opinion of women.

Most of the time he was even-tempered, often sitting with Older Dougie in the Day Room, handing him a fag, or dozing off as he smoked. One of us having to point out he was about to set his trousers on fire, with the burning fag limp in his hand. He could get upset, particularly with Eamonn. He could also get upset when Laura or Shona, both good Nurses, gently told him not to do something - maybe something he was putting in a bin, some liquid, and he'd go into a petulant huff. 'I heard you the first time... You don't talk to someone like that of my age... You weren't even born when I was...' etc, etc.

Occasionally he'd play Pool. He wasn't a bad player. The one woman he got on with, besides his Mother, was Liz, one of the Cleaning Ladies, helping her with emptying the bedside bins.

Older Dougie Isabella, a friend of Peter's, who was on a visit, was moved by the sight of Older Dougie sitting, looking a bit lost, at his bedside. She commented that her heart went out to men in that situation because they didn't know what to do with their feelings. She felt it must be harder for them.

When Dougie was first admitted two women his own age came with him, bringing a bag of his belongings. And they came in when he was allowed to go out on a Weekend Pass. I never knew whether they were family, or neighbours. When he came back in on the Sunday evening he was wearing a pair of anonymous not very well fitting corduroy trousers.

Dougie was near retirement age, so it looked, and he wore NHS glasses. When he was admitted he wore what looked like the trousers of a Sunday suit, though never saw the jacket. That and a shirt. In the first week he spent a lot of time by his bed, looking

down most of the time at his hands, which often held each other, or the thumbs circling each other. It was as if he was waiting for a very late train at a station in the middle of nowhere, that was never going to come. He had a profoundly sad expression. You never knew what it was he was holding in, or, that he didn't know how to deal with it.

Latterly he'd sit in the Day Room, in a chair by the entrance, in a very similar posture. Lighting up a Berkeley. There was something about Dougie that your heart did go out to. I think Laura the Nurse felt that way too.

The first evening when Dougie had been admitted he was lying on his bed, and the Evening Shift came on and that fat-full-of-himself bastard nurse - 'The Fat Controller' told one of the student nurses to 'get that old cunt off his bed'. I intervened and told him Laura, the Day Nurse, who had I think equal seniority with the Fat Controller, had told Dougie to lye on his bed as when he'd come in - been admitted - had had the shakes badly. He still had them - his hands and legs, so that he had trouble getting a fag out of his packet. These shakes quietened down - through medication, or changed medication, I don't know.

Two women wearing BR (British Rail) gear came to visit him the day of his admission. Presumably at the end of their shift. Another time two BR guys came in to visit him. And once a visitor came in to see someone else in the Ward, and recognised Dougie in the Day Room. The two chatted a while. I think they both knew each other from Knightswood way. Dougie was at his most animated, not quite the right word - when he was expecting visitors. It meant a lot to him. It would come out if you asked him if his visitor had come yet. 'No yet. Doesnae look if they will now. It's getting on.' But usually they would turn up.

I could only guess Dougie was suffering from depression. He was one of those meek sort of Glaswegians who wouldn't say boo to a goose. He was single, whether widowed or not, or a bachelor, he never said. He hardly spoke. I can see him, a porter on Central Station, or at one of the suburban stations, collecting tickets, and raising his hand to let the driver know it was OK to move off.

Dougie would never moan, or let on how he was feeling. Nothing. Which could work against him if one of the decent Nurses asked him how he was doing. 'Oh fine. No bad.' I think the more perceptive Nurses like Dougal and Laura knew he wasn't fine at all. He and I would 'Morning' to each other.

Iain. When I first saw Iain, my heart went out to him, just as it had done to Dougie when was admitted to the Ward. Iain seemed so young, and he reminded me of Robin, with his non-styled hair, thinnish face, there seemed to be something innocent about him. I guessed him to be about 18 or 19. He seemed inexperienced. He looked like a younger version of the Tom Courtney character in *the Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* film, only with a less tense, softer face.

There may have been an innocence about him, but he was not inexperienced. After the standard 48 hours in the Observation Bed he was moved down the Ward, two beds from me. He was on a Section and was from Drumchapel. Turns out he and Colin lived close to each other, knew mutual neighbours. Also turns out he tried to OD on his Grannie's morphine (she was dying from cancer); also turns out he tried to set fire to the house, by burning some clothing on an electric fire in his bedroom. He said he didn't have much memory of this - his Mum was in the kitchen and smelt the burning clothes and came into his bedroom.

Said he felt bad about putting his family through it, because of his behaviour, but didn't seem able to control it. Stewart who heard voices said his voices would tell him to kill himself. It wasn't clear if Iain had the same problem. He seemed to give off a kind of indifferent bravado about his attitude to death, killing himself, and it was difficult to know if this was a front. Drumchapel stories of Iain going across the landing, finding the flat door opposite open... a woman had hung herself.

In many ways he was a sensitive bloke. He could put on a sort of world-wise exterior, but underneath I sensed he was...shy? But covered it up. He tried to sneer about the OT Christmas Disco, rather than admit he might be looking forward to it, in the same way as Micky casually saying 'I might as well go to it. Got nothing else to do'. Micky, in fact, was very keen to go, asking me in a quiet moment if I was going, could he come with me, etc. At the Christmas Disco Iain didn't dance, but seemed to admire those who did. I think he was too self-conscious himself to get up on the floor but would have liked to.

Like nearly everyone else in the Ward, he smoked, drank *skoosh* and had music tapes, but here was a surprise, the two cassettes he had were one of The Three Tenors, and one of Pavarotti. Turns out my Key Worker Nurse Antonia had the same tapes. She made a bee-line to him and had a chat.

One time his sister - I think it was his sister - mid-twenties or more, came in to see him with her young children and I was envious of the natural way he picked up the children and put them on his bed...that family feeling. As I said, my sons Robin and Martin never visited in 8 weeks. Their Mum, living in Knightswood, said a Psychiatric Hospital was not a place to bring them.

When I was out (discharged), and revisited the Ward in early February, I saw Iain and we shook hands. He'd been in the corridor making a phone call. He wasn't looking so well. His complexion had changed, he had some red sores and he'd had his hair cut short, which didn't suit him.

Rab Rab was strange, Rab was ill, but none of us, I think, knew exactly what Rab's illness was. He didn't converse or interact in a normal way - in a way that virtually everyone else did, including mostly mute Harry.

He was possibly in his mid 20s. He had strong penetrating grey/blue eyes, heavy beard - the sort of person who'd need to shave twice a day. He wore jeans, expensive looking white trainers with the tongue fashionably sticking up and out, shirt and blue padded outdoor jacket, that he often wore as he walked up and down the heated Ward, cigarette tucked behind his ear.

On the day he was admitted both Don and me speculated what kind of dope he was on - because he seemed like someone spectacularly stoned. He'd walk around with a big stupid grin on his face, and suddenly burst out laughing. He'd come up to you, look in your face, with this stoned grin, eyes twinkling and he'd keep staring until you reacted by asking him what his problem was, or by you walking away. If you walked away he'd often follow you, looking at you with an expectant grin.

He latched onto Jim very early and for around a week the two walked around together. Rab kidded on Jim was his father. Jim chuckled - 'I'm your *feyther*? I'm nae your *feyther*. That'll be fucking right'. Sometimes they'd sit in silence by Jim's bed. This petered out after a week or two, through no row though. Frank

didn't latch onto to me. Maybe I wasn't at that stage, in the mood for him, pre-occupied with what I was going through.

In his first day, in the evening, on this spectacularly stoned state - was he on Acid? - he sat in the Day Room trying to stare out a buttered pancake that he got off the 7 o' clock tea trolley. Then he broke into a laugh and declared that there was no way he was going to get it into his mouth as it was massively large. Someone asked him what his name was. 'Rab.' - 'Where do you come from?' - 'Outer Space.' Deadly serious. He wasn't joking.

After a couple of weeks he quietened down, he was on less than a Trip, or whatever was happening to him. He'd walk the Ward, looking concentrated. Or sit on his bedside chair.

You'd get a soft smile now and then.

He had a cough, coughing and spewing regularly - usually where he stood, on the Ward floor. Quite a few of us flinched at this, and one or two would shout 'Dirty bastard!'. If a Nurse caught him, he'd be told to get a mop and clean it up. Sometimes he'd slowly walk up to a bin and gob into that.

Although he and Jim once were overheard voicing contempt for women - 'They're shit' - he never had any trouble talking to a woman. One afternoon a woman brought what we assumed was her boyfriend into the Ward, asked for a nurse, and the man was beckoned into the Office for a talk, an interview. The assumption was she was helping/trying to get him admitted as a Voluntary Patient. From memory a Duty Doctor was called.

She was asked to stay outside the Ward Office, during the interview, and sat on a vacant bed near to it. Rab's bed was next to

the bed she was on, and he was sitting on his bedside chair. She was attractive, thirties, looked like a teacher or social worker who smoked dope at weekends, and had interesting lingerie.

And Rab starts chatting to her, casually. She smiles. I couldn't hear what was being said, but apart from once in the Canteen, I'd never seen him talk that way and for that length of time to anyone, bloke or woman. He didn't laugh, but he had that rather nice quiet smile of his.

Her boyfriend (or husband?) came out of the office about a quarter of an hour after, his face as impassive as when he went in. And saying goodbye to Rab she walked out of the Ward, holding the hand of the man, as the doors closed behind them. We heard on the grapevine later that he wasn't going to be admitted, as it wasn't an 'Emergency' and that he'd have to go through his GP anyway, to get in. And I knew from my own previous experience, 'getting in', 'getting a bed', if you were a Voluntary, depended as much on whether any were available or whether you lived in the catchment area, and whether your GP or Psychiatrist was requesting it.

The time in the Canteen that Rab talked with someone for more than a few minutes was with a thinnish woman from Ward 2. She looked around 45 but possibly was younger. You sensed she'd been attractive in her time, but she somehow looked permanently windswept - disheveled, and her skin was lined, eyes slightly tense, and would sometimes wear fawn coloured wellie boots - that's what they looked like. One of the guys at our table commented on them too. This was Janis.

She never really got her dress co-ordination right. She looked as if she'd bought her wildly non-matching clothes at a jumble sale, but that she was striving to be elegant, stylish... She once came on one

of the outings to the swimming pool. She and Rab became sort of pally, lingering in the Canteen corridor after the mid-day meal, smoking.

Inside Rab, though, things were building up, leading to him doing a runner. Looking back, you could see the steps.

One day he unexpectedly, out of the blue, put his fist through a window. A week later he put his fist through the glass-door of the bookcase in the Day Room... and then days later through another window. Experienced inmates were surprised he wasn't moved to the Locked Ward. A few sympathetic words to him from several of us didn't penetrate his locked-in monotone expression. Next, a day or two later, those of us nearest the Medicine trolley, who'd already had our medication noticed that when it came to Rab's turn, he slowly spat it out. He was given a replacement, but he shook his head, slowly. We couldn't hear what was said by the Nurse, nor read his expression.

Half an hour later I'm at the table with the Formica top, ironing a t-shirt. The useless female Student Nurse, with the peculiar feature of having double bags under her eyes, had been trying to engage me in conversation as I ironed, and had fielded questions from Stewart and Ian about where Rab was. Somehow they had got the word that he'd done a runner. 'Has Rab run away, Nurse?' asks Stewart. 'Not at all', she lyingly replies. And walks out of the Ward.

Next thing, the young male student Nurse (who had a face that looked as if someone had started to erase it with a rubber and who must have got turned down for being in the Prison Service and thought being a Student Nurse was second best) - came through the Ward doors, flushed and out of breath. One shirt sleeve is ripped away from his shoulder, and his tie is throttled tight around his

dis-shevelled shirt collar. We all notice this - we being those of us up at that end of the Ward, Stewart, Michael, Teddy, myself ... Stewart with a smirk.

As we are exchanging looks, the Ward Doors burst open again, and about five nurses bundle Tam into the Ward. They have him in a headlock, head forward, arms gripped behind his back, his feet dragging the ground, as he is pulled down the Ward to his bed.

‘Clear the Ward! Clear the Ward!’ one of the Nurses shouts at us. The brilliant Charge Nurse Dougal is suddenly there, quietly ushering us into the Day Room, with a calm, sympathetic smile.

As we’re moving into the Day Room we can see the Nurses have got Tam onto his bed and are quickly pulling the curtains around it. Tam’s screaming. It effects us all. Dougal is with us in the Day Room, whilst two male student nurses stand blocking the Day Room exit back into the Ward.

Stewart’s going ‘Fucking Bastards! Fucking bastards!’. A Duty Doctor is hurrying down the Ward towards the curtained bed with a hyperaemic needle at the ready.

We’re quickly ushered into the Day Room, but we had time to see him being held down on his bed - four nurses now - and the curtains round his bed being drawn. Rab’s screaming ‘Save me! God save me!’

It effected us all. Stewart is pacing up and down the Day Room. ‘Poor wee guy. That’s fucking terrible.’ Rab wasn’t that wee. The brilliant Charge Nurse who was into Harry Connick Jnr (and recommended Jim put in for the Christmas job as Santa Claus at

Lewis's) puts a soothing arm around Stewart's neck. Stewart's still breathing heavily, but doesn't pull away.

Rab's still screaming. 'God help me! God help me!' Everyone in the Day Room is effected, in different ways. Sam, the African guy, who was in for a week, was curled up in a chair, head buried in his lap. One of the other guys was rocking backwards and forwards in his chair. Others stood at the Day Room windows looking out on to the grounds hoping it will finish. It does. Out in the Ward it's gone quiet. Dougal still has a soothing arm around Stewart's neck. There's some quiet activity out in the Ward, difficult to make out. It seems it's over.

Dougal quietly says to us 'Thanks for being patient through this embarrassing time for Rab'. Seemed a strange way of putting it. 'Difficult', 'Upsetting', maybe.

A few minutes later we're allowed back into the Ward, those that want to. I'm amongst them. The screens are being pulled back from Tam's bed. Tam is missing. Nicola my Key Worker Nurse, is directing one of the student nurses to put Tam's belonging into a black plastic bag, whilst she checks under his bed. We all assumed he'd been taken to the Locked Ward.

A fortnight later, after I had returned to the Ward from a four day Week-end Pass, there was Tam sitting on a bedside chair on my side of the Ward, further down. His body looked collapsed. 'Hello Tam' 'Hello Peter', he replied quietly. For the rest of my stay he was a broken man. Though that could be a wrong reading. He was maybe on a heavy, continuous sedative like Mellerill, which I had been given in a short-term emergency 6 weeks before, before I was admitted to Stobhill Hospital. There was a curious self-imposed

silence amongst the rest of us about discussing whether something had been 'done' to Tam.

The strange thing was, after his absence, on his return to the Ward, I never remembered seeing him in the Canteen, but surely he must have been? Neither do I remember seeing the wind-swept woman friend he had made.

Alec Alec presented an interesting picture. Looked as if he was in his late 60s, besuited, handkerchief in top pocket, quite fashionable glasses and a wonderful Moses sort of beard, but no posh Kelvinside accent - pure Glaswegian. This had me wondering what his story was. He had a woman come in, seemed the same age as him and I assumed it was his wife, but turned out to be his Auntie. She seemed, in her own way, as 'eccentric' as Alec.

He'd take offence sometimes at any nurse calling him 'Alec' - 'A little more respect, it's Mr So and So.' Other times he didn't object. If you sat unwittingly in a chair in the Day Room that he had vacated and then he returned to the Day Room he'd say 'That's my chair'.

He had the shits for a couple of days when he first came in, much to the amusement of Stewart and Dave, particularly when he shot across the Ward, out of the Day Room, clutching the arse of his pyjama bottoms. He would re-emerge from the toilets with soiled pyjamas. He had no hesitation in telling one of the Staff that he'd shat himself. In the Canteen he had habit of regurgitating his food that meant people, if possible, would avoid his table.

The curious Ward effect of patients changing their hairstyle, or shaving their beard off effected Alec too. He shaved his beard off. It

would have required scissors so presumably he would have done it in the toilet/washroom area with a Nurse standing guard, in case he had other ideas of ways you could use scissors. Beardless he looked older and frailer, and less distinguished.

Johnny I first met Johnny in Ward 24a at Stobhill General Hospital. 24a was the Male Psychiatric Ward. He seemed pretty together there - a dapper wee guy in jeans and white shirt. Stylish hair, two-tone dyed, silver-blond streaks. By his bed toiletries, a small sound system and some Bibles (from travelling Bible salesmen in polyester suits and mid-American accents.)

He'd watch a lot of TV, and laugh a lot at a Rikki Fulton tape; he'd watch *Terminator* on tape, and a Charles Bronson movie, and he knew the end. He was knowledgeable about films, could remember scenes I'd forgotten about, such as the end of *The Ladykillers*.

His Mum came in once, one of those watery eyed wee, wee shrivelled women of Irish descent - she was one of those women Socialists would single out as a typical example of what Capitalism does to the working classes. Someone broken, respectful to those 'better than her', such as Doctors. She must have been in her 40s when she had him. She brought him a cream sponge in Stobhill. He called her Ma, and was considerate to her. That was Johnny in Stobhill. The only hint of another Johnny was if a cop got killed in a movie he'd say 'Good, nice one'.

Saw Johnny next when he came into the Ward, unexpectedly, with the excellent, good looking Nurse Matt from Ward 24a at Stobhill. I was pleased to see Johnny and caught him before the two of them went into the Ward Office. - 'How you going Johnny?' Shook his hand. But this was a different Johnny. His face was kind

of chalk white, the eyes tighter, harder, and there were some red blotches on his face. The dyed hair streaks had grown out. Less distinct. The nurse Matt recognised me and said he was surprised to see me here, then the two of them went into the Office.

About five - ten minutes later they came out of the Office. I caught up with them as they walked down to the Pool Room. Again Matt said to me 'Surprised to see you here, Peter. What happened? Briefly told him I couldn't handle the 'outside'. Stewart was in the Pool Room and knew Johnny. 'What's up?' - 'Stobhill couldn't handle me.' After a bit of blether Matt turned to go. Johnny said, suddenly distressed 'Will you come and visit me, Matt?' Matt said he didn't think he'd be able to manage it. A Nurse was coming down to the Pool Room

The Nurse takes Johnny to the 48 hour Observation Bed across from the Office. Johnny's putting his bits and pieces in his bedside cabinet, obviously knows the drill, and some others in the Ward acknowledge him. Johnny knew a surprising number of the guys from other places, including Barlinnie Prison.

He was allowed to lye on his bed, When the Night Shift came on at 7.30 pm the 'Fat Controller' Nurse recognised him. Their dislike for each other was obvious.

In those first 48 hours Johnny sat up on his bed reciting, in a hard-edged voice, poems he'd composed. Retained in his head as he couldn't write them down, he said, when I asked about them a few days later. His poems revolved around the System not breaking his Spirit. He'd burst into singing too - 'The Organisation's a fucking disgrace...' The Nurses would tell him to pipe-down. I commented to him that he was a different man from Stobhill. 'It's just a front, Peter. I've been in Institutions ten years of my life, since I was 16.

What was you said about this place - containment?' I nodded. He was looking out the window. 'Containment.'

Some of the guys who didn't know him complained amongst themselves about his recitations, particularly the first few nights he was in. After the 48 hour observation period he got moved down the Ward to what had been Stewart's bed. Here Johnny got pissed off with Eamonn, as Eamonn started to deteriorate and bang his door at night in the two bedded side room. At Stobhill Johnny also got pissed off with English Tony who used to start foraging about at 2 in the morning. Here in Woodilee he'd go down to Eamonn's door and tell him to shut it - 'You fucking half-wit'.

Johnny was generous with any cakes or biscuits brought in for him; offering me a sponge cake in Stobhill, biscuits in Woodilee. He was also conscientious about re-paying any money he'd borrowed - 'Did I give you back that money I borrowed, Peter?'

He had an eye for ladies. At Stobhill he'd chatted up a skinny black-haired 18 year old Student Nurse. At Woodilee he was trying to muscle in on Big Michael's Woman No.2, sitting at the same Canteen table as Michael and her. If a favourite female Weather Presenter came on the telly he'd say 'Hello, darling'.

Seemingly, after I was discharged from Stobhill he got discharged too, in between being re-admitted back in to Stobhill and then transferred again to Woodilee. In the short time he was out he had a freak out at his Housing Association flat in the Maryhill Road. Something about chucking furniture and stuff, TV, etc, out the window. As a result he was worrying he was going to lose his flat. It had a steel front door.

Coming up to Christmas time he asked if I had a spare pair of shoes and if so what size. In Woodilee all he had was his slippers. We had different size feet but he managed to borrow some shoes from one of the other guys. He was determined, he said, to get out for Christmas and the New Year, because he didn't want to spend it in an 'Institution'. He did get out for Christmas but came back in early, 'of his own volition'.

I was discharged from Woodilee January 1991. Early February I'd heard from someone I bumped into in the Maryhill Road that Johnny had been discharged in January, soon after me. In mid February I went back to look up a couple of guys still in the Ward and they told me Johnny had been re-admitted. And then that he'd been sent to Stobhill, again.

Danny Danny was Scottish/African. Had a hair style like Tracey Chapman. He looked African, had an English accent, father lived in Tanzania. Early to mid twenties. Not at all shy. Did brilliant Humphrey Bogart impersonations. Got one of the nurse students guitars and played it, played it well - from classic Spanish to blues to *Dear Prudence*. Had had a band or played in a band around Glasgow.

His mother lived in the Glasgow West End, and had a sister living in London. He said he had 'problems' since he was 16. He felt the drugs he'd been given over the years fucked him up more than did him good. No indication what his illness was. He was 'Informal'. Had come back in, for Observation, but discharged himself the day after Tam tried to do a runner and was held down by four nurses whilst a Doc jagged him with a mega sedative. 'This is no place for me' he told Tommy. He also told Johnny he could get some *ganja*. 'Fancy a toke?' 'I'm easy man' says Johnny, in a way as if he didn't want to say 'No' for fear of not seeming 'cool'.

Grey haired Junkie Forgot his name. Prematurely grey hair, longish, looked startling. Talked gibberish most of the time, pretty fucked up. I assumed from years of dope, etc. He'd start talking to me about Bush, the Gulf War, but it was all gobble-gook. A lot of the time he listened to the latest Paul Simon tape, in the Pool Table room, rocking backwards and forwards to the beat.

He had a girlfriend who came in everyday. Long hair, druggy too, broad Glaswegian. Staff wouldn't let them go in a side room - Alan's room. It was a privilege seemingly, and he had to be kept under Observation. One afternoon there was a run-in between him and his girlfriend against the nurses Pat and Nichola, who said they were going to ring the Police if she didn't go. 'Goodbye hen, I love you hen', he's saying, as she moves for the exit doors.

When I got back after a week-end Pass he wasn't in the Ward; word was that he'd been moved to the Locked Ward as it was reckoned his girlfriend was bringing in hashish. I think he'd done time, house-breaking. Early thirties. Reckoned he could intervene on behalf of Margret, Steve's No.1, who had had a break-in at her Maryhill flat. Reckoned he could put the word out to find out who'd done it and get the stuff back. Possibly bullshit.

Brief patient stays There were brief stays from one or two other folk. So brief I can't put a name to them. One was a good looking Pakistani guy. He got a visit from a good looking young Pakistani woman. His wife? His sister? He kept himself to himself. He was in just two days, in the Observation Bed, and then he was gone.

9 The Women

In the eight weeks I was in the Male Acute Admission Ward there seemed to be a higher percentage of older women, relative to younger women, in the Female Acute Admission Ward. For reasons that I never got round to asking about, women nursing staff in their Ward also wore uniform.

Women patients would help each other along the corridor to the Canteen. They'd hold each others arm, or a trio holding the one in the middle. Sometime the female nurses would assist too. I never remember seeing nurses at all from our Ward on our side of the corridor to the canteen.

With some of these older women you wondered why they were in a psychiatric hospital at all. And why in an Acute Admission Ward. It may have been a hang-over from the days when patients were in Mental Hospitals because they had dementia. But why an Acute Admission Ward?

There was Janis with her handbag and her slight scowl. She never went anywhere without either of them. Sometimes she had a rucksack. It was either that or the handbag. Both were full of stuff, either as a comforter or maybe that she didn't trust her fellow patients.

Then there was the woman who went to the front of the women waiting queue for the Canteen. This got comments but there was no disruption. She wasn't in the hospital very long. And there was the coughing lady who was sitting at the table I sat down to on my first breakfast morning. She wasn't coughing when I sat down. Next to

her bowl of porridge were a pack of cigarettes, though smoking wasn't allowed in the Canteen.

One woman always wore a shroud/dress/nightie. It was not possible to work out exactly what it was. Or had been. She had a round body and deep rings under her eyes and straight greasy hair. It was her looking through our Ward door that Johnny asked if he could help her and she replied 'You couldn't help me in a thousand years, son'.

Occasionally, over the eight weeks I was in, a white haired lady would come into our Ward followed by a uniformed woman nurse. The white haired lady always seemed confused. The other time a woman patient came into our Ward was during the Big Stevie sex saga. There was little of the banter or flirtation you might occasionally expect in a mixed canteen. We were too pre-occupied with our illness, and with eating.

All the women - given our Catchment Area - were working class. There was one exception. A big built woman who struck me as having been a Head Mistress once. She used to interfere sometimes in the Canteen. 'Come and sit down Mavis'. 'I'll tell you a secret, but not now. Later, I'll tell you later'. Sometimes she had to be supervised by the Nurses.

There was a Chinese woman, grey haired, good looking and there was an Indian woman in a sari who ate the UK food uncomplainingly. The Chinese woman would sometimes frown at the food on her plate and push it around, dissecting what it was with her fork. When I went onto a vego diet I'd get vego curry and wondered if I was being given her food by mistake, but never did anything or say anything. No one talked to her. Whereas the Chinese woman talked to others. As Ziggy knew her, and chatted to

her, she'd either been in before or was a long stay patient, but if the latter, why was she in an Acute Admission Ward?

There was one young girl - really almost a girl, but she must have been at least 18 - who was strikingly good looking, as long as she didn't put make-up on. She had dark curly hair and a round face. It was her eyes and a passive trusting innocence about her that I think was the result of heavy sedation. Sometimes she put talc and make-up on, and her beauty disappeared, partly as she put it on so thickly, so badly. Once on the corridor Pay Phone to Jean I saw her parents with her, holding a very young baby - hers.

She'd hardly talk in the Canteen, choosing a table with just one person, male or female, if possible. Then change her mind and look for another table. And then get up again and walk out, her expression staying the same all the way though.

10 The Consultants & The Nurses

The Consultants There were three regular Consultants who visited the Ward. Dr Murray was the most flamboyant, with a multi coloured hand knotted scarf wrapped around his neck. It almost reached the ground. I think he was the senior Consultant. Then there was Dr Riddle - Jimmy Riddle to the patients. He was medium height, had a thinning top and a cropped beard - one of those beards you'd hardly notice. Highly polished shoes, three piece suit - one of those suits that never looked worn. Did he have a wardrobe of identical suits? That he bought at the same time? His manner was coldly efficient. He seemed as if he was always trying to get away if cornered by one of his patients: one eye straining

towards the freedom of the Ward exit doors. Probably my age but looked older.

Lastly, Dr. Kemp. Around mid forties. A slightly stout, dark haired woman. Straight haired, cut just before it reached her shoulder. She wore a dark grey suit, un-buttoned top, blouse and semi high-heeled shoes. She seemed to have a good bosom, and the semi high-heels plus something about her suggested the potential for reckless sexuality, if fired up by the right situation.

She and Riddle more or less got a thumbs down from the patients, the common complaint that they didn't listen to you. Murray was well quoted simply for noticing that you were there. Not just to be seen and processed.

The Nurses As most of the nurses were not part of, or at least not an essential part of getting better I found when I came to jot down these notes I couldn't remember some of their names.

Pat Charge Nurse, in his own way about the most 'regular' of the nursing staff. Slightly dishevelled appearance, potato nosed, good at bringing Murray the Consultant down to earth, without Murray realising it. Thoughtful, undemonstrative, but good sense of humour. I felt he was carrying a lot on his shoulders, either put there by himself or the circumstances of the job. Celtic supporter. On a Saturday afternoon, if he was on, the Ward cassette-radio would be plugged in just outside the open door of the Nurses office.

He usually wore a tie, loosened, top button undone. He looked like a detective, a friendly detective in a US TV police series, or a sub-editor (of the old school) in a 1940's newspaper office.

Nicola As she was on holiday I didn't meet Nicola for a while. She was my 'Key Worker'. I liked her a lot. She was very attractive. More later.

Joe Student nurse, short, swarthy, balding, hair cut almost crew cut, wore shiny waistcoat, nice eyes and eyelashes. In the worst stages of my fantasies I felt I could trust him. Softly spoken, ready smile.

Eric Very young looking, shortish fair-haired student nurse. Trousers always seemed too tight and short. Had a nice, almost shy smile. Often sucking sweeties from a pack he'd offer you - mini wine gums, those kind of sweeties. Ended up playing pool quite a bit with him. At first I think he wasn't sure how to approach me, or sensibly decided to leave me alone. Nice smile. When I was put on Prozac, he said he'd look them up for me. They were a brand new anti-depressant, part of a group of new anti-depressants called SSRIs. Apparently you couldn't overdose on them.

Jack Mature student. Rarely smiled, but showed me a few snooker moves. Felt there was a bit of tension, perhaps insecurity in the guy, but he seemed to like me. He first started to talk with me because I lived in Maryhill. I resented that these new students or nurses would come on the Ward and read the patients case history. I know they had to but you felt it had the added bonus of tittle-tattle, like reading the *News of the World*. The ex-insurance salesman for instance saying to me 'I see you do a bit of writing'.

Iolande Student nurse. Short, over weight, awkward body, sort of dark blonde hair, slightly crimson face, dark eyes, dark eyebrows, not very pleasant smile. A Christian but didn't shout it from the rooftops. I overheard her telling Andy, when he asked what she did at weekends, that she went to church in St Georges Cross, with her

auntie. She was brilliant with Andy and Eddie. There was something about her that got them to talk - open up - that they wouldn't with anyone else, nurse or patient. She never approached me, never spoke to me.

Mary Student from Dumbarton. Dark haired, no dress sense, double bags under her young eyes, for me a real cow, yet horses for courses, she seemed to get on with some others, and they with her, though no names come to mind. She was like an admonishing Sunday school teacher, at 22 too. She would sit down on your or the adjacent bed and engage you in conversation, which you responded curtly. Her and a male student who started the same time were extra-ordinarily similar in their manner, except he at least was a bit more insecure. She'd sit next to Chris in the Day Room. 'Are you not talking to me, Chris?' 'Fuck off' says Chris. Chris rarely told a staff to fuck off. 'I'm not going to Chris. I'm going to stay here.' Either she was a pain in the arse or had read something along the lines that those with schizophrenia will their illness on and as a nurse you shouldn't go along with that. She really was a pain. You could only hope that experience in the wards would eventually give her some understanding and compassion, but I doubt it.

Students could be a real pain You'd get a new batch now and then, on a Monday. Luckily some were shy and wouldn't try and ingratiate themselves on you. But others would step forward and for the umpteenth time ask where you come from, blah, blah, blah. I only wished I had the ability then to tell them I don't feel like speaking, except they'd come back with 'Why don't you feel like talking?' This would be for notes for the daily write up of patients. Most of the male students were regular Glasgow near-youth. They all dressed the same - black or cream chinos, baggy white shirts, or blue drill, paisley pattern ties, Doc Martin type shoes and the hair cut stylishly. Most of them.

Harry Connick Jnr Qualified senior nurse. Unfortunately I don't remember his real name. Unfortunate, as he was one of the best when it came to understanding ... when it came to compassion ... and a sense of humour. Dapper dresser, also the billowing white shirt like a lot of the male nurses, but with - a nice touch - metal elasticated thingies on his upper arms. His haircut was tufty style. At a guess he was in his mid thirties. There was a natural sense of authority about him. He took over the Ward cassette radio late one day shift and played his Harry Connick tape, unrequested. After a few numbers some of the patients grew restless at this new Sinatra serenading them. He was good with Big Al, with Big Brian and with Chris. He took Chris out fishing one Saturday.

Davie Qualified nurse, short, fair, pleasant. He had a nice smile. For some reason he got picked on by Stevie and Brian. A bit priggish, or you might say 'mindful', for instance he'd say 'Get dressed Peter' when Nicola or Laura were walking down the Ward after the lights had come on first thing in the morning, telling us it was time to get up. What were we supposed to do - particularly as as our screens had been pulled away?

Skinny Charge Nurse Ginger haired guy. Really bright red. Wore metal framed glasses. Cratered face of past and present plooks. When some of us were out at Bishopbriggs Baths he put his towel over his penis. One time I went to the Ward Office, upset, and asked what you had to do to get into the Locked Wards. His reply was 'Thank you for telling us how you feel, Peter.' He was on when I first went in to the Ward, the first week. And he was the guy who told me 'Dr Campbell feels you've responsible enough, so you can go on Pass.'

One time he noticed my Sennheiser 'phones on my bed. 'Snazzy', he says. He had a few chats with me, in place of Nicola when she was off. You felt he didn't like that side of nursing, not comfortable with it at all.

Black clothed chubby student Black creamed hair, fancy leather belt with silver or imitation silver bits in. Fancied himself a bit as a pool player. Smoker, like most of the students and staff, including Nicola. Engaged.

Brendan Night charge nurse, early thirties, ex punkish/new wave, knew how to dress. I admired his style. He looked as if he could be AC/DC. Married apparently. Worked at Yarrow's ship-builders. Commented himself he went from building things of destruction to 'healing'. Quite lax with us patients, but professional when he needed to be.

The Fat Controller Worked nights. Pug faced, hard bellied bloke, a bit of a bastard, probably insecure underneath, but that doesn't forgive him. Very loud. Swore a lot. He liked to be liked by the patients, many of the long stay did. Played pool and sang loudly.

Dev Indian/Pakistani night nurse. Small body, tight trousers and V neck sweater. He and the Fat Controller a double act, one calling the other a black bastard, the other a fat bastard. I couldn't relate to either

Night Nurse Gruff one with moustache who when Johnny said, ref a TV story about a girl seeing again, 'That's made my day' went along with the sentiment. Could be short tempered, and abrupt. Experienced it myself when in the Ward at midnight I told someone to pipe down and he in turn told me to pipe down. Rough

with Graham, but uncomplainingly changed the Commanders wet sheets in the morning before the Day Shift came on. I don't think he was adverse to a bit of physical constraint when it was, and sometimes, not called for. Frog marching Alan into the toilets one time.

Lazy ex-insurance mature student He was on my first escorted walk into Kirkie with other lads. Fattish, bespectabled. Called his former boss's wife a whore, had ideas about writing mysteries, spent most of his time watching telly in the Day Room. Difficult to fathom why he was in mental nursing unless someone told him night work in a non-geriatric ward was a cushy number.

11 The Therapeutic Occupational Therapist

I was anxious the first time I walked to the OT buildings to see Louise, a therapeutic Occupational Therapist. I can't remember who set this up, probably the Consultant Murray. I had to wait ten minutes in the hall of this modern building as she finished some business in her small cramped office. Impressions: Radio Clyde on too loud; a Coca Cola dispensing machine, a grotesquely fat bellied guy with open parka, black t-shirt, dirty black hair and dark rings under his eyes. An older guy wearing a Western cowboy tie and Western boots, quite imposing. An old deformed woman in the knitting area. I'm feeling too hot.

When Louise had finished whatever it was she'd been doing she took me outside and across to another new single storey building

with wards, and tables laid in a dining room, going into a room off it.

Louise is saying I'm looking better than when she saw me in Dr Murray's consultation. I think I told her that I wasn't feeling any better. She said she was surprised she hadn't seen me before, that I hadn't come earlier. I said no-one had told me. I kept my eyes tightly closed. Called myself a 'shit'. Can't remember why. My fists were clenched, as I respond to something she asked me. 'Body language and I can't even look at you' I said. She said not to bother about that.... She said her approach was 'non-logical'. I didn't have a clue what that was, and I was beyond caring, but didn't say. I kept my eyes closed..

After this first session, when I found that talking about things that were to the point caused me breathing/temperature problems Louise gave me a task: make a list, a time-table of things I saw as important in my life.

Weekly meetings with Louise were divided between her small office, with the phone often going, and the quiet retreat of this room off a Canteen. Once she interrupted a Shop Stewards meeting, and said the room was already booked. They left.

At the next meeting I turned up on time but she said she was typing and had to finish it. Could I come back in half an hour, if that was alright? I said 'Sure' but was pissed off and also pissed off that I wasn't able to tell her. I rationalised that the work load she was under, that it wasn't her 'fault'. I left the OT building and sat on an outside bench, feeling very nauseous, faint, not connecting my state with the fact that I didn't say what I really thought. We were able to talk about this either at the meeting or the next one. She cottoned on that assertiveness was a problem I had in some close

relationships. She also pointed out that I became more animated when I was talking about Robin and Martin, and thought this was significant

At another session she said if you're more sensitive, more intelligent, you suffer more. I disagreed. Later she said she was pleased I pulled her up. She was testing me.

There was a period when Louise was going into Stobhill, for an operation. It turned out I didn't see her for several weeks. And then one day during the lunchtime rest-time here she is, in the Ward, walking towards my bed. Her hair is cut short. She seems self-conscious about it. A loss of femininity? She'd had it long since her twenties. Her hair had been falling out, a hormone problem apparently. She didn't volunteer it, and I didn't ask, of course, but I wondered if she had had a hysterectomy.

She said she could see a difference in me, coming up to 'baseline' she called it. Prior to her going off for a fortnight she'd ask me to keep a note of those things that caused me anxiety. I didn't. I was too pre-occupied with my 'illness'. Although I felt a little guilty that I didn't I felt I could tell her why, if it came to it. But she forgot anyway, when she came back.

The sessions with Louise were a lifeline. She was able to help me focus on those areas that were causing me problems. I talked about Robin and Martin and Martha a lot. The boys with love, Martha with ... with ... frustration ... with her over protectiveness over them, and her 'I'm right, you're wrong' all the time. She hadn't been like that when we met.

13 Night Time & Bits and Pieces

Night time For weeks I had difficulty sleeping. It was a mixture of how I was mentally, and the overnight heat from the Ward radiators. They were full on. So I'd try and re-arrange the cigarette stained duvet. The duvet seemed to lye too heavily on your body and you'd roll down to the bottom of the bed. You seemed to spend a lot of the night pulling it up or pulling it down. Tom next to me used to sleep head to toe, the 'wrong' way round, as he also found the radiator too hot. There was no control on the individual radiators to adjust their heat. I felt too vulnerable to have my head that end of the bed, particularly with the night walkers.

It was interesting that night staff sometimes had students with them. I didn't expect that. The nurses would pull chairs together at the top end of the Ward, near the entrance to the bogs. If you were on an overnight Pass they'd take your duvet. A Charge Nurse like Brendan would sit at a table outside the office, with a discreet light, reading a paper. When Fat Bastard was on he seemed to spend his time ringing nurses in other wards, loudly talking about holiday pay, or other chat, often gossip with woman nurse night staff.

Bits and Pieces

Morning Hum as fluorescent lighting are about to go on; reluctant bodies; dirty sheets trolley; nurses helping or asking patients to strip and make their beds; the usual morning palaver with getting Graham out of his bed

The Pool Room A pool table, nice and smooth, no tears in the green felt; empty fish tank; a few Dentist Waiting Room type books; a broken office typewriter; a half functioning radiogram,

scratched 45's, and Jim Reeves LPs. A few plants, grossly neglected, mostly spider plants.

Day Room The Day Room almost ran the length of the Ward. Windows all the way along on the Ward side and along the external side. The external side had a locked door that was unlocked in the evening by a nurse when the local Mr Whippy type van turned up. It did a brief trade in ice cream, ciggies and scoosh before it drove off to another Ward, the Locked Wards excepted.

The Day Room had metal framed comfy chairs, just some with half the frames - the comfy bit - missing. The Day Room was popular for kipping during the day; for taking a visitor into. Not many watched the TV. **There were** glass fronted bookcases of unread books - thrillers, and 1940s hardbacks. On a couple of shelves were board games: dominoes, *Trivial Pursuit* but no pack of playing cards. A box of draughts, but incomplete. The TV was 24 hour, never off, volume turned down at night. Popular things were *Fifteen to One*, late night films, football, some soaps. Nurses keenly watched *Casualty*.

14 Jean the Psycho-analyst meets Campbell the Psychiatrist

It had be arranged that Jean would meet and discuss me with Campbell. This was Campbell's idea. I didn't know why. I wasn't bothered one way or another. Due to the usual Ward balls-up, close to the Saturday of this meeting Campbell knows nothing about it.

I'm in the Day Room when a student nurse comes in, guiding Jean to me. I suggest to Jean we go and sit by my bed in the Ward. It's quieter there, no TV. The student nurse brings Jean a tea. Jean and me are holding hands. Jean has hardly started on her tea when we're called into a side room, near the Ward Office. Bizarrely Campbell launches into an irritated questioning of what it is Jean hopes to achieve from the meeting. She tries to tell him that it was him who suggested it, who arranged the meeting. He counter-attacks with saying he remembers very well the telephone conversation he had had with her. Pat, the Senior Nurse, is also present in the room. Campbell continues haranguing. Jean and I are openly looking at each other, shaking our heads. Pat holds his fire and when Campbell's finished he quietly and effectively recalls that it was Campbell's idea. I angrily say this is another example of a hospital balls-up.

I'm very pissed off with Campbell, that I'm not listening properly as he and Jean talk. I sit sullenly. Campbell has calmed down and seems to be trying to calm down Jean. He talks about maybe Kerr (the Psychiatrist I'd seen in Maryhill Health Centre) had me admitted to see if I was psychotic prior to group therapy. Told me that the anti-depressant I'd been on was a dual-modal: anti-depressant with an anti-psychotic. What dual modal? Talked of giving me half hour chats every day, with my Key Worker. I had no idea what a Key Worker was. Pat tells Campbell that my 'Key Worker', Nicola, is on holiday leave.

15 The Key Worker

It was when Louise was off that Campbell suggested to me I should talk to a nominated member of Ward staff. Someone called

Nicola. She was my 'key worker', whatever that meant. As I said, Pat, one of the good senior Ward nurses, told him she was on holiday.

When she was back the first meeting - in one of the side rooms near the Ward double doors - was a wash-out. I felt she wasn't sympathetic to how I was. We had a curious meandering 25 minutes, concluding with her saying, in a slightly affected embarrassed type voice 'Thank-you for talking to me'. But despite me moaning on the Pay Phone to Jean about her, it got better and I got to appreciate her and could be pretty free with her, talking about the tenderness of the guys in the Ward, etc. There was also a kind of sexual ambiguity - maybe I was imagining it, but here she was telling me about the shower she was having that morning when the electricity meter ran out. She was very pretty and had a fabulous body, slim bust, dark hair, smelt of apricots. Wore a white blouse with a high collar and a tight fitting three-quarter length navy blue skirt, and sensible shoes.

She drafted a letter to Martha for me, can't remember why. She was a little hesitant, conscious about her spelling. I wondered if one or two of the staff regarded me warily because I seemed 'educated'. It was simply that as a teen-ager I was already writing short stories, and TV scripts. This was the early 1960s when there were one-off TV plays on the BBC, and on the 'commercial' channels. Writers like Alun Owen, who wrote the film script for the Beatles *Hard Day's Night*. And whilst I typed rejected TV plays I paid the bills, and then the family bills, earning a living working on building sites, labouring for Glasgow Parks Department, working for the Forestry on Arran and finally working as a self-employed gardener on the island. Meanwhile I had a couple of radio dramas broadcast, and an oral history of the Second World War published, *You, You & You: the People out of Step with World War 11*.

Nicola and me got to appreciate each other, to like each other. Coming up to Christmas she asked what I'd bought Jean. Soaps was the answer, the easiest thing to find in Lenzie. And she in turn told me of having been in the Christmas crush in the Body Shop, in Sauchiehall Street. I somehow had a hospital number - the Ward external number and I rang her after I left Woodilee, thanking her for all she'd done. 'Oh, that's really nice' she said, 'We don't often get people thanking us'.

16 Going out on Pass

Everyone I talked to seemed to share the same emotional experience of going out on Pass - trepidation at first, the first hours, part of you very much wanting to return to the familiarity - safety of the ward - and then on the last day, a reluctance to return. Tommy Chisholm talked of his unease when he had a Pass and him standing on the platform at Lenzie, waiting for the stopping train to Glasgow, and an Express rushing through. Next time he stood in the Waiting Room but the rushing past train caused the door to rattle. 'Too much man.' The next time, he went up to Town by bus.

It was the same for me, standing on the platform for Glasgow. I also felt a terrible anxiety, and had a feeling the small building was getting smaller, and smaller, closing in on me.

When I first went to my flat - which was by bus - I wanted - how I wanted - to return to the Ward as soon as possible. Thinking about the importance of timing it so I got to the hospital in time for the evening meal at 5 o' clock. In October, just prior to being admitted

to Woodilee I'd received a Summary Warrant for Poll Tax Payment, and my Investment Savings Account Book had been lost in the Post. It was being followed up. I wanted to see if there was any Post about either of them.

As I say, the first time I went up to Town it was by bus, a local single decker stopping bus into Buchanan Street Bus station. I'd walked to the Hospital Lodge Gate before, but this was the first time I'd walked beyond it, without an escort or without a couple of escorts and some of the lads.

The bus journey was not pleasant. I was in a morbid self-hating world, could hardly relate to the other 'ordinary' passengers, who mostly seemed elderly women apart from a couple tech school type girl students. As we travel along a women passenger sitting in front of me has a transistor radio on. It's not too loud. She turns to her friend and matter-of-factly tells her that a 'News Flash' says that the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, has announced she's resigning. Bus passenger murmur it on to fellow bus passenger. It's Thursday, November 22. I've been three weeks in Woodilee.

The second time up to Glasgow I got the train into Queen Street. I had a Pass for two days.

It was a strange thing to voluntarily return after those two days. Approaching the Ward reinforced glass panelled doors I see Chris walking up and down, talking to his Voices.

It was after 8 pm so I had to tap the glass door to get one of the Staff to unlock it and let me in. The Nurse says 'I thought you were supposed to be out until 10 pm? How'd it go?' I'd been tipped off by one of the lads always to say it was fine, even if you'd shat yourself. That way you keep your options open for another Pass. I marvelled

at Tommy Chisholm telling me he had a beer at so and so bar, did this, did that when he was on a Pass in Glasgow. All that seemed beyond my ability.

Going into Glasgow the first time gave me an idea of how far it was from the hospital to the station. It seemed very long and all uphill. Daunting. The time I went in by bus I returned by bus, and was deposited in the bleak mid-winter muddy landscape. No one else got off the bus. On one of these visits to my flat, on the way back walking down the hill from Lenzie I surprised myself to find I was fantasising about throwing myself into the path of an on-coming car. They seemed to be travelling so fast.

I can't remember much about the days away from the Ward, but I'd wake up in my flat with this fear and terrible depression. Even though I had been in Woodilee five weeks there seemed to be no progress at all to how I felt.

But I was making progress, even if I didn't realise it. I remember trips back to Lenzie from Queen Street Station in banger diesels going to Stirling. I remember a loud mouthed but not unattractive girl student talking to two pals about her exams and the McDonald's job she was going to do in the Christmas holidays. There were always a lot of schoolchildren getting off at Lenzie, fanning out from the station. As I made my way down the hill I had a spring in my step, particularly when I realised that unexpectedly I was getting better. One sign I was getting better, besides asking Jean on the Ward 1 & 2 Pay Phone if I could borrow her cassette radio was me buying fruit and carrots in a manky Lenzie greengrocer's.

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17 The Edinburgh Shrink

Prior to being admitted to Woodilee Hospital Jean had been keen for me to have psycho-analytical therapy. She was a convert to it. She had a degree in Psychology and worked, when she was well, as a NHS Clinical Psychologist. She was drawn to psycho-analytical therapy as she believed it took the practitioner - and the patient - deeper into the patients problem. The National Health Service didn't take that view. In Scotland the psycho-analytical believers called themselves The Scottish Institute of Human Relations. It had no status within the NHS, or any other Government department. Jean had spent a lot of money, and a lot of time in therapy, to be part of the Scottish Institute of Human Relations, to be one of their therapists.

Years before I'd read a biography of Sigmund Freud, the man who had developed the theory of psycho-analytical theory and practice. The author was Ernest Jones, a believer in Freud's ideas and practice. I wasn't convinced. Jean had already made enquiries about me having therapy with a trainee analyst, at reduced rates. I had difficulty saying to Jean that I wasn't interested. She'd arranged for me to ring the Glasgow Office of the Scottish Institute, who gave me the Edinburgh number of a 'practitioner' called Willie McIntyre. I was given a date to see him, but this was before I was admitted to Woodilee. When I was admitted to Woodilee Jean rang the Institute and cancelled the appointment. Apparently McIntyre was suspicious that I hadn't canceled myself. A new appointment was made, even though I was in hospital. Pathetically and predictably at no time did I say 'I'm not interested'. But Jean senses I'm look-warm and confronts me. Meanwhile there's a small queue at the Pay Phone behind me, in the corridor. I say 'OK, I'll go.' McIntyre is to assess my suitability as a possible patient for a student therapist.

I was to find out that both the Doctor in the Maryhill Health Centre and the Consultant in Woodilee knew I was going to see McIntyre. I assume Jean had told them and I also assume they knew of, or were connected in some way to the Scottish Institute of Human Relations.

Richard, a friend of Jean's, drives me into Edinburgh. I'm silent. I thought it would be a quick cut across country into Edinburgh, but we're driving through congested and mud splashed mean wintery wee towns, and mean countryside with tortured plastic bags captured by hawthorn hedging, then onto a motorway, road works, etc, etc until eventually we reach Edinburgh. Following Jean's written instructions Richard drops me off at the *Scottish Institute of*

Human Relations. I told him I'd be finished in an hour, that's what I'd been told. It was an old large building which had seen better days.

I press its door-bell and am ushered into a rather large, rather run-down reception area. It could be used as a set for a Hammer Horror film. An elderly thinnish man, wearing school teachers glasses appears and on the same floor indicates we go into a wee, low ceilinged room that has a small window, with bars to it. A former maid's room?

The thinnish man is wearing a kind of Tweed suit and has an educated Edinburgh accent. It's like being in a time warp - the 1930s, not 1990. He sits opposite me, just to one side. It's quite intimate in this small room. His expression is as if he's thinking hard between my answer to each of his questions. And he's constantly re-orientating his line of questioning. Very soon I find it hard going. We seem to be exploring events at cross purposes. He keeps pulling me up - "That's not what I asked you" always in a dry 'professional' manner.

When I tell him I had self-destructive fantasies, and he asks for an example, and I tell him about the knives sticking out of my eyes he says it isn't self-destructive, they're not stuck into my eyes.... I'm getting angry, frustrated, and feel like telling him to go fuck himself, but more and more I'm feeling like a squashed wet limp rag.

It seems that every time I respond in a way that he has problems with he pauses lengthily between each response, notebook and pen resting on his lap. Typical exchange: "Do you feel you're on a pedestal?" Me: "What's a pedestal?" Him: "You don't need me to tell you what a pedestal is". Eventually he says "I'm experiencing a lot of difficulty. You seem to answer my questions with a question of

your own. Are you also feeling this frustration?” “Yes”. “Why do you think this is?” “I’ve no idea”. Another long long pause from him, then “As you know I’m assessing your suitability to be a patient’ ... blah, blah, blah. Goes on about my lack of money. “I don’t feel we can help you”. Pathetically I ask “Can I go now?” He wishes me all the best.

Richard, the driver, sits in the hall. We’ve overshot our time by at least half an hour. He doesn’t say anything, apart from asking if it’s OK if he smokes. We drive back cross country. Richard doesn’t say a thing. I get the feeling he’s really pissed off at giving up almost a day ferrying someone he doesn’t know. His foot was firmly down on the gas.

Cars in front seemed touchable. I didn’t give a monkey’s if we fatally piled into them. I was emotionally anaesthetised. Outside the Ward I did manage to say ‘Thank-you’ when Richard dropped me off. Later, on the Payphone, I told Jean that McIntyre was a sadistic bastard. She then tells me that her heart had sunk when she’d heard McIntyre was going to be my Assessor as she had heard similar reports about him by someone who was supervised by him.

(In the 1990s at least one Practitioner connected with the Scottish Institute of Human Relations slept with his patient. Though this was known by others in the Scottish Institute of Human Relations, he was not expelled. The Scottish Institute of Human Relations closed of its own volition in 2012.)

18 My Visitors

Anne Anne came into the Ward on a Sunday afternoon. Tea from the trolley was just being served. I immediately noticed how stylishly dressed she was, and she had a very soothing manner about her. I fancied her there and then, even though my libido was scunnered. I liked the details on her gloves. She brought me flowers from Jean and a piece of millionaire shortbread. She introduced herself as a friend and a work colleague of Jean's.

She commented how bare our ward was, compared with the women's ward. No personal touches. She could see through their windows when coming to visit me. I was surprised I wasn't over-sweating, as I usually reacted on the rare occasion I had a visitor.

She came in to visit me the following weekend and took me to her home (she lived in the Lenzie area). I met her husband. He was changing the baby boys nappy. And I met their daughter. To my surprise I managed all this fine.

Jackie Jackie was my previous girlfriend. She lived in Glasgow, worked with children with developmental problems and was a single parent bringing up two lovely pre-teen girls. It was her who asked me if Minutes were taken when Campbell first met me, used me, as a specimen for the benefit of assorted 'professionals'. Imagine James Robertson Justice as the Consultant in the film *Doctor in the House*, holding forth at the patients' bed, surrounded by trainee Doctors, and you get the idea.

I was pleased she visited me, even though I had trouble looking directly at her. I kept my eyes closed a lot of the time.

My best friends lived on Arran. They were the ones who helped me, looked after me when I was 'going under'. Two came up to Glasgow and tried to find a hospital bed for me. They had no luck.

As mentioned, Martha refused to bring Robin and Martin at Visiting Time, that a mental hospital was not a proper place for them. That wasn't the view of other visiting families who brought youngsters - brothers, sisters and neighbours.

19 The Letter from Martha

A fortnight before Christmas, Nicola came into the Canteen at lunch time. I was just finishing my afters. She said Dr. Murray wanted to see me. I followed her back down the corridor to the Ward. She showed me into one of the side rooms. Murray was there and to my surprise, Louise too. Nicola stayed. Dr Murray said he'd had a letter from Martha, about me. She had asked him not to tell me that she had written to him, but, he said he had an open policy with his patients (whatever that was) and as I was his patient and Martha wasn't he felt it OK to tell me. He said he couldn't say what she had written, beyond saying that it was clear to him that she had a neurotic attachment to me, and how would I feel about the idea of asking her and the children to come in so they could help the process of a cleaner, clearer separation.

He said the letter to her would have to be worded carefully, anticipating that she would be defensive. Any agro on my part to Murray melted. When he had talked about the letter and what he thought of it and the suggestion of asking her in I found my body temperature shooting up and a slight breathing difficulty, followed by a feeling of great relief, that here was a professional who seemed to be very insightful about Martha. I'd discounted what Jean and Jackie, my previous girlfriend had said about her because I felt they were inevitably prejudiced, even if correct. But here was Murray saying it ...

I told him I thought he was incredibly insightful, and apologised for being aggressive at a previous meeting. He smiled, then laughed, and pretended to take his coat off and have a fight. When he was talking I looked across at Louise, who was maintaining a professional look. He talked of using a room with a screen, and of me helping Nicola to compose the letter to her. But the letter was never written. Like quite a few of his suggestions he never followed it up. And I wouldn't have agreed to it anyway. I was in a hospital, not a police station.

20 Christmas

The decorations in the Ward went up one weekend when I was out on Pass. They were a novelty for Colin and me and the others who had been out on a Weekend Pass. A couple of the balloons had already sagged. They were strung along, in loops, around the Ward. Colin felt one, and grinned. Big Stewart went in the Ward Office and borrowed some sellotape and we tried to stick them back up. Some of the loops were low enough that you had to avoid your head getting caught up in it all.

There was a small artificial Christmas Tree in the Day Room. It had fairy lights. They were supposed to be on. But a lot of the time they weren't. It was a nurse who'd eventually switch them on at some point. Once or twice I did. Because we were in the Ward most of the time - not outside in the big Christmasy High Streets - there was less reminder about Christmas, apart from the ads on the telly.

There were no decorations in the Canteen.

Some Christmas manifestations took place: nearly everyone got at least one Card. Big Al got one from his brother. Eddie got one from a pal. Only Andy didn't get one. He didn't seem bothered. If Iain did, he didn't put it/them on his bedside cabinet. I got the most along with Micky.

The OT Party Coming up to Christmas brown envelopes were delivered via the Internal Post to a few of us in the Ward, and I heard likewise to the Women's Acute Admission Ward. "Dear Peter, You are invited to the Occupational Therapy Christmas Party". Iain tells me he's got one as well. I didn't know who else got one, or on what basis. Stevie was going (he did daily OT). I asked Andy if he was going. 'Might as well. Something to do', with his sort of sigh, off-hand, but I could tell he was looking forward to it. Andy's response was typical of him, in the way he sat on any enthusiasm.

Scott sneered about the OT party, but that was to cover that he was looking forward to going to it. 'It'll be a load of old ballocks.' He did come. And myself, Scott, Andy and wee swarthy suicidal Brian went.

Andy was soon dancing, with no shyness about asking a young woman to dance. She was an 19 year old OT helper with blond braided hair, cherry coloured lipstick, bottom hugging tracksuit. Andy was a good dancer. Scott watched on, thinking Andy was going to make a prat of himself, but was to admit later on just what a good dance Andy was. He was a different man from the 'poor me' Andy. The way Scott watched on indicated he'd like to have the confidence and style to dance as Andy did.

The dance was in the OT leisure area with the DJ in the open doored kitchen. I don't know whether the decks and the speakers belong to the Hospital, or whether they got a DJ in. The music had too much treble, the speakers couldn't handle the volume, but it didn't take me long to get on the floor and dance. It was so hot and cramped that I'd take a breather, out in the OT hall.

Most of the people sitting around in the leisure area were post-60 and the music was not appropriate, but no-one seemed to mind, apart from one or two who pushed their way out, saying it was too loud. One thin guy in his 70s was dancing with Louise, the OT. All the OT women were dressed up. Louise seemed smaller in her black top. When she was sitting down, talking to an ageing patient, it revealed a white brassiere. Louise was very attractive ... beautiful dark eyes, but because of the lack of a libido I was never aroused, in fact there was a kind of embarrassment for me to catch this glimpse of her white bra. It was interesting that myself and everyone else in the Ward were back to pre-teens. Our desires, mostly, were back to that age: warmth, food, sleep.

Louise danced with me, I can't remember who asked who, I think she asked me. I felt awkward - that she was in civvies - the patient/health worker divide was not clear. I also danced by myself, with women, or on the fringe. Andy was the other guy dancing. The other guys watched, apart from the 70 year old. Most of the women patients had less hang-ups about dancing. Janis was dancing by herself, her bag at her feet.

There were also a number of younger people that I hadn't seen before. I didn't know whether they were staff or patients. A young guy says to me 'I saw you dancing - you're a free spirit.' Out in the

OT Hall a girl stood near me, giving me meaningful looks. Also in the OT Hall were two bowls of alcohol-free fruit punch with bits of orange floating on the top, served up with a soup ladle. This area, with its table of peanuts, sandwiches and cakes was almost as crowded as the dance area.

Colin was there. He hadn't told me that he'd had an invitation. He was chatting up a very attractive piece in a tight, short skirt. I had no idea whether she was patient or staff. Johnny told me afterwards her name was Cecilia and that she was in Craigie House and that he had had a scene with her once. Colin was quietly enjoying himself, this beaming face with a Christmas-cracker hat all pulled down over his head so that his ears stuck out.

Everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves. Big Steven was there with his female entourage but they all disappeared. He was to re-appear later, minus them. I wondered if they'd disappeared for a group snogging.

I left when I'd had enough, Scott walking back with me. Walking across the worn patch of grass between the trees near the old Admin house, with the monkey puzzle tree. Swarthy Brian joined us, telling us his latest scheme to top himself: eating match-heads.

After the noise and the bustle of the party it was a contrast to enter the quiet Ward: Chris walking up and down, Billy lying on his bed with his girlfriend holding his hand, leaning close to him.

We heard that if we'd stayed at the party longer we would each have got a half-decent Christmas present. I think it was Andy who told us. Everyone in over Christmas - by 'in' I mean still

hospitalised, even if out on a Pass, was to get a present to the value of £5 or £10. Because I left just after Christmas I forgot to ask for mine. Most asked for ciggies. I heard that Andy and Eddie got pissed on two cans of lager that they got with their Christmas dinner.

20 Discharged

I'd been on a five Christmas days Pass and returned to the Ward with no build up of depression as I usually got. I felt ready to go. I told the red haired pock marked nurse with glasses. He went into the Ward Office whilst I hung around in the Day Room. He came back and said they were trying to get hold of Murray. Seemingly he was at his Maryhill Clinic. Being a Friday it looked as if I was going to have to wait until after the weekend. But here is Murray coming into the Ward. Goes into the Ward Office. The nurse Pat beckons me into the Ward Office. Murray is happy for me to go, Pat adding they could do with my bed.

Luckily I've got five days supply of anti-depressant and beta blockers. I'm keen to come off the beta-blockers but Murray says to keep on them for a few weeks as it can be a bit dodgy coming out of hospital. He comments how I'm a changed man from when I came in.

I felt a bit of disloyalty to the others that I was leaving. Told Colin, told Johnny. They were pleased for me. I cleared my bedside cabinet, putting the framed school photos of Robin and Martin into my rucksack.

‘That you away?’ asks Andy. I nod with a smile.

I stuck my head in the Ward Office to say goodbye. Pat was there. Nicola wasn't. Paul's in the Day Room surrounded by his fly fishing stuff.

I'm not going to get a taxi, the way I'd come in. I'm walking down the drive, heading out to a world I hadn't been part of for eight weeks. And here's James, a long term patient, in the wee Gatehouse - used as a small Ward - giving me a big smile from the window. I smile back. I was to see him again when I dropped in on the guys in late January.

21 And then ?

When I got in I phoned Martha, telling her I'd been discharged. She queried if the Hospital had done the right thing. I let that go. I asked her to drop Robin and Martin off on the Saturday morning. She had a car. I didn't. Them being with me at weekends had been a regular thing. I always looked so forward to seeing them. A favourite thing we did was to watch the Saturday lunchtime *Saint and Greavsie*. This was going to be the first time in eight weeks. Another thing we used to do regularly was me reading *Tin Tin* with them. We'd sit on the sofa, Robin on one side of me, Martin on the other. And as I read Robin gave me a wee squeeze.

The recovery from my breakdown was solid, no wobbly bits. So solid that in March I took Martin to Paris to look at TGV trains, and we managed a TGV day trip down to Tour. He took photos with his

little camera. He was into trains. Robin wasn't. He stayed at home in Knightswood.

I then went on a computer course with something called *Community Service Volunteers*. I can't remember what Benefit I was on. One of their tutors told me that schizophrenia was the work of the Devil. Thank you very much. CSV were a dodgy outfit. They still exist and now call themselves 'Volunteering Matters'.

In early summer I knocked into Johnny. He was in good form, even though he'd been back in Woodilee ... and out again. As he'd told me in Woodilee, he'd been in and out of psychiatric wards and Woodilee since he was 16. When I told him what I was up to, he looked at me as if I was mad. I'd started a year's placement in Paisley with Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health. 'You're fucking mad, Peter. Come off Invalidity Benefit!?' But I did the right thing doing a year's placement with RAMH. It was Murray, my Consultant in Woodilee, who put me on the track, saying a week before I was discharged that I had some interesting insights into mental illness, and had I thought of working in that field? Besides, I wanted to find out how solid my recovery was. One thing led to another



Talking to Renfrewshire High School pupils about Mental Illness

With a National Lottery Grant I financed talking to pupils about what Mental Illness was. There were 16 High Schools in Renfrewshire. When talking to senior pupils and defining what psychosis was - experiencing something that does not exist - I'd give an example: pointing to the lights in the Assembly Hall ceiling I'd say that we all knew it was lighting above us, but if you were having a psychotic experience you'd look up and think it was the Galaxy. I'd get knowing grins from some pupils, boys usually, who had obviously tripped.

Or I'd give an example of watching Rugby on the TV and there's a scrum, and if you're having a psychotic experience you might say 'They're talking about me'.

When talking to pupils in the schools their teachers would sit up at the back. And they'd be marking pupils home-work. But without exception, they'd stop marking and start listening. This happened in all schools. Afterwards, in the corridor, two or three would linger, to talk to me about a colleague they were concerned about.



High School pupils on a visit to Dykebar Psychiatric Hospital, Paisley, 1994. Bottom row, on the right, four psychiatric nurses.

**NURSI
TIMES**

Friday
August 25
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90p

SCOT

THE SCOTSMAN
Monday, 21 August 1995

**MENTAL HEALTH
TEACHING IN
SCHOOLS URGED**

Schoolchildren must be taught more about mental health and how to recognise early symptoms of problems in a bid to stem the spiralling rates of mental illness among young people.

'If there is a trend then it has to be addressed now. We cannot afford to wait,' said Alex McMahon, RCN Scotland's service development manager.

'We have to educate youngsters about mental health as early as possible, by taking the message into schools in much the same way as we do with smoking or HIV and AIDS. And the school nurse would be well placed to do just that.'

Mr McMahon backed last week's call by Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health for an educational campaign on mental health to be launched both in schools and in the wider community.

Psychiatric admissions of Scottish children have virtually doubled, says a report by the RAMH, while their own survey shows that a third of school-age girls and 15% of boys have known someone with mental illness.

Peter Grafton, RAMH educational coordinator, says there are no educational initiatives on mental health planned for Scotland. This is despite a special resource pack being produced this winter for school teaching and nursing staff in England and Wales.

The Herald, Tuesday, August 22, 1995

**Mental
illness in
young
increases**

A 25% INCREASE in mental illness among young people in Renfrewshire since 1990 has been attributed to distress caused by bullying, exam pressure and problems at home.

Based on a three-year study, a report published yesterday by the Renfrew Association for Mental Health is the first in the UK to question secondary schoolchildren about their experience and awareness of mental illness.

Of 1800 questioned, 31% of girls and 15% of boys knew someone who had been mentally ill, but almost half of all pupils wrongly equated mental handicap with illness and 87% wrongly understood the nature of schizophrenia.

Mental illness among the young is often confused with teenage mood swings, said the report's author, Mr Peter Grafton, who added: "Society finds it difficult to accept that the young can become mentally ill in what is seen as 'the best years of their lives'."

He said parents should look for sleeplessness, severe appetite loss, and truancy as indicators that children may be suffering mental illness.

The report calls for a national strategy involving school visits by mental health professionals and ex-patients

MURDO MACLEOD

Report claims health service failing disturbed young people

**Mental
illness in
children
'on rise'**

By Bryan Christie
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

FOND images of childhood as a golden period, full of happiness and laughter, are shattered in a report which details rising rates of mental illness among the young.

The number of Scots children admitted to psychiatric hospitals has almost doubled in 20 years, leading in extreme cases to children of primary school age trying to kill themselves.

The report, published today by the Renfrewshire Association

THIS poem was written by a girl aged 12 who was among those interviewed by the Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health.

Family

I need a mother i need a

nity to highlight issues rounding mental health. Grafton, the association's national co-ordinator, said targets had been set in England for reducing the incidence of mental illness, but no corresponding initiative was taken in Scotland.

Mr Grafton said that previous national campaigns along the lines of those aimed at cutting child abuse and preventing teenage pregnancy needed to be used.

The findings echo those of a report produced this year by the Royal College of Psychiatrists. It concluded that depression is more common among children than anyone had previously thought, and that the proportion of affected one primary school child, and between three and five adolescents, in every 100.

Mr Grafton said that previous campaigns had been unwilling to accept

I discovered I had a talent for publicising what I was doing. This was not about ego, but about funding, which in the non-statutory sector is often a problem finding. I applied for and got a significant National Lottery Grant that made it possible to have a job share assistant and a full time secretary. I also had sessional workers, stipulating that they had been in psychiatric care or had received psychiatric support, like myself.

I also publicised the shortage of professional support for teens and pre-teens suffering from mental illness.

Medication that helped

Fluanoxol Anti-psychotic drug.

Temazopan Sleeping pill.

Mellaril Anti psychotic drug.

Zimovane Sleeping pill.

Half Inderall LA Beta blocker.

Diazepam for severe anxiety & panic attacks.

Chloral Hydrate anti-anxiety.

Gamanil tricyclic anti-depressant

Fluoxetine (Prozac) SSRI anti-depressant.

I was put on Fluoxetine (Prozac) whilst in Woodilee Hospital. Now and then, over the years, when I've needed an anti-depressant I'm prescribed Fluoxetine. It doesn't work for everyone and an alternative SSRI anti-depressant is usually prescribed. Fluoxetine worked for me. Tricyclic anti-depressants, which I was on prior to my breakdown, are rarely prescribed these days. Importantly besides SSRI anti-depressants being more effective, they are safe - you can't fatally overdose on them.

