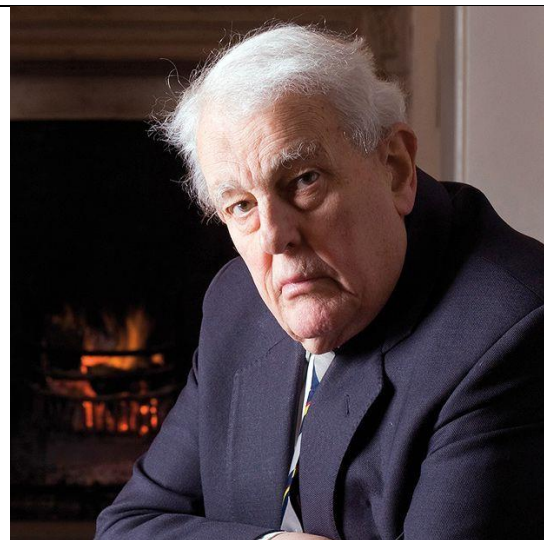


Interviewee: Tam Dalyell (Sir Thomas Dalyell of The Binns)
(Died 2017)
UoS Dates: n/a
Role(s): Former MP for West Lothian and one of the Falkirk
Committee for the siting of the new university.
D Univ (2006)



Interview summary:

Start 00:30 – TD talks about the process that occurred for the creation of a new university within Scotland. He talks about the many people who were involved in the whole process. Priscilla Lady Tweedsmuir was MP for Aberdeen omit shire South and Undersecretary at the Scottish Office. She was responsible for day to day education and was in favour of Inverness for the site of the new university. TD states that it was Forbes Hendry MP for Aberdeen West who introduced him to Alec Duncan, town clerk of Denny and secretary of the committee working to bring Scotland’s new university to Falkirk. Peggy Herbison MP for Lanarkshire North, was in favour of Falkirk first and Stirling second. Sir Fitzroy Maclean of Bute and North Ayrshire was in favour of Ayr and George Mackie of Caithness and Sutherland campaigned for Inverness to be the site of the new university.

04:32 – Arthur Woodburn MP for Clackmannan and East Stirlingshire was strongly in favour of Falkirk. Sir Hector Monro campaigned for Ayr.

05:09 – George Morgan Thomson, chairman of ITV, was in favour of Stirling. Dr Dickson Mabon was in favour of Stirling. Tom Fraser MP for Hamilton was in favour of Ayr. William Ross, who was about to become Secretary of State for Scotland, was in favour of Ayr.

07:13 – Judith Hart MP for Lanark for technological reasons wanted Falkirk to be the new university site. Ian MacArthur who was Junior Minister in the Scottish Office and MP for Perth and East Perthshire wanted Inverness to be the new university site. Betty Harvie Anderson MP for East Renfrewshire was very active and influential and was greatly in favour of Stirling. TD was himself in favour of Falkirk.

08:27 – The MP for Stirling and Falkirk Malcolm MacPherson stated he couldn’t get involved as he would no doubt offend half of his constituency with whatever decision he made. William Baxter MP for West Stirlingshire was strongly in favour of Stirling.

09:37 – One vital person was the Conservative Secretary of State, Jack Maclay, Viscount Muirshiel, who was in favour of Stirling. Edward Boyle, Vice-chancellor of the University of Leeds hesitated to get involved as he was Secretary of State for Education in England. His private view was however in favour of Stirling.

09:49 – TD was told by Colonel Forbes Hendry, MP for Aberdeenshire West that he ought to be supporting Alec Duncan (town clerk of Denny) who was secretary for the committee campaigning for Falkirk to be the site of the new Scottish university. Dame Mary Smieton was very vocal about the need for more technological universities across the UK. The Robbins report stated there needed to be eight new universities in Britain with one having to be in Scotland.

12:00 – Warwick had been chosen as one site, with Colchester in Essex being another one; both were medieval cities. The medieval towns of York and Lancaster also were chosen as sites. TD argued that there should have been a university established in the town of Malvern due to the Radar Research Establishment. These universities created the argument that the new Scottish university should be placed in a bustling modern town instead of “sleepy Stirling”.
13:57 – Falkirk wasn’t Stirling’s main competitor for the university. It was Ayr, mainly because of the influential MPs who were backing it. There was a feeling that the then industrial Ayrshire and the lovely town of Ayr appealed the location argument and also satisfied the modern industry argument.
14:47 – Inverness was another contender but mainly due to the Highlands and Islands issue. TD believes that Inverness wasn’t a very thought out or feasible option for a university location as at the time it was a remote and smaller city than others. As well as this, the university of Aberdeen thought they were coping well enough for Northern Scotland.
15:56 – Unknown to the group which was campaigning for Falkirk, the secretary of the committee had hired a helicopter to take the UGC group around the site of Callendar Park. TD states that it was a very windy day and that the members of the group reluctantly went up and the helicopter just narrowly missed wires. The members of UGC were white faced and displeased by the encounter. TD believed then and there that that whole experience had ended any chance of Falkirk getting the new university.
18:05 – It was stated that something had to be said about putting universities in medieval cities as it will attract not only more students but also more staff. Stirling ultimately proved to be more attractive than Falkirk.
20:11 – TD thought it was unrealistic to think that Callendar House could be a university headquarters.
22:51 – TD believes that the Stirling Marine Biology department operated by Professor Richards [Editor’s note: Roberts] was a great success and was probably one of the best across Britain. TD thinks it useless to think one university can do everything. There was never a question of a medical school at Stirling.
24:39 – TD argues that every university should have a department of Mathematics, as it is relatively cheap. Whereas Physics or Chemistry are more expensive and should be exclusive to some universities. He believes that Chemistry should be limited to Edinburgh and Strathclyde and Biology should be limited to Edinburgh and Dundee.
[Ends 28:14]

Interview No:	SURSA OH / 008	<p>SURSA University of Stirling Stirling FK9 4LA</p> <p>info@sursa.org.uk www.sursa.org.uk</p>	
Interviewed by:	Grahame Smith		
Date of interview:	31/01/2012		
Summary completed by:	Laura McLoughlin, rev AS		
Date:	16/06/2016		

