



*A voice for our village*

## Interview with Vic Howarth (#1 of 2)

James Victor ("Vic") Howarth ('VH'), born 30 March 1930, later joined by wife Patricia ("Pat") Mary Howarth ('PH')

Interviewers : Irini Tzortzoglou ('IT') & John Batty ('JB')

Date & Time : Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 10.45 hrs

Location : Croft House, Priest Lane, Cartmel (Vic's house)

Recording duration : 58 mins 30 secs

- JB So it's the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2016, just after quarter to eleven in the morning, [VH : Yes], and I'm here, I'm John Batty; Irini Tzortzoglou is also here, and we are in the house of Vic Howarth. Vic, I know you only as Vic, but maybe you could tell us your full name, firstly.
- VH My full name is James Victor Howarth, and in this village, I am better known by my school-boy nickname which is Sam.
- JB Is it ? OK, well we'll come back to why you were called Sam a little bit later, but just tell us Vic, if you don't mind, when were you born ?
- VH March 20, 1930
- JB So that makes you 85 years old ... 86 this year ?
- VH Well, yes, nearer 86, yes, yes.
- JB And you're beautiful wife, [1 min] Pat, is not here today, but maybe you could also just tell us Pat's full name, also ?
- VH She's ... she's Patricia Mary Howarth, born Ballance, (B A double L A N C E), from Grange.
- JB Very good; thank you. Now what we'd like to do today, Vic, is just hear in your own words, some of your memories, your recollections of the village, because, you've lived here quite a long time, haven't you ? Can you tell us, firstly, were you born in the village ?
- VH I was born in this house, yes.
- JB And this house ... so let's just get the details of this house. Does it have a number ?
- VH No, it has a name : Croft House.
- JB So we're ... Croft House, and Priest's Lane, [VH : Yes] in Cartmel, and you were born in this house. [VH : Yes] And have your ... have your parents ... did your parents subsequently tell you any stories about your birth ? [2 mins] [VH : No]. So you don't have any particular recog... , well, you wouldn't remember it, of course.
- VH [laughing] I remember it well !
- JB What were your parents names, Vic ?

VH My father was Alfred, and my mother was Edith Marguerite, but known within the family as Daisy ... from the Marguerite, I think ... born Stamper, in the Sun Inn at Consiton.

JB She was actually born in the Sun Inn ?

VH She was born in the Sun Inn at Consiton, yes.

JB And do you remember their birth dates ?

VH My mother was March the 15<sup>th</sup>.

JB Which year, Vic ?

VH Oh, that's not easy. Perhaps we can come back to that ?

JB Yes, of course. And your father ?

VH My father ... his was [3 mins] the longest day, June the 21<sup>st</sup> ... and he would be 1890 something, I think.

JB In the 1890s, OK.

VH They were both Victorians, yes.

JB Do you know why they came to Cartmel ?

VH Yes. My father was born and brought up in Millom. And of course the most significant part of his life was that he fought through the first world war, from beginning to end. He was a Captain in the Lancashire Fusiliers, and he was twice decorated with the Military Cross, once on the Somme, and once on another battle. When he returned, when he [4 mins] finally ... he returned to Millom after that, but went to Canada, to join his sister and brother-in-law on a ranch in Saskatchewan. And my mother followed him, with my brother who was then two years old, and it was their intention to settle and ranch in Canada. It didn't work out, the reason being that when they got there, they had a couple of good years, sharing this ranch, (it's a wheat ranch in Saskatchewan), followed by three terrible years. They lost three consecutive years' [5 mins] seed crops, in consecutive years, one on account of drought, and two, the crop was eaten entirely by locusts. Now I may have got them the wrong way round, it may have been one of locusts and two of drought, I don't know. But my mother told me that they tossed a coin on a prairie, out on the prairie, whether to return back to Cumberland, as it then was, or to go and fruit farm in California, that was their ... and it came down the wrong way, and they came back to Cumberland.

JB And when they came to Cartmel, do you know, do you remember, or have they told you how old they were, or when that was ?

VH I can get pretty close. I was born here, therefore it must have been before 1930, [6 mins] and it was probably about 1925 or 6, and they first of all lived on Barngarth, [JB : Yes], and then moved to here. My father became ... what was called a Rating and Valuation Officer, a civil servant, to do with collecting and administering the rates for quite a big area ... for the

- Ulverston ... Rural Council, ... it was quite a big area, roundabout ... that's what he ... that is what he did.
- JB So he moved around ... his job took him round and about quite a lot ?
- VH Well, they used to go round collecting [7 mins] in those days. Yes. Yes he knew the area very well.
- JB And your mother ? Did your mother have a job, or was she a housewife ?
- VH She was a housewife and assistant to my father. That came about because my grandfather, of Millom, did that particular job of Rating and Valuation Officer there. My mother became his Secretary, then met my father, through that, and he followed ... that's how it came about, really.
- JB And Vic, I should have asked you before, but do you have any brothers and sisters ?
- VH I had one brother, Philip, but he's ... he died. He's ... he was 10 years older than me, I came ... I was a mistake, I think ... I came rather late in my parents life, but ... so ... I was [8 mins] born in 1930, he was born in 1919.
- JB So he would have been born when they were still in Canada ?
- VH No, he went to Canada as a two year old, so he must have ... they must have got to Canada about 1921. He was born November 1919. November the 6<sup>th</sup>. So ... he then became an Officer in the Bengal Sappers and Miners in the second world war, part of the Indian Army.
- JB And Vic, sorry, just to go back to your father, (I know I'm moving around a bit), how long did the collection of taxes continue for ? Do you remember when it stopped ?
- VH It must have been when they came to Cartmel from ... [9 mins] because when they came back from Canada, they went first of all to Millom, where he had come from, and they ... this is a bit vague to me ... they farmed, or poultry farmed, somewhere very close to Millom. I think they called it Red Bank, but where it was I don't know. And that ... that sort of disappeared as he got this job to do, which he was quite familiar with, through his ... my grandfather doing it at Millom, and it was in this area.
- JB He was collecting taxes ?
- VH He was collecting taxes.
- JB And were those income taxes, or local taxes ?
- VH No, rates.
- JB Local rates ?
- VH Local Rates, yes.
- JB So that's the equivalent of the Council Tax probably, as we know it today ?

VH It is exactly that.

JB Yes, OK. [10 mins] Do you have any memories as to how much the rates were in those days ?

VH No, none whatever.

JB OK. So Vic, what are your first memories of the village ?

VH Well, strangely, I actually have – this is not a memory of the village, I have a couple of pram memories as a child. I've tried to think back as much as I could, I've made a little hobby ... not a hobby of it, but occasionally I used to ... and I actually can remember two occasions when I was in a perambulator. One down that road, and one in Grange, being pushed by a lady called Mrs Lancaster ... Miss Lancaster ... who lives on Barngarth. But that's nothing to do with the village. My first memories, I think, of the village, would be when I started [11 mins] at the ... at the school, and I was ... I started a bit early ... I think they started school at five or six in those days.

JB Was that the Primary School ?

VH Yes, yes, it was the Primary School

JB Which is where it still is today ?

VH Yes, yes.

JB So you didn't have very far to go, to go to school ?

VH No ... no ... no

JB How old would you have been, about, Vic, when you started at school ?

VH Five or six.

JB Do you remember any of the teachers from those days ?

VH Yes. The teacher was called Miss Steel. [JB : Steel ?] Steel : S T double E L. Miss Steel was an infant teacher. There were three teachers – there were three classrooms. And she ... the middle one ... the teacher was called Miss Brennan, who came from Grange, and she left [12 mins] and was succeeded by a lady who came from Barrow called Miss or Mrs Dilkes. And the Headmaster, who had the big school, the big classroom, with the older boys, he was Geoffrey Castle. [JB : Geoffrey Castle ?] Castle, yes.

JB About how many pupils were there, Vic ?

VH This is just a guesstimate : there was ... I would think ... 50.

JB And were they all from the village, or did they come from the surrounding area ?

VH From the surrounding area ... as far away as Field Broughton. None that way, 'cos there was a school at Allithwaite, so it was the West side of the valley there, [13 mins] and Field Broughton ... there was nobody living on the East side ... yes, there were a couple of girls from the Hags

Lane, so the East side as well, but there was a school at Grange, so it didn't go over the top ... so it's Cartmel parish, really, which extends all that area. Yes.

JB What was a typical school day like ?

VH Well, it changed, of course. In the infants' class we sat at little tables ... and I think it was mostly ...

JB Did you have lessons ? Did you have formal lessons ?

VH Yes, as far as you can have formal lessons with six to ten years. We had cards with spelling, [14 mins] pink cards, this long and this wide, with ... we had to spell things ... there were pictures on the top of them.

JB So there'd be a picture, and you'd have to write the name of the ...

VH Yes, that sort of thing. That was ... I can't remember when you sort of emerged from the infants class to the middle class, but then the middle class ... with teachers ... they were more formal lessons ... reciting tables ... all that kind of thing.

JB Did you have your lunch at school ?

VH No, because I just walked home.

JB But some children presumably could do that if they came from further away ?

VH I don't think there were any ... there were no school diners in those days at all. So if they came from Field Broughton, they would probably bring a sandwich box. Derek Birch will tell you better than that. I don't think there were any ... there wasn't a dining room. [15 mins] There was milk in the morning. It was nearly always sour; I hated it ... beastly ... because it wasn't ... sour is the wrong word, it was warm and nasty. Geoff Castle was really quite an enlightened and rather modern teacher, I would say, and he was certainly technologically inclined, and what we had was a movie cinema in the big classroom. The cinema was on a sort of mezzanine, just behind the front door, up ... and it shone out, and every ... I ... some reason I think I remember it was Thursday, we had films.

JB What kind of films ? Were they educational films ?

VH Oh yes, [16 mins] yes. They weren't ... they weren't ... yes, they were educational films. The only one that I can actually recall was a film about the Germany, and I can only imagine it was something like a travelogue. It was that kind of ... that kind of film show ... travelogues and educational, of a sort.

JB Do you remember the names of any of your fellow pupils from those days ?

VH Oh yes, lots of them.

JB Can you give us some names ?

VH Probably my best friend at the time was called Frank Laisby. [JB : Laisby ?] Yes, he lived in the cottages down there. There was ... there was ... there was quite a big family, actually, there was Doris ...

JB And Vic, sorry, because [17 mins] nobody when they listen to this will know where you were pointing, that's down Priest Lane, towards the Priory ?

VH Yes, it's the row, the little row of cottages, and I think they're called Church View, facing South.

JB And Laisby was L A S E B Y or ...

VH L A I ... [JB : Oh, L A I S B Y ?] Yes. [JB : OK] He had two younger brothers, who were twins, Denis and Brian, an elder brother called Fred, and an elder sister called Doris. How many does that make ? [JB : Five in total] Yes, that's right then, that was the lot. There were lots more ... I could probably pick up a number ... a lot of names, given a bit more time ...

JB Well another time maybe we'll come back and ask you if you've remembered any more. [VH : Yes, OK]. [18 mins] So after you came back from school Vic, in the afternoon, or at the weekends when there was no school, how would you spend your time around the village ?

VH In the sort of infant period, we were talking about just now, here, in the garden or in the field behind, and there was quite a lot of to'ing and fro'ing between the different families of ... of kids ... so it would be playing with a ball, or playing catch, or ... that's about it, I can't remember much else about what we did.

JB How far would you wander away from home by yourself ?

VH Quite a way. It was something that impressed me very much when I grew up, when I had my own kids, and I discovered that neighbours around, wherever we lived, were very [19 mins] reluctant to let kids go out. I had the complete freedom of the valley, so did any of us. Yes, I would certainly wander away ... across down ... past Castle Meadows, as it is called, where the lake was, there's a river down there and an old stone bridge, so we would ... you can't see it from here ... there ... Park Wood ... The Park, that was probably the main playground for us really.

JB Where is that ?

VH Cartmel Park, which is now ... which people would call the Racecourse. [JB : Yes] But it really was common ground, and everybody ... that's where we played, mainly.

JB The Racecourse was there though, wasn't it, in those days ?

VH The Racecourse. Yes, the races took place on Whit Monday. That was the only ... there was only one day, and it was Whit Monday. [20 mins] And there was the Cartmel Show, which was where it is now, on the same Park. That occurred on the first Wednesday in August, as it still does. The interesting thing about that was that the ... the Racecourse wasn't permanent ... there was a Grandstand and all the railings defining the racing ... and for the agricultural show, there was a circle and tents, and there was another grandstand there, and all of that

was there for that one day, and taken down and stored by Mr Hulme and his horrors who lived ... who were carpenters ... and their job was to erect all that stuff for one day each year ... two days ... it wasn't the same stuff actually ... lots and lots of planks and posts ... [21 mins] that were erected, and of course it took quite a long time, and that was a marvellous play area, for all of us, because we could get among these planks and build ... erect them, and make see-saws, or even ... and play games ... a strange game called nerky off.

JB Sorry, could you say that again ?

VH A thing that's called nerky off. [JB : Nerky ?] It was a kind of rough and tumble hide and seek, where you ... where somebody was it and had to get from A to B without being tackled and caught, by dodging in and out of all these planks and heaps and so on.

JB How would you spell nerky, just so we ... ?

VH N E R K Y [JB : That's how we'll spell it then] That's how I would spell it ... I don't know ... that's as far as I know, it's simply a local name.

JB And how old would you have been at about this time ?

VH [22 mins] Oh ... that was from ... that went on until one became a senior of the school, or beyond, I mean ... everybody could just join in.

JB But presumably you'd be about seven or eight, or round about that age ?

VH Oh yes ... yes.

JB What other games did you get up to with your friends, Vic ?

VH The best game of all was Guinea Pig.

JB Now you have to tell me how to play Guinea Pig as well.

VH Right. I don't know why it should start playing Guinea Pig. It's a marvellous game. A guinea pig ... everybody had a ... every boy had a guinea pig in his pocket. It's a piece of wood, maybe, let's say ... we better use imperial units because ... [laughs] four inches long. [JB : OK] It's about ... inch and a half in diameter, [23 mins] so it's a little lump of wood. And with a pen knife, you could carve the end to form a lip, so ... right ? [JB : Yes] Then you have another stick, cut out of the hedge, or somewhere, about the size of a cricket stump, two ... two and a half feet long. And you scratch a rectangle in the grass, or a hard bit of ... and you put the pig down on there, whack it with the stick, and it jumps up in the air, and then hit it like that, as far as you can.

JB Sorry I'd better just be clear because nobody can see the movements that you're making, Vic, whilst you're ...

VH Exactly, so ...

JB So you put the pig on the grass, [VH : on the ground] on the ground, OK, you whack it on the lip ...

VH of course it then jumps up in the air.

JB So it springs up in the air, [VH : Yes] and then you're ready and you ...

VH and [24 mins] you have to whack it whilst it's in the air, to hit it as far as you can.

JB What did you call the long piece ... there was a piece of wood as long as a cricket stump, two and a half feet long, what did you call that ? Did it have a name?

VH No, I don't think it had a name.

JB OK. And how far would you be hitting one ?

VH If you got a good ... if you got a good contact, you could ... it would go twenty yards or longer ... thirty ... right ... if you didn't ... sometime ... sometime you missed completely. So if it fell back in the square ... and if you missed it and it fell back in the square, then you have another go. [JB : I see] If it fell outside the square, you're out. And if it fell so that it was on the line, that was a very prolific source of dispute[?], regarding whether it was in or out. And so you divided yourself ... whoever was there [25 mins] divided themselves into teams ... and it was remarkably informal, because there weren't equal numbers in two teams, because kids would come on, join one or the other team, others would go away to do a paper round, and this game would go on ... it was never finished ... it didn't matter. So ... but then, having hit the ... the pig ... somewhere ... the fielding side ... there was an in side, where everybody took their turns to be ... to do the hitting ... and the other side was in the field. If a fielder could catch the thing in flight, of course you were out .. the batter was out and you had to hand over to the next one. If it was on the ground, and still moving, you could pick it up and throw it back towards the base, or even kick it back ... if it was still moving. If it ... once it was stationery, [26 mins] you had to stop. Once again, that was a prolific source of contention, whether it was moving or not. So having hit the pig, and it arrived, stationery somewhere, the batter would then put his stick half way across the little square that we talked about, and it was up to any member, or any number of members of the fielding side, to step it out. The batsman would claim a score. Right, so if I hit the thing and it come to rest ... twenty feet away ... I would say ... 'three', or something like that, and if they could stride it out, in a running stride, between the pig ... and get over the ... then I was out, and the three was added to the score of the fielding side. If they couldn't, then I got the three and had another go.

JB Right. [27 mins] At the end of the game there was a winning team, presumably ?

VH I don't think ... it never ended ... [laughs] it just went on ... [JB : until it went dark ?] until it got dark, yes, yes ... yes. That was the ... And teams were of any size, and any age, and so ... but it was a marvellous game. You didn't need any kit ... or special clothes, or anything ... you could do it anywhere.

JB Vic, was this game only played by boys, or were their girls ...

VH No. It was mainly boys ... some girls would join in, but not many.

JB Right, OK. What other games were there ?



VH Well, as I say, Guinea Pig went on until it got dark, or somebody lit a fire, or somebody showed up with a packet of Woodbines [laughs]

JB What age were they smoking Woodbines ? [Pause] You won't [28 mins] get into trouble for telling me !

VH Well ... I wouldn't expect ... I suppose kids of ten, twelve ... fifteen.

JB But these were outdoor games, Vic, weren't they, what about indoor, when the weather was bad, or if it was dark, what would you do ? Did you have indoor games that you played ?

VH I suppose everybody had their own. I was especially interested in ... in aeroplanes ... I wanted to build model aeroplanes. But that was not ... now ... by that ... you know you need to be ... to have some manipulative skills to do that ... and you need to know a little bit about how to adjust wings and tails to make them fly. That didn't come on until ... I was doing it at Cartmel School, so it was by the time I was eleven and went to the Grammar School, I'd built a few. [29 mins] But I wasn't very good at it, [JB : OK] and I didn't have a lot of success until later. Other games ... I can't ... no ... I can't help you there ... I suppose people would paint and draw.

JB You mentioned the paper round, Vic, so who would be doing the paper round, and where would the round be, and what was the paper ?

VH Well, I'm talking about delivering ... stuff around the village, or any other activity that took him away from playing Guinea Pig, for one reason or another. Somebody would have to go home, or whatever, so the teams changed.

JB Was there a local paper ?

VH I'm trying to think. I think there must have been a Grange and Cartmel News ... I think ... [30 mins] yes there was. I think it might have been called Grange and Cartmel News. I wasn't meaning the papers ... I only think that because I do remember ... the local correspondent ... had any news about the cricket scores, or the ... [JB : Yes] that sort of thing. I think there was a thing called the Grange and Cartmel News. [JB : Did people ... ] I forgot ... I forgot to tell you the other ... the other thing ... once ... there was a sort of right of passage, by the time you got into long trousers, and this ... you were able to join the Working Mens Club, the Institute as it was called, and that's where boys spent their summer holidays ... upstairs, where there were two billiard tables.

JB Now where was that, Vic ?

VH It's that very ugly building, still there, in ... [31 mins] opposite the church gates.

JB The ... That we call the Village Institute ?

VH Yes, yes, yes, yes. That was ... that was there. There were two billiard tables upstairs. All the men would go there, sit around, watching ... and either playing ... you had to take your turn ... so that is certainly where one would spend one's teenage ... summers ... winters ... evenings, yes.

JB So tell us a bit more about that. Did you call it ... you described it as a Working Mens Club ?

VH I think that is what it called itself, but that didn't mean very much.

JB What else did it have, apart from the billiard tables ?

VH Well it had ... it had a dart board, and it had what they called the reading room ... that was downstairs, where there were [32 mins] magazines and papers. And where the hairdresser now is ... was called the library, and it was visited by presumably the County library vans, and they changed the books. This came round, I don't know, once a month, or something like that; they changed them all. So it had the library, and the reading room ... the billiard tables upstairs ... and the little room opposite ... another little room upstairs for ... where there was a dart board, and playing cards ... and probably dominos, for all I know. Yes.

JB Any food or drink ?

VH No. [JB: Nothing at all ?] No, there was nothing of that kind.

JB And who was the organiser ? Who was the proprietor of the club ?

VH Well ... I don't say the proprietor ... [33 mins] there was a caretaker ... Mr Bell ... and his wife, who looked after the place ... opened it at the ... when it was locked ... swept the stairs ... looked after it ... I mean ... I would call him the concierge, Mr Bell who lived there.

JB I was curious to understand who ... who owned the building in those days, and who was responsible for it ?

VH I simply don't know ... [JB : No, OK] I don't know.

JB Well as we've started to do a little tour of the village, Vic, because you've ... you've mentioned the cottages down ... Church View Cottages down Priest Lane, and we've now moved into The Square, so what else ... what was different in those days, compared to the village as we would see it today ?

VH The geography is very much the same. There has been some building, but mainly on the outskirts. It looks very much like it did before. What is different about it ... [34 mins] is ... there is a lot more money. It was ... it was ... not very prosperous. I'm talking, I suppose, although I wasn't aware of it at the time, it was when the depression. [JB : What were ... ] The houses are now painted, with new widows in, it looks much nicer than it did. There were some pretty awful bad parts of the village, but it looks much the same in geographically, the street line is the same. 'Cos it's a higgaldy pigaldy ... the roof ... the village anyway ... you know there's no consistency with the roof lines, wherever you look at it, some are set back, and some are brought forward, and the roofs are like ... It's all the same, but it's ... it's better kept, and the other big difference ... the big difference ... and this is the really big difference ... it was a self propelled, self contained community, that one of everything. It had a ... it had two [35 mins] grocers ... and every aspect of the building trades where here ... plumbers, painters, brick layers, electricians ... every ... as I've said before, perhaps as I said to you, you could have gone to all round Cartmel, and it wouldn't have made any difference. It could

- have been ... it was a self contained community. It had all the ... it had a cricket club, a football club, womens institute, mothers union, it had a dramatic society, choir ...
- JB So if we just were to walk around The Square, what would the buildings have been in The Square, because I think somebody told me once that there was a bank ?
- VH Yes. It was Westminster ... what ... it was ... in those days called the District Bank, but it was gradually taken over by the Westminster Bank ... it would be the Westminster Bank. But it was a bank that was only open one day a week.
- JB [36 mins] Which building was that, Vic ?
- VH It was ... the building ... I think its called The Bank. [JB : Bank House ?]
- JB Pat is shaking her head. [VH : No ... well its ...]
- PH It's called the Circle in the square, isn't it ?
- JB The Circle in the square ?
- PH I thinks its Circle. It is. It's one that Gary had .. it was District Bank. [VH : Yes] ... now opposite ... the square thing, then right opposite there's an arch, [VH : Yes] and then there's a biggish, more substantial house, and then the archway that you go through to ... not the archway to go through to the ... Priest Lane, but the archway down to a little ginnell, and then there's a little [37 mins] tiny squat house with a window ... four windows [IT : called Bank Court, I think]
- VH Bank Court. Yes, that was ... Bank Court is the opening ... like a ginnell ... and the court ... Bank Court is behind ... so the ... so the ...
- PH [initially inaudible in the background speaking simultaneously]... its got a sign post there ... I think there's a sign post ...
- VH It's ... it's immediately opposite ... on the opposite side ... and facing the [PH : Fish Slabs] hotel, [JB : the Priory Hotel ?] Yes, it's immediately opposite and facing the Priory Hotel, and it was probably only ... it didn't have much of a frontage ... there was a door ...
- PH [inaudible background comment]
- JB So were ... because you mentioned all the trades and the shops, were they all dotted around the village, or were they all around the square ?
- VH [38 mins] No, they were dotted all over the place ... but the trades didn't have shops. The shops were ... there was a shop ... a shop, where the shop is now ... right ... Sid Hull's grocer's shop. [JB : Siddall's ?] Sid Hull. No. [JB : Sid Hull ?] Yes. Sorry, I ... Mr Hull ... had that shop ... there was [PH whispering : now the sandwich shop] ... yes, now the sandwich shop, yes ... and the other grocer was Henry Teasdale, who had the ... shop which is now called the village shop, the sticky toffee pudding shop, it was also then the Post Office. Now the other ...
- PH [inaudible background comment] [39 mins]

VH The shop which is called Hales ... [PH : Rogan and company]

JB Well, Rogan and company now are, that ... you're saying, Pat, that used to be a shop ? [PH : Yes] What kind of a shop was that ? [PH : a grocer's shop]

VH It was a small general store, run by Mrs Warrener, and it sold sweets, cigarettes, and local produce from farmers, so it was a ... so it wasn't a shop really at all.

JB Now one of your neighbours here lives in a house called the Old Police Station. [VH : Yes] Was it a Police Station in those days, or was it a private house ?

VH Not in my recollection. It was ... it had ... I don't know when it ceased to be a Police Station, probably when they built [40 mins] the new Police Station, but it was a Police Station.

JB Sorry Vic, which new Police Station ?

VH Well, it's not there any more either, so ...

JB Where was it ?

VH It was ... the end of the terrace houses ... you know the Friends ... the Friends Meeting House on Hags Lane ? [JB : Yes] Right. So go up from the Friends Meeting House, there's, I think, two quite small cottages, then a row of semi-det ... a row of terrace, and the Police house was ... the end house ... at the ...

JB So, opposite the doctor's surgery ? [VH : Yes] And was there a policeman permanently living there ?

VH Yes ... yes ... yes

JB Do you remember his name ?

VH Mr Key [JB : Key ?] [41 mins] K E Y. Yes.

JB And would he ...

VH And I can tell you something else. [JB : Please do] Somewhere in that garden, there's an incendiary bomb. [laughs]

JB Tell us a bit more about the incendiary bomb.

VH Well, it ... Cartmel got it's air raids, like everybody else. There was no damage ... we're now talking about 1940, 41, something like that. There was no damage actually in the village itself, but Allithwaite and Grange got it ... some bombs ... but a lot of bombs were ... fell on ... on the fell ... on Hampsfell. And of course the next day, we were all off up there finding bits and bombs, and I found an unexploded incendiary bomb, and came proudly back with it, [laughs] and was ... I was way laid by Jack Castle, the headmaster ... [42 mins] who took it off me ... well he didn't take it off me, he ordered one of the older boys, 'cos I was about eleven at that time, to take it to the Police Station. And Mr Key said ... I'm not ... what to do ... what

- am I to do with it ... [laughs] so he dug a hole and put it in the garden. But that's something else.
- JB So even though it was live ... was it still live ?
- VH Yes, it must have been ... it hadn't ... a lot ... all over ... loads of little white piles of Magnesium that had burned, and ... up there ... this one just hadn't exploded ... and they were all tails ... they had steel tails ... those bombs.
- JB So whilst we're on the subject of the war, in the early 1940s, what was life like during those days ?
- VH For me ... for children ... I don't think [43 mins] they noticed very much. We never thought there was going to be ... we never imagined that it wouldn't end ... successfully ... but of course, parents ... my mother ... whose elder ... my elder brother had gone ... and of course she'd had ... she'd gone through the first world war ... so ... it made a big difference to them ... and of course there was ... everything was rationed, and a lot of things didn't exist ... there were no such things like sweets or candy, or things of that kind.
- JB How often would there have been an air raid ?
- VH There were quite a number ... but ... just here in this valley ... there was about ... as I recall, there were several nights when ... we hid under the table downstairs ... [44 mins] they were after Barrow .. the naval ... the dockyard at Barrow, and all the naval ships there, but like a lot of bombers, as soon as they got near the flag, they dropped their bombs, wherever they were, and headed off home. And so there were bombs that side of the valley, this side of Grange and Allithwaite.
- JB Was there any damage ... any serious damage done around the village ?
- VH Not in Cartmel itself, no, no. There was in ... there was in Allithwaite ... several houses were demolished, and in Grange too.
- JB Do you remember, when the war finished, was there a big celebration in the village, any kind of street party, or anything like that ?
- VH Yes and no. There was no ... not a big [45 mins] celebration like a street party, but there were quite a number of other things, like there'd been a lot of saving up for the boys returning, and that sort of thing ... so there would be ... I can't actually recall them ... I'm sure there were ... get togethers. But there wasn't street parties. No noisy celebrations, as far as I know. They came back in dribs and drabs of course, when they were demobilised.
- JB How did you celebrate when your brother came home ?
- VH Not at all, as far as I remember. Well ... just a family reunion. [JB : Yes, OK]
- PH When he came home, [VH : Don't switch off] When he came home, he came home later, didn't he, because he brought Wilmer with him, and they had ...

- VH Yes, that's right, of course ... yes ... my ... [46 mins] when the war finished, my brother was in the Indian army, and he had to go back to India, and by which time he had met his future wife, and they married ... and when they came back here, it was two of them.
- JB I see, OK. Vic, we've mentioned smoking earlier on, that some of the boys would get up to, they'd start smoking early on, what about drinking ? Was drinking ever a practice, in those years, in teenage years ?
- VH Teenage years ... what it amounted to is ... I wouldn't call it drinking ... but ... older boys ... I particularly remember this ... in the winter when we ... there were certain ... certain fields which were good ... good sledging fields, when we used to go sledging. The Pig and Whistle had a little ... [47 mins] that's the pig pub ... it was called the Devonshire ... Devonshire Arms, I think, [JB : Devonshire Arms ?], but it was always known as the Pig and Whistle. The Pig and Whistle had a hole in the wall at the back down a little ... you went down ... round the side ... where ... where boys could buy cider ... I mean ... I'm sure quite illegally but ... so, you could ... you could get a bottle ... one of those biggish bottles of Whiteways cider, and take it back to the sledging field ... and it got passed round like a joint.
- JB What ... at what age would you have started going to the pub, or did you start going to the pub ?
- VH I ... yes, I used to go to the pub, not till I was demobbed from the air force, so that would be ...
- JB So you were be in your twenties by that age ? [VH : Yes, yes] Right, OK.
- VH If I went to the pub before that, it would be because [48 mins] I was ... I was taken by the rest of the cricket team. I was probably the youngest member of the cricket team at the time, and not old enough to go to a pub anyway, but of course cricket matches always finished up in the pub ... so I got to be ... in the pub.
- JB And did they finish up in the Pig and Whistle, or one of the others ?
- VH No – the Kings Arms.
- JB So, were there the four pubs then that there are now ?
- VH Yes, there were. It's astonishing that they survived. There were the four ... there were the four pubs : the Cavendish Arms, the Kings Arms, the Royal Oak, and the Pig and Whistle. The Pig and Whistle, I think, was really an ale house, it wasn't a fully blown pub selling spirits ... I'm not quite sure about that. All the others, they were proper pubs.
- JB Did they have rooms ? Could ... were they inns in that sense, where people could stay the night ?
- VH I think the Kings Arms had probably ... one ... they would be able to [49 mins] take one guest, I think. I don't think the others did at all, although they may have done ... I can't remember ... they certainly weren't hotels in the modern sense.

IT Vic, you said the pub was Devonshire Arms, but it was known as the Pig and Whistle, and you were Victor, but everybody knows you as Sam, and we understand that here were lots of alternative names about.

VH That is absolutely right, yes. [IT : Why ?] I can't say why, it was a convention. The Cavendish Arms was always referred to as the Kremlin ! [IT : Why ?] Why ... I don't know. The Cavendish Arms ... some boys often ... sometimes went to ... people ... it's a sort of right of passage, when you get to the pub-going age, I think you would tend to go to the [50 mins] Cavendish Arms first. And the Cavendish Arms, in those days, was a sort of farmers' pub. It had ... it didn't have a bar, it was a lot of little rooms, and they were little rooms ... they were probably ... you know, you'd have got three of them in here ... little rooms off a corridor ... and they had these cast iron and filigree tables ... chairs ... all the other ... chairs with sharp legs, you know, that sort of place. And so, you didn't stand at a bar, you had to go to another place ... one of the corridors, there's a hole ... the beer was in a little room behind it, and you ... you asked for ... you ordered or asked for a pint ... or three pints if it was a group, you know, and stood around, and paid at this little ... [51 mins] this little window in the wall ... and then Mr Irvine [JB : Mr Irvine ?] Yes, [laughs] ... Joe Irvine ...

PH [inaudible background comment]

JB Go on Vic, just finish what you were ... finish your thoughts.

VH He would bring you the beer, to your little room. [laughs] And Joe Irvine ... he was ... he was ... he was so doddery ... he used to walk along with two pints in each hand, by the time he got to the ... by the time he got to your table, half of it was on the floor behind.

IT So, by calling it the Kremlin, did you mean to give it an air of forbiddness, or very austere, or very ... because it wasn't ... it doesn't sound a very welcoming place ? [52 mins] I'm trying to understand the thinking behind the name.

PH [inaudible background comment]

VH No, it ... I don't think there was any thinking about it. To be honest, I don't know. It ... I don't think it had any significance.

IT Right. So what type of things had other names ?

VH I don't think the other pubs did have names. The Royal Oak was always the Oak, and the Kings Arms was always the Kings. The Pig and Whistle, of course, was the one with a name that didn't really belong to it.

JB And that, you said, was called the Devonshire Arms ? Was that the proper name ?

VH Yes ... yes ... it was.

JB But even then, people would call it the Pig and Whistle ? [VH : Yes ... yes]

IT And when it comes to people's names, why would people have two names ?

VH Nicknames ? [IT : Yes] [53 mins] I ... I can't say why ... it was a custom.

IT In your case, why were you known as Sam ?

VH Well, I know why I was called Sam, because my mother told me. In that house across there, there was a family called Burton, and their son was Sam Burton.

IT On the corner of Priest's Lane and ...

VH No, it's the house ... the one immediately up there ... it's called Little Croft ... and the house ... Home Cottage, it's called ... it's the biggest ... biggest house on this terrace. Sam Burton was a good bowler, and he played cricket, and my father was Captain of the cricket club, so we had a bit of a ... and as a very ... as a biggish toddler ... toddler, I was ... sort of rather hero worshiped Sam Burton. So I used to ... when we were playing cricket or whatever, down [54 mins] in the back, I would run around saying "I'm Sam". And that's how I came to have that name, so my mother told me ... so my mother told me.

JB Vic, we were talking a little bit about the houses, what do you know of the history of this house ?

VH All I know of the history of this house is that it was ... originally two cottages. And I think it was probably the first house, on Priest Lane ... because all these houses have got Croft in their ... White Croft, Stone Croft, Little Croft, Green Croft, and this is Croft House, and that field and this house were an item at that time ... it's no longer, because the field got separated as well.

JB You mean they belonged to the same owner ?

VH Yes, yes, yes. ... All the ... my father rented this house for many years, [55 mins] and he bought it when the owner, Mr Burrows, died, and his family didn't want ... wanted to get rid of it, so my father bought it.

JB Did the Burrows live in the village also ?

VH Mr Burrows – No. He ... he must have been a widower, and was a lodger ... in .....[?] House ... he lodged in Cartmel, but ... I don't know how he came to be ... to own this.

JB But do you know about the age of the house ?

VH Yes. No. I know it became a house in round about 1895, that's when the two cottages became Croft House. We have got a photograph of when it was two cottages. It was a pretty tumbled down looking place, but it had essentially the same ... [56 mins] are you going to get it ... it had essentially the same shape and size and position, as it did then.

JB But they were ... those two cottages were private residences, weren't they ?

VH Oh yes, yes, yes. So it was in the last decade of the nineteenth century that it was converted, and you can detect the places ... parts the original cottages.

JB OK. Pat's just looking for the photograph, so it would be very interesting to see that. Vic, we have been going for about an hour already, and I think we've only just started, in some ways. I think that there could be a lot more, but maybe, because the first hour is up, it's probably a



good time to have a break now. Would it be possible to continue, [57 mins] not today necessarily, [VH : Yes] but maybe another time ... next weekend ? [VH : Yes] Because I think there's so much more that you can tell us, but we can only go for so long, I think ...

VH Well, we've actually jumped about a bit actually ... we're going to have a truly chronological order ... we've spent ... talking about the period that I don't remember very well when I was very small ... later years I remember much better.

JB Yes, and we want to hear about cock fighting, and everything.

VH I can't tell you much about cock fighting, because I know it occurred but I never saw one. And ... it didn't take place in my time, within the village. It was pretty secret. I do know that cock fights were known to happen.

JB So what I'll do is, I'll stop the recording there, [VH : And I ... right] [58 mins] and say thank you very much so far, for giving us your time, and for sake of this record, we're going to continue at a later stage.

VH Whenever ... I'm happy ... I'm quite pleased to do it, in a way, because it makes me think a bit harder. [JB : Good] I can't tell you much about .....[?] either, which I think is quite an interesting ... part of the ... sorry

JB So, I'm going to stop the recording, Vic, and we'll restart another time soon. I'm just going to stop it now. [VH : Oh, right] [recording ends 58 mins 30 secs]