

Summary of Interview with Derek Birch

Interviewee : Derek Birch, born 6 February 1933

Interviewer : Irini Tzortzoglou

Date of Interview : 19 May 2016 Duration of Recording : 43 mins 6 secs

Approx time (mins) Content

0 – 2	Introduction, born in Backbarrow, moved to High Newton when father was working on new road there in 1935, one of family of 5 brothers & 2 sisters.
2 – 4	Played Cricket at Cartmel for 38 years; during teens played at Field Broughton who had a team then; had to give up football early due to cartilage injury.
4 – 10½	At recent Cricket Club Annual Dinner, presented with a anorak with name and dates 1956 – 2016 printed on it to recognise 60 years service to the club, playing, coaching and fund raising; reminiscences of activities in those years.
10½ – 14½	Early career; 2 years at saw mill in Backbarrow, then apprentice decorator with Postlethwaites of Grange; early experiences of being treated as “the boy” and learning the trade.
14½ – 19½	Changing fashions for wall paper.
19 ½ – 20½	Seasonal nature of the trade.
20½ – 23	Working hours and changing wages, starting on 8½d per hour.
23 – 24½	Working clothes and importance of appearance.
24½ – 25¾	Worked mostly on private houses during apprenticeship, but later on most hotels in Grange, including the largest, the Grand Hotel.
25¾ – 32	Getting work at, and working at the Swan Hotel, Newby Bridge, resulting in a prize winning certificate from the British Decorators Association.
32 – 36½	Dealing with problems of customers’ choosing colour schemes, especially commercial properties; assistance was available from paint manufacturers.
36½ – 39	Discussion of Health and Safety issues; limits on ladder heights and use of scaffolding, which actually overall saved time.
39 – 41¾	Comments on number of staff employed, only George Rawlinson mentioned by name; business now continued by son Neil.
41¾ – 43	Satisfaction with life as a decorator with pride in work done.