

Voices of Hickling

Interview Transcript: Paul Borrett

In conversation with Ann Louise Kinmonth on 26th November 2018

PB: My name is Paul Borrett and I lived at Eastfield Farm. I was born in Martham on 1st February 1944. I was a war baby.

ALK: Were there any particular memories or stories that you wanted to tell, but otherwise I'll just take you through your life...

PB: No I've got lots of stories to tell...

ALK: OK.

PB: But not in any particular order!

ALK: Then let's do it in the order of your life. What are your early memories of Hickling?

PB: Well I, the first memories I've got I suppose when my sister was born in 1947 and eh that was the dreadful year when I think it snowed until the beginning of April. And all the crops were got in as far as I can tell from my father.

But the sugar beet was drilled as soon as the snow went and they never had another drop of rain until they were lifted and sent into Cantley and I think the average tonnage that year was about 3 tons and acre, can you imagine that? And they're now lifting about 35-36 tons an acre.

That was a pretty disastrous year for everybody, especially as you know food was pretty scarce just after the war.

So that was my earliest memory. My father who was...

ALK: How old were you then?

PB: I was 3, yeah that's about right. I don't remember much before that.

ALK: Yeah yeah, and you were saying about your father?

PB: Well, I was saying about my first memory,.

His first memory was because he was at Hickling Hall. He was born in 1913 and his first memory was being held up in the attic of the hall and watching the search lights over Great Yarmouth on a Zeppelin that was bombing Great Yarmouth at the time. That's incredible, isn't it.

ALK: Amazing, tell us a bit more about your father.

PB: Well, he was quite a character really,

ALK: Perhaps name him for the tape...

PB: Yes. Jack Borrett. And he was an only child, he was brought up at Hickling Hall by his father and mother. His mother died when he was only about 20 and he was then looked after by his aunts who spoiled him rotten I think.

And he went on to farm at Eastfield Farm, which I believed belonged to his grandmother on his mother's side, or his grandfather on his mother's side at the time, and that was left to him.

That was then sold, I think Eastfield Farm was then sold to Aubrey Herbert Smith who lived at the Smea and he became his tenant and then he bought the farm back again in the late 50s. So we actually owned Eastfield Farm and lived there, I've lived there most of my life.

ALK: So what was it like growing up on that farm and brothers and sisters and that kind of thing?

PB: Well it was idyllic, really. Do you know where Eastfield Farm is?

ALK: Yes.

PB: Yes, we were pretty remote down there. Just at the back of Horsey Mere basically, so we were quite detached from the village itself, we were a mile and half then and not very much traffic and not very much transport in those days.

I remember going to Hickling School, the first week I walked to Hickling school as a five year old, but I didn't used to get in 'til about half past ten because I'd stop and talk to all the men on the way from Mr Blaxell's farm and, er, my father got quite a wrong about that, and in the end I got a lift from Roy Worts, who had an old jeep and had the marshes beyond Eastfield Farm and he used to pick me up as he picked up his milk and he ran me into school, but I always walked home again from there.

You wouldn't allow that nowadays I don't think.

ALK: Did you go home at lunch time or in the afternoon?

PB: No, I came home in the afternoon.

ALK: Did you take food to school, or did they feed you?

PB: No they fed us at school.

ALK: What did you get?

PB: Yeah, Ronny Gibbs's mother was dinner lady. Oh, it was brought in from Stalham School in great big caskets and we used to get sort of stews and mashed potatoes, that sort of thing. I can remember one day they brought us soup in these great big caskets and that obviously it had been kept warm for some time, and by the time we all went home the whole school were being sick everywhere. (LAUGH)

That's almost hanging offence now isn't it!

ALK: Then were you there with your sister?

PB: Yes. My sister, who was 3 years younger than me, and she went to Hickling School as well and we went through to 11 or 12 and we took, what do you call it, the exam and anyhow I went on to Norwich school where my father and been and I didn't much like that. I was a boarder there. Norwich School...

ALK: From 12 or 13?

PB: Yeah from 12. Yeah. And, of course, we were boarders in those days 'cos you know, Norwich was a long way from Hickling in those days - it took a good hour by car - you wouldn't dream of doing that now. In fact I don't think they board at Norwich School any more.

ALK: Yeah, yeah.

PB: But I enjoyed the sport, I didn't enjoy anything else much, I just wanted to get back a drive a tractor.

ALK: Did you enjoy the cricket?

PB: I loved cricket.

ALK: Did you get that from your dad do you think?

PB: Yes he was, he was, my father was captain of Ingham cricket club for 26 years, and saw it through from a very junior cricket club to probably at certainly one time the best, the strongest club in Norfolk for right through the eighties. We had mostly county players or ex- county players playing for us at the time, a very strong side and when I - I've the photograph there now, the Norwich School Under 13 eleven was quite a strong eleven.

Well, that's a picture of Norwich School Under 13 eleven, and I'm on the bottom left and one second right seated - there is a chap called Clive Radley, who went on to play for England and Middlesex and has always been a great friend of mine.

I went - he was awarded the MBE several years ago and he had a reception in the Long Room at Lords and I went to that, or Joan and I both went, which was great fun.

ALK: Wonderful.

PB: Yes very proud of him as Norfolk man. And then I went on. I suppose sport's played a big part of my life: I enjoyed my farming but, it wasn't the [be] all [and] end [all] then of what I wanted to do, so I played football and then I went on to play rugby for North Walsham and played badminton at under 21 level for Norfolk and I played cricket, 50 odd games of cricket for Norfolk.

And I'm even more proud of the fact that my second son Chris went on to play even more times for Norfolk than I did and was far more successful than I was...

ALK: Fantastic. And you just had the one sister, is that right?

PB: Judy

ALK: Judy, yes, and how is she?

PB: She's now living in Maldon. She's a retired Headmistress and my wife's sister is also a Headmistress, so we have to watch our Ps and Qs when they're about!

ALK: So after Norwich School, what happened then?

PB: Well, then I left school at 15 and came back onto the farm and it was pretty hard work at the time. There was, you know, mechanisation wasn't there at that time

ALK: Tell us a bit about the extent of the farm and the fields and what you were producing...

PB: Well, we farmed about 150 acres at Eastfield, but eventually that went up to 400 acres with land that we bought and land that we hired, but even when I retired you know 400 acres was a very small farm, and we farmed - sort of - a couple hundred acres at the time, that was a large farm, or a reasonably large farm. You'd certainly need somewhere about 1500 to 2000 acres now to make it work particularly well.

Which is quite sad, and of course when I first came back on the farm we had about 7 men working for us. We grew all the crops that we grow now plus 50-odd acres of blackcurrants, which was probably our main income from them. And that went on until the '80s, when we started to import Polish blackcurrants, and they could import those cheaper than we could even pick them let alone grow them so that was more or less the end of the blackcurrant crop, certainly for us.

One or two people had contracts with Beechams and they still grow blackcurrants in this country, but not to the extent we used to. And, of course, that., we used to employ so many people. All the local women especially would come and pick them. We'd probably have well over 100 people picking blackcurrants at one time and then of course they produced a blackcurrant picking machine. Kind of helped get rid of the job because it made it too easy for everybody to grow them, and then when they all got too pricey that was the end of things.

But, yeah, still some grown, but that was quite an interesting job of course we could grow them all on our wetter lands, that weren't very easy to grow other crops on.

So, when they went, we had to get all this land well under-drained and improve them some.

We just went to grow sugar beet and vining peas, all the cereals, potatoes - which were a very good crop to grow on this land especially. We've got a high water table round here so we don't have to use too much irrigation.

And talking of irrigation we got a - we did have a licence to draw water from the Broad but that was for frost protection on the blackcurrants and that was the worst job of the lot. I used to hate that because you used to have bell that would go off in the frozen, in the night, in the spring time and we had to get up and spray water and by morning they were almost flat on the ground covered with ice, but, funnily enough, it formed a vacuum between the ice and the bud which allowed the temperature not to go below freezing and it did actually

work. Because if you've got a spring frost on buds in April, May even, that would wipe the crop out. They've probably changed, they've probably got different varieties now. I mean you could go weeks on end being up all night spraying these.

But there you go. Yes we went through all that.

ALK: *So I get the impression you came back mad keen to be on the farm with the family and then over the years some of the stories you're telling me now suggest why that things changed slightly for you and your feeling about farming?*

PB: Um, not particularly, I always enjoyed farming, but I think by the end I'd had enough of the paperwork and one thing and another it got worse and worse.

The thing that changed farming completely was agro-chemicals because we didn't have those. The first year I worked on the farm there we none and it was jolly hard work, a lot of work, hand work, hoeing and that was nothing on the blackcurrants that we could do apart from I think there was a spray that helped kill Capsid Bug, which is a big bug which caused bad disease on the blackcurrants.

But more and more agro-chemicals came into use because which made farming so much easier: that did get rid of a lot of work or so, you know, it didn't have as much a benefit for the people who worked for us, but it made life a lot easier on the farm.

Everybody says the good old days but I don't think you'd want to go back to well for the best part of your life with a hoe in your hand.

ALK: *Who were the main people who worked for you?*

PB: Well we had, when I first came back on the farm we had a chap called Arthur Cator, who was a sort of head tractor driver. My father never really got too involved after I came back, he ran the farm but didn't... he did a bit of tractor driving but not an awful lot.

Arthur Cator was quite a, really, quite a funny man: he used to make me laugh quite a lot. It's good fun when you have people on the farm, I can remember when my father used to go out every morning to pick a paper up and he said to Arthur, "Arthur, you'd better get on grease those two combines up".

We had two combines in those days, one was a 3 foot 6 inch cut Ransome and one was a 4 foot cut Ransome! When you think they're now about 40 foot cuts on some of these, and these were two little tractor drawn combines and you had grease nipples everywhere and it used to take him no end of time to grease these things up.

And when my father came back he said, "Have you finished greasing that up yet Arthur?", and Arthur said, "No I haven't finished yet", he said, "there's more nipples on this he said than there is on the Luton Girls' Choir". (LAUGH)

So there was him, there was Oliver Beales and Geraldine his daughter, who was born in Hickling exactly a year after me I think, my birthday is the 1st and hers is the 2nd so exactly a year after me. And, um Wilfred Beales. Oliver Beales and Wilfred Beales used to spend nearly the whole time pruning

blackcurrants, from the time we picked them to the next crop. Neither of them really wanted to drive tractors - 'cos these old boys didn't really want to go that way, you know. It was quite difficult for them to pick up how to you know they used to shout "Whoa" to the trac, to the horses - but that didn't seem to work on tractors!

But they were very nice people, Wilfred was a lovely old man and so was Oliver and we had a chap called, what's his name now, can't remember.

Tom, Tom Applegate, *Tinker Two Tom*, that was his nickname. And he'd been a prisoner of war in the first World War, Tom, and he was funny old man, he was our stockman and I just wish I could call him back now and talk to him about the first World War 'cos it never really meant much to us then, the first World War, and this has all come out recently, hasn't it, you know how dreadful the conditions were.

And I just wish that I could get and talk to him again but he was taken a prisoner of war and I can remember him coming to see me, he came across the field after he'd retired then and said, "do you know it was 50 years ago today that I was taken prisoner?". And, er, so, he never did talk too much about it, not that he didn't want to, but people didn't want to sort of listen in those days, I don't think.

It was just one of those things that happen. And we weren't born far after, long after the second World War and that was in everybody's mind, wasn't it?

ALK: *Did your father talk about that?*

PB: No, not particularly, no. He was a, he didn't... He was not in the Forces in the Second World War because of his farming, so he had to have another job to do, and he was a Special Policeman, and I think that was a pretty important job.

Anyhow he used to, he'd spend a lot of time in the Smoke Room at the Pleasure Boat where they used to meet and I don't think they went very far after that. They'd probably go round and say 'Put that light out' and that was about the end of it.

ALK: *Did he have any stories about sorting out smuggling or Black whatever it is?*

PB: No I don't think they had to do too much really, he did have to...

There was a bomb, an unexploded bomb, dropped on, down at Eastfield on Harry Blaxell's land, on his marshes and he had to guard that. And he stood by a gate post all one Sunday morning and nobody turned up so eventually he found his way to the Pleasure Boat and when he came back half the village were there. And, anyhow, he got rid of them. Actually the bomb went up that night and the gate posts where he was leaning on, well that had gone too, so you know.

We also had some searchlights down at Eastfield on a long strip of land. Well called it a long strip, it was a meadow and I think there were four, they dredged, they dug these mounds out and then put searchlight in the middle. And after the war they offered to pay him, I think he said 3/- each, to fill them in again and that was what they were going to give him so he objected to this

and they sent a bowler hat down from London to - with a chauffeur driven - and they eventually settled on 5/- each (LAUGH) but he never did fill them in.

I filled them in in the end.

ALK: *Did you get the 5/-?*

PB: **No chance. (LAUGH) No.**

ALK: *Do you have any animals on the farm?*

PB: **Yeah, we had a suckler herd, because we had 120 acres of marshes down there as well, yeah. And my father was quite keen on cattle. He used to go to market and buy a lot of Irish stalls and put them in the yards in the winter time and sell them off 'cos they used to really fatten these things in those days, you know. Fat was pretty good for you, so they said (LAUGH).**

They were big animals the time they went out of the yard

ALK: *Horses?*

PB: **The horses. I can remember the last two horses being sold, I was at Norwich School at the time so it would have been about 1960 I suppose. I went to see them sold. Duke and Gypsy were the two.**

ALK: *Heavy horses?*

PB: **Yes, oh yes. I can remember as a boy they were always on the farm, we didn't have a tractor until I would think about 1950, something like that 1948. Yeah, that would have been about when the first tractor was there.**

IALK: *And Eastfield Farm, I mean, did that have electricity?*

PB: **We were one of the first to go on electricity because of the electric pump because we had a wind pump down there that broke down and, in the end, the sails came off, so they had to put electric pump down there**

To do that they had to bring it right through the village. So they put us on they put our Eastfield Farm on with, um, Harry Blaxell's Eastfield Farm - they were both called Eastfield Farm - so we were one of the first to go on, because they put us on the way down, which was quite handy.

But I can remember them putting the electricity on in the house and of course there were all the old reed block ceilings in there. They pulled them all down obviously to get it all rewired, and I've never seen so many mice in my life. They were everywhere, 'cos that old house - there was a date in the barn down there 1622, so the house would have been built around about that time - the original house, which would probably have been a very small house which was built on, built out, made bigger and bigger and then I suppose if farming had had a couple of good years they built another bit on and finished up quite a big house, but the centre bit of that must have been around 1620.

No electricity then!

ALK: *And lavatory, water all that kind of thing?*

PB: Well, no. We had our own cesspit. The water we pumped from a well and then we had a bore sunk later on until Stuart Ellis went down there 10,12 years ago now.

He brought the mains water down there and in fact rebuilt the house, knocked it down, knocked the old one down, which was probably the cheapest way out.

ALK: So any other stories of growing up in Hickling, you know your friends here, holidays, that kind of thing?

PB: We didn't have holidays.

ALK: No, school holidays...

PB: Oh, well, school holidays yes. But I just got, I just got on the tractor if I could. And in the summer of course we'd be playing cricket, or going to Ingham to watch cricket.

No, we just got involved in the harvest, really, in the summer holidays. It was great fun really, to be down there.

We didn't get involved too m[uch]... We were quite detached from the village so I didn't get to meet too many - after I left Hickling School I didn't really get to meet too many of my school friends after that.

ALK: No swimming down the swimming place or anything like that?

PB: Yeah, well I went down there occasionally, but well it was quite a long way away from us, wasn't it.

ALK: You didn't go to Horsey?

PB: Well, we couldn't really get to Horsey, only by coming back to the village and round. There was an old footpath there, but I think the bridge collapsed over the main drain sometime before, so we couldn't walk through there.

We were only about mile and half from the sea there, and I think when the sea came in in 1953, that didn't really affect us very much then but apparently - in 1938 I think it was - when it came through Horsey, I don't remember that, I wasn't born then. I think the marshes down at Eastfield were flooded: I never knew, but the '53 flood went the other way. We weren't affected by that.

ALK: And severe winters? You must have got wintered in...

And the other thing about Hickling Broad I remember most of all when I first left school was, of course, the old coot shoot.

ALK: Do you remember that?

PB: Oh absolutely...

ALK: Describe that for us.

PB: They used to have two.

If you've got an easterly wind and a full moon you..., the keeper, who was Mr Piggan at the time, they would sit out there and hear them flock in 'cos they'd come over from Holland and wherever and there would be masses of them, I mean absolutely masses of them.

Then you'd call a shoot and they used to have the main shoot first which would involve Royalty sometimes. I can remember King George VI coming past my Aunt Doris's shop, I was stood outside I was about 6 years old. It was only about two years before he died I would think. I remember him being driven past. So I saw him.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Charles, all sorts of people came to that then. It was a big event and it was big event for people in the village because the old guns would come out and people would stand on a piece of land that they had round the outside and they would shoot these coot and, of course, I've eaten coot. They weren't very tasty - and a bit tough - but I've eaten them because just after the war, you know, it was food wasn't it. And you didn't...

Most of them I think were sent down to London. I can't imagine what you'd do with them - pretty tasteless old things, horrible.

And then they had a tenant farmers shoot, which would be Major Mills' tenants, but you would, there would be all sorts of other people too.

But it was great fun. They used to have all these Norfolk punts, probably 20 of them, pushed across the Broad and they'd push up to a corner of the Broad and then the coot would get up and fly back over them.

They look as though they fly very slowly, but they were quite difficult - they'd slide with the wind and they'd be going a bit quicker than you think and of course you have to shoot them sitting down. I mean, that would be allowed now would it?

ALK: *Do you remember any of the old punt guns? They weren't in operation then?*

PB: **No they weren't in operation then, no. But there were several on the Broad at one time. I believe there were 7 or 8 of them sort of at the end of the 1800s.**

ALK: *That's a good story. So you mentioned your Aunt Doris in the shop.*

PB: **Yes.**

ALK: *I don't know that connection.*

PB: **She was my mother's sister. She was a Chapman and she married Ralph Osborne and they lived, oh what's the name of the house, they've just done it up so it's bed and breakfast, back down Stubb Road: you know the one on the left as you go back. I can't remember the name of it now, but she had her little shop there. She sold vegetables and sweets and drinks and things.**

And he, Ralph Osborne, who was my uncle of course, he was a basket maker.

ALK: *Yes that's what I know it as. The baskets were on the outside of the house.*

PB: **Yes, that's right, yes. And he would make all the bushel baskets that you used to feed the cattle with, and he was a very clever man really, nice man,**

not particularly ___(?) He always had problems with illness, but he was a very nice man.

ALK: *And you and your family, did you have any troubles with illnesses?*

PB: **Well my grandfather on my father's side had suffered with angina all his life and he was not a very well man at all. He at one time was a tea taster in London,.**

He had two other brothers that went to live in Canada. I suppose that would have been about the time of the agricultural depression. He eventually came back and farmed the Hall and I would imagine that that was about the same time as my father left Norwich School, so they sort of farmed that together, and then my father took over Eastfield and then helped his father out.

ALK: *So farming over several generations...*

PB: **I think the Borrets came to Hickling Hall in about 1850 and I think there were, so it would have been my great, great, great grandfather, something like that and they farmed there until they left, with one interruption when a chap called Manny Neill (?) farmed it for a time, not for many years I don't think, I don't know how that worked really.**

Anyhow when my grandfather died Major Mills decided to sell the farm. My father wanted to buy it and he'd already just bought Eastfield a couple of years before, although he bid for it, and in the end Roy Ellis bought it. He was very disappointed, my father but in the end you know, we wouldn't have had - Bernie is a great friend of mine and probably would never have met him. A nice, a very nice man and we've had a lot of fun together at various different times.

So we then bought some land over at Maltby and we bought some more land at Potter Heigham and eventually when my son came back, he said he didn't really farm the way... Didn't want to farm the way I farmed anyhow.

ALK: *He came back from?*

PB: **He came back from University, Harper Adams.**

ALK: *Oh so he did agriculture.*

PB: **Yes he did yes. With a view, so he was in view...**

ALK: *Yes.*

PB: **He wasn't that keen on that side of farming. Anyhow, we had a chat about it and I was in my sixties then and I thought well, you know, I might as well, I'd never been, never been on a holiday anywhere abroad or anything like that, so we decided to sell it and enjoy the rest of our life which we've done.**

ALK: *And what does your son do?*

PB: **He's a corn merchant.**

ALK: *Aah.*

PB: **Yes he works for (?)**

ALK: *And your other children: what do they do?*

PB: **Andrew had minimal cerebral palsy and he's autistic and he lives in Norwich in a flat on his own. We're going to see him today his 43rd birthday.**

ALK: *His birthday.*

PB: **But he's a lot of fun. He enjoys his life. He's very quick with figures: he's a very good cricket scorer and scores for Norfolk occasionally, the county side. He's scored since he was 13, at Ingham.**

Yes he's enjoyed his life, and my daughter who is my youngest child - she's now 34 think so, yes something like that and she lives in Creaton, just outside Northampton. She works for HSBC, with a good job there. Two little boys. Chris has got two daughters and a son.

ALK: *So if we think about Hickling Broad itself and Hickling village, how does that sit in your memory, what are your stories about?*

PB: **Well, I mean I could - when I was at Hickling School - I could have named everybody in the village. I don't know too many of them now.**

ALK: *Yeah. Do any of them stick in your mind?*

PB: **Well all the old boys. Barney Amis was a great character.**

The trouble is now I think we don't have a shop in the village, so you don't get to meet these people every other day, and that's such a shame I think.

A village this size could do with a proper shop. There's no post office, there's no paper shop and it would be so easy for people to have something - not a Tesco's Express, but something similar.

But, of course, when I was little, you know, virtually everybody in the village worked in or around the village, all the farms were. I mean there were a lot of those small holdings to, they probably all had one man working for them as well, so most people were employed in the village.

There were carpenters, there was a garage, there was shops, 3 or 4 shops. At least I think there were 3 pubs that I can remember.

Everybody new everybody else in those days and that has changed a lot. And it's not going to go back is it? I mean, you know, agriculture just won't employ very many people any more.

ALK: *So your best friends actually seem to be guys from school.*

PB: **Yes. That's right, yes.**

ALK: *Even though you didn't like the school much. You didn't like Norwich school very much but you like the boys.*

PB: **Well I liked, I enjoyed the sporting side. I made a lot, a lot of friends that I met the rest of my life really.**

ALK: *Well now let's think now about the wildlife rather than the people, the other animals, and whether you've got any stories about sort of managing the vermin on the farm*

or you've got some stories about sort of flocks of birds who were coming down eating the fruit and disappearing and...

PB: Well, yes. I mean, that's right. Bullfinches were a real pest on the old blackcurrants, a pair of bullfinches could strip a bush in about 3 or 4 minutes and we used to shoot them, that was the only way we could deal with them. I mean that would be a dreadful thing now, but you don't see many in any case. They were a real pain, and we had flocks of them and we had to protect the crop. So we did, trap them and all sorts of things.

I can remember seeing the first cranes when I was, it must have been about 1975 or mid 70s when we saw a flight of them and drove down the farm and saw these 3 huge birds and I couldn't believe my eyes and now of course we've got a flock of them.

And rabbits of course. I've told you they got myxomatosis, a real pest. And I've got some of my father's wage books there and he put at the bottom of each week what he'd done and some years they were rabbiting twice a week, just to get them down because they ruined everything. You know, they were a real pest. And of course myxomatosis came which was a dreadful horrible thing. We did get on top of them and they've kind of got on top of myxomatosis and they're making quite a big comeback.

Anything else, you weren't a sailor by the sounds of it, you weren't out on the water.

The only time I went out on Hickling Broad was to skate

I thought you were going to say was to shoot birds

No I did shoot one of the coot shoots not on the broad I stood in the back set.

So tell me a little bit on present day, how do you see, you've talked about this a bit, how has Hickling changed in your life time. What are the improvements and you've told me about the losses so how have things changed for the good.

Well it hasn't changed an awful lot; more people live here now you've got a couple of estates. Housing estates. Um the new Hickling Barn is a great bonus I think, I know there was an awful lot of fuss about having it built but you know I think it's a great asset to the village. Um people don't use the pubs as much as they used to and no shops so. I mean it hasn't changed an awful lot really except that you just don't know as many people.

And now thinking about I know before we started to record we talked about the changing ownership of farms and things, but um starting off with Norfolk Wildlife Trust, if you were in charge what would you have NWT do with the broad

Ugh well that's a difficult one isn't it. I don't, I mean when we used to have this coot shoot there was so much wildlife on the broad and now there's not a coot shoot there's not as much. Um I think they do a pretty good job really. I suppose they've made a lot of improvement on the old marshes to encourage waders and bittens and all this sort of thing. But I've been round a couple of times and you don't see an awful lot of wildlife in the ... But that's just a general thing I think, wildlife changes all the time, you never used to see many geese here but you see an awful lot geese now. Um you don't see many coot on the broad, um and they still get problems with prymnesium which is quite sad really, and there now going to do some more

dredging I think which might bring back again. Cos that was a dreadful thing, the first time it happened carted trailer loads of fish off. Dreadful disease. You keep getting little toe rags down there but I don't know what you do about that. Um why do they get so much trouble. They had trouble with weed didn't they last year and you couldn't sail on it very well with that, cos it's very shallow Hickling isn't it. I don't know if you start dredging it you cause all sorts of other troubles, I don't know just try and keep on top of it really. 38.00

And how do you see you know looking back over your life time, there were tenant farmers really to the Mills estate, and as time goes forward it's likely that, that will change. What are your thoughts about that

Well it depends on who buys them I suppose. You know just the thought of a complete estate re-let they won't change much at all but if people are going to have to buy them, the farmers there now the tenants of, that's going to cost them an awful lot of money, something I'm not going to have to get involved with.

Well we've gone through quite a bit, is there anything I haven't asked you about stories I haven't asked you for you know we talk about the old stories back at home. You know what are the ones that come up.

Well there was one. Well I drove a mini pickup and that was what my father thought I ought to have, everybody had one in those days and they were great fun to drive and they were handy on the farm. And you know to could get them anywhere, they were front wheel drive, and I came back in the yard and my father bought me, well I say he bought, the farm bought it, he had this watering can and the bonnet up and he said 'when did you last see, look at the water level in the radiator on this thing, see you haven't had it long and you haven't checked it and I've just put a whole watering can in there and when I looked he was filling the oil sump (LAUGH). Oh dear Walter Beales was funny, he was a lovely man he worked really hard to put, on his own a lot of the time, brilliant, but after he retired he had an allotment and when I went down I always used to stop and have a chat with him and he talked about the green house affect at the time can you remember. And he was really worried about it, he said I don't know what they're talking about the greenhouse affect, he said the sun must shine off Hickling Broad something off my greenhouse anyhow I'm not going to pull mine down (LAUGH) um he used to get the wrong end of the stick sometimes, yeah nice lad.

41.13

*This transcription has been made to back up, not replace,
the audio tapes that form the main record output of the VOH Changing Village project 2015 to 2020.
The transcribers used their best efforts and checked back for proper names and places.
We ask for forgiveness for any errors...*