

[Start of interview – 00:00:01]

WRM Would it be in *Whitaker*?

PD It is, but the whole period of the real Cravens is in *Burke's Peerage*.

WRM Oh, yes.

PD And if you look up 'Craven' and peerage it goes right back to them; so that's got the whole thing in. Anyway Christopher Dawson, from either Langcliffe or Halton Gill, was a yeoman. I think they'd just become landowners by then but they started as yeomen. He rode over there and he met Margaret Craven and married her at Appletreewick, the High Hall, they had the wedding at the High Hall. And she I gather was the niece of Sir William Craven and the daughter of Thomas Craven, and she had two sisters. One of them married a Clapham, and the other married Sir Edmund Andros. Do you know about Andros?

WRM No, I don't. How do you spell that?

PD A-N-D-R-O-S.

WRM Ah, yes.

PD He was from the Channel Islands and the first governor of New York. My grandmother wrote a little book, rather a fanciful book it was like a story you know, about it. And Lady Andros went out to New York and she died there after a year. (Having come from here you'd have thought she

would have survived it!) And I'm descended from that Margaret Craven and Christopher Dawson; and that's when they got the property at Hartlington, because originally they had a property up here at Halton Gill. And we owned Hartlington Hall and I think they lived there. It's a bit difficult to tell, but a lot of them were baptised there and so on; mostly Christophers. Among the Christopher Dawsons was one of the first feoffments, I don't know how you pronounce it, for Burnsall School that was built by Sir William Craven.

WRM Oh, yes.

PD That would have been his uncle, and he built the school.

WRM So you indeed are descended from Sir William Craven?

PD I'm descended from Sir William Craven, yes.

WRM Via his niece.

PD Via his niece. His niece's father would have either been his brother or his nephew.

WRM Are there any stories in the family about that niece?

PD About the niece? Well, we have this story but it probably isn't true, how there was this old witch who lived up [unclear 00:02:51] Gill and they all went up there, and she prophesised what they would all do. And then the niece, Margaret, yes, she was a very interesting woman. Let me see now. Yes, they had Hartlington, and I think by then they owned Langcliffe Hall. The trouble

is you see that a lot of them were alive so they couldn't live in the houses because of the grandparents and things. And Margaret Dawson, she had a family with Christopher Dawson, and her son William bought the Folly, or she bought it, they're not quite sure which of them bought it, as a sort of Dower House. And she bought the Folly with her son, and then she died in York, because they had gone to live in York.

WRM Why did she buy a house at Settle?

PD Well, they were at Langcliffe, you see.

WRM Yes, that's right.

PD And they lived there for about seven years and he married a Pudsey, the last of the Pudsey family. They always seemed to marry these heiresses, you see, very sensible, and she died. She had a family and died at the Folly, and then he married again and married her cousin. And I'm descended from the second wife. But I'm still descended from the Margaret Craven, you see? And then there are all these people called Pudsey-Dawson who are really the heads of the family; and I think they still exist, but I don't know where they are. And they were the ones who were at Hornby Castle, but only for a generation. I mean it wasn't a family seat.

WRM What relationship were you to Geoffrey Dawson?

PD Geoffrey Dawson?

WRM That was Robinson, wasn't it?

PD Yes, now that goes back miles. There was a Christopher and a William Dawson back in about the end of the 1500s or the early 1600s at Halton Gill, and the ancestor left Langcliffe Hall to my branch of the family and Halton Gill to the other branch. And Geoffrey Dawson, they're the Halton Gill Dawsons. And it went down through the female line, and they had to change their name because of an entail.

WRM So eventually it became Robinson, did it?

PD Yes, Robinson got it and he had to take the name of Dawson when he got it. I mean, they would be tremendously distant cousins now but at one stage they were the same. And I don't think they will be descended from Margaret Craven, because I think it was Christopher Dawson's brother who had Halton Gill, so I don't think that they are descended from her.

WRM Did you actually live in Hartlington Hall at one time?

PD We did, but it wasn't the proper Hartlington. What we lived in was a house my grandfather built in 1895.

WRM Oh, I see.

PD He had this idea, like a lot of Victorians had of going back to your roots, you know?

WRM What was his name?

PD He was Dawson, Henry Dawson. And my branch of the family, they'd become merchants, and become very rich by being merchants, because my great, great, great grandfather left £90,000 in 1800 which I mean was millions. And they became very rich. It's disappeared since, you know? [Laughs] It does! Anyway, my grandfather was in the Army and he was very short of money because the money was all in the hands of *his* grandfather who lived to be ninety-nine, so until he died he didn't get anything. Then he died and then it rather went to his head, so he built Hartlington Hall on this hill top. The old Hartlington Hall which we'd owned had fallen down, that was like a farmhouse. So we'd owned that, and the land was there. And they build a farmhouse that the [unclear 00:07:17 – the Daggers?] have, out of the stones of old Hartlington that were down in the bottom. So the new Hartlington where we lived was a kind of Elizabethan copy rather like Town Head or something, and we lived there for a while. But we weren't there very long. It didn't suit us to live there at all.

WRM Sir William Craven will be remembered pretty fondly won't he, in Yorkshire?

PD Oh yes, he was an absolutely wonderful person.

WRM Yes, that's right; he seems to have been a great philanthropist, wasn't he?

PD Yes, I wish I'd known because they sold the Craven portraits recently and until they'd been sold I didn't know. Because there was a portrait of him that I would have liked to have bought and given to Burnsall School, which of

course he founded... but anyway.

WRM Have you seen a picture of him?

PD I've seen it in the catalogue, a picture of it, and he looked a very shrewd Yorkshireman.

WRM Who bought it?

PD I don't know. I should imagine something like a livery company would. He was the first... was he the first Lord Mayor of London? Anyway, he was Lord Mayor of London and he was a sort of original Dick Whittington, wasn't he, and walked there?

WRM That's right, yes; he wasn't thrice though was he? He wasn't Lord Mayor three times?

PD No, no, he walked there.

WRM He was a poor boy who walked to London.

PD Yes, he was a sort of peasant boy from Appletreewick, and it's so funny how...

WRM Where did he make his money then in London?

PD Oh, he went as an apprentice to a mercer or something, and this man I'm not sure if he didn't leave him the business or something. He seemed to have been a very honourable man too, a very good person, and of course he didn't forget his home, you see, and he built Burnsall Bridge and he built the Church. Or

did he restore the Church? I can't remember. And then the High Hall, Appletreewick, that's where my great, great something grandmother was married from. That was the Craven house, you see? But of course, the Cravens soon got much grander and left there, and one of them was supposed to have married the Queen of Bohemia. He didn't, but I mean there is a story that he did.

WRM Are there many stories told about Sir William in your family?

PD I'm afraid not, no; nothing.

WRM Where was he buried?

PD I think in London. My mother went to see... when they were in America she tried to see Lady Andros's grave but it had been uprooted. But she saw where it had been.

WRM It had been built on, was it?

PD I think they'd pulled all the gravestones up or something. But anyway she saw where it was for Lady Andros, yes. I don't know if they had any descendants or not. And then of course the Claphams, they were a local family, weren't they?

WRM Where were you born actually?

PD I was born in Dawlish in Devon.

WRM Did you come up to Burnsall in your early years?

PD Yes, that was very interesting; I came up from the age of one because my grandparents had Hartlington and we'd all come up for the summer.

WRM And your grandparents. What was your grandfather's name?

PD Henry.

WRM And what was her name?

PD She was Mary Bevan. Have you read Kilvert's diary at all?

WRM Not recently.

PD It's by a Welsh vicar. Well, she's in that a lot. She was a girlfriend of Kilvert, and she was an incredibly clever woman. She was a genealogist and she knew everything about everyone. She had no education, women didn't then, but she just... I mean, I went to Wales the other day and mentioned her and they said that for all historical things they use her because she was never wrong. She never would say anything unless she was certain.

WRM Absolutely. So you came up at the age of one, and successively, and you remember your grandparents do you?

PD Yes, very well.

WRM What was he like?

PD He was a sort of rather gruff-looking little Colonel, rather small, and he was a very clever man too. He was very interested in religion and history. So they had a lot in common. And they didn't marry until she was about 38, which is quite old in those days, and I've got a diary of hers that I bought from... somebody in Australia had got hold of it and I bought it. I didn't want it printed. She was obviously a terribly attractive girl, and a great flirt, and was flirting around with all these officers and really rather silly, and then when she did marry she married somebody very, very suitable. You know, they had so much in common.

WRM What was she like physically? Was she tall?

PD No, she was small with beautiful eyes. Of course I remember her as this funny little old lady all dressed in black, like a flown witch almost, you know? She had a funny little voice and she was very, very Welsh, and all the staff we had there were mostly from Wales. It was like a family unit, you know? I used to spend half my time in the kitchen talking to the maids, and they'd tell me about Wales. It was a lovely atmosphere altogether.

WRM What was Burnsall like at that time?

PD That was lovely. My nurse would take us out for walks, and of course she made friends with all the farmers' wives around so when we went for a walk we'd end up at a farm and they'd always give us a glass of milk and a piece of cake and make a fuss of us. And we owned one or two of the farms. The one

I've still got, Woodhouse; the people there, the Sedgwicks, they are a very old local family.

WRM In those days Burnsall wouldn't have the tourist pressure that it has now?

PD None at all, no; and you knew everybody in the village because everybody walked then. I remember going up and down that road from Hartlington and we would meet people on the road, and then we would go into the village to the shop and then we would meet so-and-so; and it was very nice that, a lovely sort of atmosphere. And everybody cared about everybody else. And what was rather nice, my grandfather was abroad in the South of France enjoying himself and there was an old lady who lived at the gate at Hartlington and who had no money at all, and everybody used to contribute; like the Sedgwicks would give something, and so on, and my grandfather did. And my grandfather wrote to my aunt and said, 'Will you please remember Mrs So-and-so's coal?' And I thought, 'Well, how people cared in those days. He was away enjoying himself and at the same time remembered the important thing', and there we all were.

WRM You said you went up with your parents, did you, to Hartlington?

PD I went up with my parents, but they'd often go away on holiday and leave us there. And we were very happy there.

WRM What were your parents called?

PD My father was Christopher, Henry Christopher, and my mother was Valerie Mills, she came from Oxfordshire.

WRM And the relationship with the grandparents came through the male line, didn't it? Your father was the son of Henry Dawson?

PD Yes and the other ones were descended from the Cravens. And Hartlington was quite new then, you see.

WRM Whereabouts is it?

PD It's up in some trees. You'll see a great big house. It looks huge. It isn't as huge as it looks but it looks enormous. And it was all 'hall', it had this enormous hall and nothing much else. It was most badly planned and very uncomfortable.

WRM Were there servants and what-not at that time? There would be.

PD Yes, there would be, but they were mostly Welsh. We didn't have the quantities that the McEvoy's had, of course by then I mean they weren't very well off, my grandparents. You know, they had money, but they didn't live in an ostentatious way at all.

WRM Was the mill working at that time?

PD No, the mill, that had been a ruin, and grandpapa... no, what happened was, oh yes, we owned half the mill together with Lady Fairfax, I think, for centuries. And then I think they bought Lady Fairfax out, and we owned the mill, and

there was a ruined cottage and the ruined mill. And my grandfather restored the mill and made electricity for the house from the mill, and the cottage the gardener lived in, and then restored the mill dam and all that. There was always a lot of trouble with it. And they put in electricity in 1895 when the house was built, it was extremely early.

WRM Jolly good.

PD Yes.

WRM They generated their own, did they, presumably?

PD Yes, with the wheel, you see?

WRM Ah, yes.

PD And then afterwards the village got put onto the thing, so we supplied the whole village. No, we let it then to the man at the mill and he supplied the whole village; and of course when they nationalised it, it was not used anymore and it was an absolute waste. I mean, it was terrible.

WRM Did Sir William Craven live at Burnsall at any time?

PD At Appletreewick. He lived in those little cottages they've shown in the magazine. I think that was a chapel, it's a chapel now, and he lived in this cottage.

WRM That was when he was young?

PD Yes.

WRM Did he actually own property when he was older? When he was doing all this work for the village?

PD Yes, I think he did. Our uncle, Thomas Craven, owned property. They did own property there. They had the High Hall which they built. I don't quite know. But he didn't live up there; he used to come up there. He lived in London; he built a house in London. So yes, I remember Burnsall very well, we'd come up every summer, and when we got to Bolton Abbey we'd get to the car and when we got to Hartlington all the maids had put flags on the tower. There was a tower. It was lovely, yes.

WRM Of the house?

PD Yes, there would be all these flags flying when we'd arrive.

WRM Brilliant.

PD And then we'd spend the summer there and it was very nice. But in actual fact I didn't like the house very much, and it was the people really that made it for me.

WRM Was it rather draughty or unhandy?

PD Yes, and also I didn't like... I was always interested in architecture and I didn't like an imitation old house, I wanted a real old house. And of course I loved Parcevall Hall: that was the one.

WRM Do you remember Mr Milner?

PD Yes, William Milner. Yes, somebody wrote about him the other day and they mentioned me, because apparently at Burnsall Sports I couldn't see what was going on and he lifted me onto his shoulders because he was a giant, you know? And he loved children and apparently I wasn't a bit frightened of him, why should I have been? It said I was very shy, I wasn't shy, and I could see all the view, you know? And he used to come to Hartlington and we'd see him. Oh yes, he was a very nice man.

WRM What sort of a man was he temperamentally?

PD He was very nervous, very nervous and shy. Yes, not a sociable person. But he was in the area, you know?

WRM He was very contemplative I suppose?

PD Yes, and he was very popular there, and my grandfather and he got on very well.

WRM Did you ever see, you know, the Bolton Abbey... the Duke of Devonshire?

PD Well, they never lived there then, they just used to come for the shooting.

WRM Did you ever see the King, King George V?

PD We saw him, yes, we pulled the car in. As he was coming along we pulled in and he took his hat off and my father took his hat off. And they used to send us grouse every year, the Devonshires, because they said that our

grouse flew onto theirs or something. But no, we never met them, they didn't live up here. Who else did we see? Oh, the Halliwell Sutcliffes.

WRM Yes, now, will you tell me a little bit about Halliwell Sutcliffe?

PD Yes, oh yes, I remember him very well. They lived at White Abbey at Linton and we lived at Hartlington, and they often used to... they used to bicycle everywhere and walk everywhere, and they used to bicycle over.

WRM What was Halliwell's wife called?

PD Mabel, Mabs, she was extraordinary. I've got a very good photograph of them and I put them in that book. She was very sort of theatrical and had great big hats and roses and things, and you know she was quite an extraordinary woman really.

WRM An extrovert?

PD He or she?

WRM She.

PD I think she was, yes. Everything she did was marvellous, yes. And she was devoted to him, and they had very little money but it didn't matter. I mean, they lived as they wanted to, and he did his writing, and they lived in this lovely old house. And they had two sons, one of them has recently died.

WRM That's right.

PD And then the other one was a bit dotty, and he was an awful worry. I remember on the bus he started sort of pecking our governess and she got in an awful state, it was very funny really. And of course it worried him terribly, the son, and luckily he died.

WRM What was Halliwell Sutcliffe like as a man, temperamentally?

PD I can't remember him very well, just his shape. I remember the look of him. He was small.

WRM He was small, was he?

PD Yes.

WRM But he'd got rather a lean face.

PD A very lean face, yes.

WRM Often when it's just the head and shoulders and a lean face you assume he was tall.

PD I think he was small. I seem to remember. She was so tall. She was very, very elegant with these long legs.

WRM Was he rather tweedy?

PD Very, yes, you never saw him in anything else.

WRM And what was his voice like?

PD I'm sorry I can't remember. You see, I knew her later. I knew her much better. I used to stay with her because he died when we were there, and my mother always said it was the worry of the son that sort of probably killed him. I don't know if it did but anyway.

WRM You went to the White House of course, did you?

PD Oh yes, the White Abbey, yes.

WRM The White Abbey, sorry. What was it like? Sparse?

PD Well, it was very dark and creepy and they had very old furniture. No, it wasn't sparse, it was rather full of things but not grand things, you know? Because in those days old furniture was very cheap, you see? You could get it for next to nothing. And they had a lovely atmosphere, I loved it.

WRM He would be rather like Elgar in the sense that he cycled everywhere, you know? I can imagine him looking a bit like Elgar too.

PD Well, you would do, yes, he was the same type, yes. Yes, and they'd come over, and then when my aunt was up there on her own in the winter...

WRM What was your aunt called, sorry?

PD Gwendolyn Dawson.

WRM Ah, yes.

PD And she was very well known in the area because she... my father wasn't, he was a sort of hermit and nobody saw him much, but my aunt knew everyone and she'd go up there in the winter. She hated Torquay where my grandparents went and she lived up at Hartlington with a caretaker, there was a caretaker and she'd just live with them, and although they had a car I don't think it ran in the winter, you know? She didn't have the use of it.

WRM So your grandparents went down to Torquay did they?

PD Yes, they had this great old Buick, an extraordinary car to have: like a lorry. And they went to Torquay. My grandfather didn't want to, but Granny's chest was so bad, she had a terrible chest. It's amazing she lived as long as she did. She had this very funny voice, and I remember her as a child. I used to sit on her bed and she'd tell me wonderful stories. She was most wonderful with children. And I used to enjoy her company. And there was no vicar's wife in those days, so she fulfilled the role of vicar's wife and every Sunday she would take a whole basket of toys down to the mill, and buns and things, and entertain all the children. It was very nice.

WRM Which mill was this?

PD The mill at Hartlington.

WRM Oh, yes.

PD Yes, there was a big room there and she used to entertain them all; so she was

very popular, and yes, she had a lot to do with it round there.

WRM Yes, there isn't very much to Burnsall, is there, but it's all interesting.

PD Yes, there isn't very much.

WRM It hasn't been spoilt at all, has it?

PD It hasn't no. It's a shame, we had a house in Burnsall behind 'The Red Lion' and my father said that if only my grandfather had kept it we could have lived in it. It was quite small and we could have come up there in the summers, but you see Hartlington Hall was huge and we couldn't really afford to live in it and it was uncomfortable.

WRM What was Hartlington Hall named after?

PD Well, the old Hartlington Hall. You see, the old Hartlington Hall was in the bottom, which was pulled down, so they named the new one.

WRM Yes and Hartlington was a surname was it?

PD Hartlington was a hamlet.

WRM Ah, yes. There wasn't a Lord Hartlington or anything then, was there?

PD No, it was a hamlet. But there was a family of Hartlingtons, [unclear 00:25:50 – Kefle?] de Hertlington, and they became Metcalfes, the same as the original owners of Hartlington.

WRM Excuse me.

*[Interruption in tape]*

PD Marsden...

WRM Of Hornby Castle?

PD Yes, who wasn't right in the head, he was my something uncle. And he died and there was a law suit, and they asked my great, great, great grandfather, the merchant, to finance this and he did, and then he thought well he'd better not go on doing so because he had a big family; so another Dawson, a Pudsey-Dawson, did. And then they got Hornby Castle. They won the case and then [unclear 00:26:31 – Adam de Tatham?] left them Hornby Castle. But it was a very... I mean, it didn't do them any good because they went bankrupt.

WRM The strange thing is... I wonder if I can put my hands on it; downstairs...

*[Interruption in tape]*

WRM The Pudseys were at Bolton-by-Bowland?

PD Yes.

WRM So they married into the Pudseys, did they?

PD Yes, a Dawson married the last Pudsey, and then they had these children, and I'm descended from the second wife who actually was related to the first one, Elizabeth Marsden. They've got a portrait of her at Langcliffe Hall, a rather

plain woman. And I've got a wonderful portrait by Romney of a Mrs Dawson, a very beautiful Mrs Dawson, and I've lent it to Abbot Hall at Kendall, so if you go up there you'll see Mrs Dawson.

WRM Where would Mrs Dawson live?

PD London, she was a society lady really. She was the wife of this merchant and they had a house at Windsor, and they all mixed with the Royal family, she was very ambitious. And they had this house in London which she entertained from. She wasn't very nice, I don't think. But that was later on, you know. They'd rather left Yorkshire by then. I've still got some of the land up there.

WRM You have? At High Hill?

PD Yes, Middle... what have I got? I sold Low High Hill to the Dugdales, but I've got Middle High Hill though.

WRM Good heavens.

PD Yes, I've still got that.

WRM There's a nice view of it from here, isn't there?

PD Yes, there is, yes; I was just looking at the view, it's a wonderful view.

WRM By the way it is a wonderful view; it's quite a surprise really. When we came up here there wasn't anything between ourselves and the river.

PD Oh, how lovely, yes.

WRM And just look, it's all been developed in the last thirty years.

PD Yes, but it's still a wonderful view. Yes, I always used to think of coming back to Settle but I'd find it too cold now.

*[Interruption in tape]*

PD ...a hundred years ago.

WRM Where is that, at Burnsall?

PD At Burnsall, yes, and I've got that and then...

WRM Woodhouse Farm...?

PD Woodhouse, yes, and I've sold the main farm where Hartlington Hall was. I sold Hartlington Hall for practically nothing as it was full of dry rot. But anyway, that's by the way. And I've still got Calgarth, which is a ruined barn down in the bottom with a field, and we've owned that since 1500 something I should think. I've still got that.

WRM How do you spell that? How do you spell the name of the barn?

PD Calgarth.

WRM C-A-L-G-A-R-T-H?

PD Yes, although they used to call it Callgarth, because of course there were lots of spellings for different places.

WRM That's right.

PD Yes, and what else have we got...? Of course, people are buried there, a lot of my family: my parents, and my grandparents, and my great-grandparents.

WRM At Appletreewick?

PD At Burnsall, Burnsall Church. So we've got things there, and we've got some windows as well. Aunt left money for a window to put in memory of her parents. She found somebody in York to do it: it's a beautiful window. And then the one behind the altar my grandfather put in. So they had lots to do with the Church.

WRM Yes, wonderful.

PD And I'm trying to think of other things... because my father became a very well known writer and he's in the *Dictionary of National Biography* and that sort of thing now.

WRM What sort of thing did he write?

PD Oh, history. He was Roman Catholic. It was a history of religions but it wasn't from a Roman Catholic point of view, you know, he was a total historian and that's why he was a sort of hermit. And then when he was 68 he got his first job at Harvard. He was at Harvard. Unfortunately he had a stroke after four years and he had to come back and was ill, but he was a brilliant man but very, very frail, you know?

WRM I'm still wryly amused by one of my memories of you. We used to meet occasionally in the library when Mrs Percy was there and she used to keep us under control.

PD Yes, I'd like to see her, yes.

WRM But I remember when you were leaving I said, 'How long have you been there?' And I thought you might have said, 'Oh, about twenty years', and you told me, 'Sometime in the eighteenth century'.

PD Yes!

WRM It took me quite a while to recover from the shock of that! I mean, normally you'd say, 'Oh, twenty years' or something. What was it like living in The Folly?

PD Very uncomfortable, but I enjoyed doing it up. It was a sort of great interest for me.

WRM You were mainly responsible, were you, for its restoration?

PD Well, I was really. We owned it and the Grisedales were tenants of part of it, and at the other end were the Ecclestons which was a sort of slum really, and the Grisedales, I mean, they paid hardly any rent but at the same time they did keep it together, you know? People have been very rude about them in the paper, but in actual fact if it wasn't for them it wouldn't be there. And I told them that and they were quite pleased. And they've had a horrid time since

because this last man is just letting it kind of moulder, he's not doing anything about it. I wish I'd waited now and sold it to somebody I wanted, you know, because I wasn't in a hurry. I don't know why I did it so quickly. I tend to do things rather on the spur of the moment.

WRM Oh well, we're all capable of doing that.

PD Yes, I would love to see the Folly used properly. It is very sad for me because having put all that into it, but it can't be helped.

WRM So what is your address?

PD 'The Hidden Cottage', Hare's Lane, Ashburton, Devon.

WRM Well, if I come across Mr Pudsey... and if I put together a little article for *The Dalesman* I'll make sure that you see it before publication, and then if there is something that you...

PD Yes, if you could sort of fill it out a bit because I ramble rather, you see.

WRM No, that's alright. What I'll probably do is to bind it together by having a little trip to Burnsall.

PD Yes, do that.

WRM Then I can enjoy it altogether or to Appletreewick of course.

PD Last time I went to Burnsall I was looking at...

WRM The Yorke family, they had a lot of property in Appletreewick.

PD Yes, they were very important round there, the Yorke family. The Yorkes of Gouthwaite; and they had Parcevall.

WRM John Yorke is still going strong.

PD Yes, I know, yes. I meet his son sometimes. I'm very friendly with the Tempests at Broughton and I go there quite a lot, and he lives there and is awfully nice I think, David. Yes, they're one of the oldest of the families, aren't they?

*[Interruption in tape]*

PD There's a wonderful poem I've got.

WRM Is this the Tottys of Conisford?

PD Yes, and she became a nun.

WRM Who was the one that became a nun?

PD Mabel, and she wrote the most beautiful poem which I've got about the Dales. She loved the Dales beyond anything, and she was saying that when she got to heaven she would hear the dialect and, you know, it was wonderful.

WRM Do you remember, was it Richard Totty...?

PD Yes, he was her brother.

WRM He was the last of them, was he?

PD Yes, he was the last of them, yes. Of course all the girls were rather clever but he wasn't, he wasn't clever at all.

WRM Had he been at home all the time?

PD Had he?

WRM He didn't leave home, did he?

PD Well he did, he let the place for a time.

WRM Because he was living in the kitchen the last time I saw him.

PD Oh yes, he was when I saw him. Yes, he got in a terrible state.

WRM It was this enormous kitchen lit by this gas thing or something in the corner.

PD Yes, it was extraordinary, wasn't it? But two of the sisters lived at Grassington. We called those 'The Tottys', and those ones became nuns and missionaries and all sorts of things, and they were very interesting people. And there is this lovely poem she wrote. Yes, we knew them, and the [unclear 00:34:32 – Mawkhills?] and of course we knew everybody at Burnsall.

WRM That's right, yes. No, I just ask about the Tottys because...

*[Interruption in tape]*

PD Yes, the Garforth family.

WRM Oh, they got it through the Garforth family?

PD Yes, they're a Leeds family.

WRM The Tottys were a Leeds family, were they?

PD Both were, yes, and then Mabel had Coniston.

WRM Who put the lake in there?

PD I think the Garforths did, I don't know.

WRM Were the Garforths connected with the mills?

PD Probably, yes.

WRM There was a Garforth at Skipton, wasn't there?

PD Yes, I expect they were all connected. Yes, that's quite interesting. There was something else I was going to say. Oh yes, about Hartlington. Yes, I'm half Lord of the Manor at Hartlington, you see.

WRM Oh, how does that come about?

PD Well, we'd bought it in 1600 something, the Lordship of Hartlington, and the other half belonged to the Wilsons at Eshton, and we never sort of bothered about it. We just thought it was rather amusing, you know, it wasn't of any importance. But recently Grimwith Reservoir has grown, and we own the minerals there, you see, and they've dug all these minerals out to line the reservoir; and we're saying that they're our minerals and that they

should pay us. And this has been going on for years and has never got anywhere, and I didn't see how I was going to be able to afford to have a lawsuit with the Water Board. And then Sir Matthew Wilson, who was about 85, died. He wasn't much use, he was rather stupid, and so I just let the thing go. And suddenly another Sir Matthew Wilson appeared from America and said could I meet him in London, and he flew over from America and said he thought we ought to make this claim again. And to my joy he was only about sixty and full of brain, and he was a businessman, and I'm not a businessman but I'm not stupid but at the same time I haven't the confidence to do this sort of thing. And so he said that he thought that we should have another try.

WRM So he is your fellow Lord?

PD Yes, so if we win it we get a lot of money. But I can't believe such a thing.

WRM What sort of minerals were they getting out?

PD It was builder clay.

WRM Yes, oh that clay is classified as mineral, is it?

PD Well, we do. That's the argument.

WRM I was thinking that you'd hit a lead seam or something.

PD No, but of course they used it there, and if they hadn't had it there they would have had to have bought it; so that's what we're sort of claiming.

WRM It seems reasonable, yes.

PD Anyway this lordship of the manor is alright, and then an extraordinary man called Mr Horlington who is quite dotty, has been in touch saying that he is the Lord of Hartlington, and this, that and the other. The Hertlingtons owned it originally, but long since, but he's quite muddled. He went to Burnsall and everybody found him quite dotty. And he says that he owns the mill, which of course he couldn't do. I mean, you've often owned things in the past, but you don't go on owning them. And if he could get the Lordship of the Manor of Hartlington he offered Eshton Mill. He said, 'Who is the Lord of the Manor of Hartlington?' Well I said, 'Well, I'm half the Lord of the Manor, and Sir Martin Wilson has the other half'. Then he heard he'd sold it. He was terribly rude. He said he'd sold it to a Pakistani plumber.

WRM Who had sold it?

PD Sir Martin Wilson. He'd sold his Lordship of Eshton to this Pakistani plumber. Well, I mean, it's very rude because why shouldn't a Pakistani plumber buy it if he wants to?

WRM So it's not Sir Matthew Wilson who is the other Lord, it's Sir Martin is it?

PD Well, I don't know which is which quite, but it's one or the other.

WRM Is there documentary evidence of it, sort of thing, or is it just tradition?

PD Yes, he has it; I haven't got it. He has the documentary evidence. And then

this wretched Hurlington man said ‘This Asian plumber’, and I said, ‘Well, somebody has bought it’. Anyway, the plumber, who I met and who is extremely nice, he’d bought Eshton. But the latest Sir Martin Wilson was so sorry that it had been sold so I said, ‘Well, I’m sure he’ll sell it you back’, so he’ll probably get it back again.

WRM That’s interesting that, because doing this...

*[Interruption in tape]*

PD His brother apparently looked very like the portrait.

WRM Oh yes? What do they call the Wilson then who was at Sotheby’s?

PD William Martin? No, I’ve forgotten. There were three brothers. And anyway the one I’ve met recently is the...

WRM Their mother was one of the Wilsons of Eshton, wasn’t she? And she married into the...

PD I thought she was a Ribblesdale, no, she was a Ribblesdale and married into the Eshton...

WRM Oh, of course.

PD Yes, that’s it. Anyway, this present one, you see, is the nephew of the Sotheby’s one. But I was so glad to see this sensible-looking man. He runs an airline, so he must be pretty bright. And he was related to various people; he’s

not related to me, he's no relation of mine at all. So we're going to see what will happen. It will be interesting.

*[Interruption in tape]*

PD Yes, she did.

WRM So your grandmother wrote a book on Burnsall?

PD Yes, and this little story about Lady Andros which is very romantic.

WRM Wonderful.

PD And then she... I saw her in Burnsall churchyard about a year ago, and some people there were looking for some graves and my grandfather's tomb was carved by Eric Gill, you know, who is very famous now. And I thought that they were interested in Eric Gill so I said, 'Are you interested in Eric Gill, because that's the tomb.' And they said, 'No, we're interested in Mrs Dawson's'. So I said, 'Oh, why?' And they said that they came from Wales and that she was this wonderful historian, so I said that she was my grandmother so it made their day.

WRM Whereabouts is the tomb at Burnsall?

PD It's straight behind the church.

WRM Is it by the river side?

PD On the river side; and it's very modern, by Eric Gill, you know? And there is very modern writing, lovely writing, 'Henry Philip Dawson and his wife Mary Louisa', and next to it is my father's tomb, which is a Celtic cross, and then my great-grandparents. So they're there, yes.

WRM And you've got to go to London for Sir William Craven?

PD Yes, that's it. And I've got a lot of ancestors buried at Giggleswick.

WRM Have you?

PD Yes, there are a lot there.

*[Interruption in tape]*

PD They would had been tenants of the Cliffords then, wouldn't they?

WRM Yes, the Dawsons were very important people.

PD Yes, I think they go back to about 1500 or 1400.

WRM They have a cat as their crest, don't they?

PD Yes, a cat with a rat in its mouth.

WRM What does that derive from?

PD I don't know. It's an extraordinary thing. And then we have three jackdaws for a coat of arms.

WRM Oh, I see. Is there a family crest?

PD Well, that is the family crest.

WRM Oh, sorry, is there a family motto?

PD Yes, 'Amor Meus Crucifixus': my love is crucified; which is rather nice because they were all religious.

WRM How do you spell that?

PD Amor Meus Crucifixus: Latin you see. And I've got the thing from the College of Heraldry. I haven't applied for it. I mean, you're supposed to apply each year and arrange it with them but I haven't bothered. I really don't use them now. But recently... I had a ring and lost it, so I had another ring made, and then that one broke and then I broke the first one, and so in the end I got this one made out of the gold of the rings and we had these chauffeur's buttons with the crest on and did it off that so it was quite interesting. I don't know what the cat and the rat is about, I think it's a funny sort of thing to have. They've got it all over the place round Hornby. It's on the bridge, and at the garage there. I was so surprised it was at the garage and I said, 'Look at my ring', and they were so surprised.

WRM Which house at Halton Gill was the one where your family lived?

PD Well, it's the Old Hall, a big farmhouse.

WRM Oh yes, it's still there is it?

PD Yes, it's still there, and it's got CD, Christopher Dawson, over the door. And that's still in the family really because it came down to the Langcliffe Dawsons, so they own it, so it's the same. But Langcliffe Hall actually got sold for about fifteen years and then the Miss Dawson from Halton Gill bought it back and left it down the family.

WRM And they also sold Pen-y-ghent – what a marvellous thing! *[Laughs]* I own a mountain! Or, 'I bought a mountain', it's a famous book.

PD I see Belinda, Geoffrey Dawson's daughter quite a lot. They come to see me.

WRM Oh, yes? Has she got any photographs of him?

PD Have I?

WRM Has she?

PD Of the Geoffrey Dawsons? No, there is one in a book. There's a book on Geoffrey. She will have.

WRM I'd love to, sometime, I'd love to do an article on him actually.

PD Yes, that would be very interesting.

WRM It has never been done, has it, not recently?

PD No. There was this book, a rather dull book, written about him.

WRM And I did a lot of work on... did you see the thing I did on Walter Morrison?

PD Yes, I did, yes.

WRM Because he was a neighbour, wasn't he?

PD Yes.

WRM And there were little bits I picked up there.

PD I've got a bit about him because he was a friend of my grandparents, and every year they used to go to Arncliffe to 'The Falcon' to meet, and he would walk over the hills and my grandfather and my father would walk, and the women came in carriages. And I've got a wonderful photograph of them.

WRM And your grandfather would walk from Burnsall?

PD From Burnsall yes, and Walter Morrison from there, and there is this wonderful photograph of them at 'The Falcon'. They look as though they'd had too much to drink, I'm sure they hadn't, and are thoroughly enjoying themselves, with Walter Morrison in the middle, you know?

WRM Do you remember Malham Tarn, Malham Estate, years ago?

PD Well, not years ago; I mean I knew it when you did sort of thing, but I didn't know it in the olden days.

WRM Did you know it when Walter was there?

PD No, I didn't, no. No, it was my grandparents who knew him. He used to go

down to Skipton eating buns and things, he was most extraordinary. My sister is a nun, and her Reverend Mother is a niece of his, I think.

WRM Good heavens.

PD Yes.

WRM What an amazing world.

PD It's an amazing world, yes. Yes, he had quite a character.

WRM You saw the book did you?

PD Yes.

WRM Have you got a copy?

PD I don't think I've got one.

*[End of interview – 00:46:10]*