

## **Thorne and Hatfield Moors Oral History Project**

### **Interview with: Richard Lyon (part 1)**

**Date: 15 December 2006**

**Interviewer: Lynne Fox**

### **Summary**

**Dave and Richard Lyon's grandparents moved to Lindholme Hall in the early 1930s and the family have farmed there ever since. Lindholme is an island almost exactly in the centre of Hatfield Moor. It is the subject of much historical conjecture and mythical stories, mostly surrounding the figure of William 'Billy' de Lindholme, a supposed medieval hermit. Lindholme Island, as part of a geological 'ridgeway' type feature, could have prehistoric importance and the Neolithic trackway discovered nearby in 2004 may have connected to the island. (see Mike Oliver, Paul Buckland, Henry Chapman & Ben Gearey recordings). Richard still farms Lindholme Hall land but lives at Lindholme Grange Farm.**

Location of Lindholme Grange Farm.

How family came to Lindholme. Formation of family farming partnership

Description of location of Lindholme Island. Historic improvements & cart warping from bed of Old River Idle. Warping pit here eventually formed Lindholme Lakes.

Description of warp layer & underlying peat

Difference in structure between flood warp & cart warp.

Farming on thin crust of warp soil – danger of sinking into peat. Drainage

Parents farming at Lindholme. Crops 'farming by boat' – some fields almost all under water in wet years. Isolation of farm. Workforce then & historically - Lindholme Hall farm in 1871 census

Size of current farm

Historical references to Lindholme – Samuel Wesley & George Stovin's visit to find 'Billy'

Lindholme's grave. Some 'Billy' Lindholme stories. Playing with 'Billy' Lindholme's bones when he was a child.

Dad as collector. Collection of historic vehicles.

Getting to school

Working on the farm in school holidays. Moor fire

Little connection with surrounding peat working. Tram way in the lane.

He worked on family farm at Lindholme Hall. Relationship of his current farm to Lindholme Hall

Description of his current farm. Crops include new bio fuels for power stations. Agreement to grow wheat for bio ethanol for motor fuel in 2008

Relationship with wildlife of the moors.

Never considered selling underlying peat

Description of the moor prior to surface milling. Hundreds of people working on the moor when he went to school. Recovery of landscape & wildlife. Impact of surface milling.

Potential impact of restoration programme

Conservation on the farm – set-aside, Countryside Stewardship Scheme, Environmental Stewardship Scheme etc.