

**East Prawle History Group**  
**14 November 2011**  
**Talk with Michael and Richard Partridge**  
**Kingsbridge and East Prawle History Societies**  
**transcribed by Kate Jennings**

Michael I am just going to tell you a little bit about the cox of the Salcombe life boat when he came into the wreck of Heye-P and he stood in wind and the Heye-P came ashore out here and when the Gazette reporter interviewed him and said what was the weather like then, was it rough. He said well 'twas a bit breezy and that's what it's like out here today, a bit breezy! Thank you all for coming.

A little bit about October's meeting. I don't know whether everybody came to October's meeting but that went off lovely with Betty and her husband and Ray and also young Mr Pedrick, all his photographs. They went to a lot of work to put it on disk and I think it worked out really well, and like to thank them all for putting so much time and effort into organising a really grand evening, and there will be more of that to come in the future hopefully. Ray came in talking about cob walls and one thing and another and then onto the next meeting after this in December again Reg is on it and Agnes ?? ... Over in the hall I've brought a black folder which is on the table there handy to all my gear that I've brought with Devonshire Dialect words and telling you what they mean, for those that want to swot up on it. Ready for the next meeting and then you understand what she's saying. Right back to today, we're going to walk after we've looked around the green out to the old, old coastguard houses. A lot of people don't know they take the old coastguard stations out there. But there's three. There's the old, old coastguard station out there, the original. There's the old coastguard station built in front out by the Lookout. Incidentally there was a lookout just down that road, the original lookout – is that right Rich? You can tell us when it was built?

Richard In on the right.

Michael When were the houses built?

Richard They were built between 1823 and 1825.

Michael Ok. So we're going out to look at those and where the rocket house was where they kept the wagon. We've got a photograph over there. I think a lot of you have seen it of the Hope Cove rocket wagon?



Hope Cove Rocket cart. Rocket apparatus with drogue on wheel

Which carried all the gear to be able to effect a rescue and originally towed by horses ? nowt with ropes and men. But then in later years they had a tractor tow bar put on and Roger's grandfather and father supplied the standard ?woods that formed around, and Bill Sanders who you can see in the Home Guard to drive the tractor, and then eventually they used a barn trailer instead of the massive four wheel wagon, and just put on board the bits and pieces that they needed to do the rescue that they had information as to what the rescue was going to be, so therefore they didn't take all the gear, they just took the few bits on the farm trailer that was relevant to the rescue that they were going to do or a practice. So it meant that they could get around, because a lot of places they couldn't get round with the wagon, would they Roger?

Roger If it was long distance we used to go in Jack Rendell's Bedford lorry.

Michael Absolutely, Jack Rendell the Prawle carrier? It was out at Hallsands.

Roger Dartmouth.

Michael At Hallsands – I don't know if any of you ever saw it, but in the hotel, the Trouts Hotel, all the tables were laid ready for the evening meal, right? With ?Servey Right – you know what Servey Right say – the idea of a Servey Right is, I am telling you in case, is to tuck 'em down on your lap, and when you'm eating, if you should drop a bit of pork or anything, you can pick it up and eat it again, so it didn't fall on the floor and all dirty see. Anyway, back to the main ? on the green – there's a photograph of the green look, years ago, right? And the car there and the heap of stones for being cracked for the road – see that? And the old car here we think could be this lady's relation. We don't know.

Roger Their great grandfather.

Charlotte Great Grandfather, Dr Webster.

Michael Yes, Dr Webster, used to come down from where? London?

Charlotte Yorkshire.

Michael On holiday and he eventually bought a piece of land out there which you'll see as we make our way down, and settled there, and his wife used to put on Christmas parties every year for the children. And all the villagers, well a lot of the villagers would help her and make different things, sponges and what have you, the same as what we're doing today! OK I've brought you up here because before this seat was here there used to be some stones. This is probably one of them. ?? Standing beside the hedge here, hedge cum wall and old men used to come and what I call like yourself talk about what you half have done. Can't tell anymore what you're going to do, you've got to revert to what you have done in the past, and this is where they talked about it.



William Putt, Albert Rundle, Robert A Phillips, Danny Wotton sitting by the wall at the top of East Prawle Village Green

And one thing that happened – elder brother down in Cornwall his grandfather, a fisherman used to be up with his cronies talking about, discussing the government and

where they were going wrong, and he used to beckon Bob over “Come over here boy” and he’d give him sixpence to go down to Emma Putt down the shop, the carpenter’s wife, on the left this white built, and get him strong peppermints. And he had tuppence over to buy hisself some boiled sweets which is nice, and they were all in jars up on the shelf and he went and got the peppermints, and I’ll have some of they, they winter mixtures there Mrs Putt. Her’d get them down and have one of those pointed paper bags like you get chips and be weighing them out, tuppence worth of they, and if her



couldn’t get it quite to the right weight her’d bite one of the sweets in half. [laughter]

Right Charlie Yelland shop and he was the main man on this green. His shop with the window in the top. He was a bachelor – he come from Higher Borough, he was a farmer’s son, and he was here for years. Charles Augustus Yelland, all right, and he was some feller. And Rich tells me that he’s heard that this granfer that had the peppermints, he had to get him home before now because they’d been down the pub and they got very well oiled up on cider and Charlie was one of the strongest men about and the one that they had the most trouble with to get home. But if you broke, if you were working out over the hill here, and you broke a chain and you brought it in and you got in before Charlie went into dinner, you’d give it to Charlie, go home and have your dinner, and he wouldn’t go in home to dinner, he’d mend that chain and when you came back after dinner up across the green, the chain was all mended. Marvellous asset to the farming community in this area, was Charlie. But unfortunately Rich we haven’t got any photographs of him.

Richard No. ...

Michael It might be that you told us that Patsy from the post office was a relation of Charlie’s and they, when they moved up to the council houses they sold it and the shed .... Look after these photographs. The other thing I wanted to ask Gordon is as we go out over we’ll see that in Prawle there’s three levels of land isn’t there? There’s the sea.

?Gordon Yes.

Michael The beach and 200 foot cliffs.

?Gordon Yes.

Michael And then we’ve got a track of land running right around the top of those 200, and then you come up between another range of rocks and then you’ve got another layer going right out through, and then the third layer is up here. So there’s three different places

that the sea has been over last 25 years – [laughter] and we wanted you to tell us why that is.

Gordon It's millions of years. What we are here that's about 430 feet.

? Five hundred and forty.

Gordon Five hundred and forty.

?Roger Five hundred and forty feet high ...

Gordon Right cos there's a sort of level that goes from Start Point right to Bolt Tail. So the highest is 4 or 500 feet.

Roger Exactly the same height as where my daughter lives in Dallas in Texas. 540 feet.

Gordon So once the sea may have been that height and it ? off. That's one theory and I am only trying to remember.

Michael What I'm trying to do is getting everybody involved. There will be questions for other people. [laughter] What we really want to know Gordon, is that the sea has risen or is it that the land has risen out of the sea?

Gordon Ha, ha. Both but mainly I think, because the mountain building of the Alps, when was that, and then Dartmoor came up – that was 270 million years ago, and this stuff that we are treading on is schist, that's at least 400 million years ago and the earth has moved and the sea has gone up and down and there's occasionally been times when there's not been climate change, and they're the times when you get these levels. That'll do!

Michael OK! I forgot to tell you. ...[can't hear as everyone talking together] Anyway this hat came off Hi P – this is what you call it when you go aboard a ship and pinch stuff. Wreckers! So the wreckers were still about when I was a boy, look, and that's the one from the Hi P, but the thing is if I hadn't taken that one he's still a hat, but if he'd been left there he would have been rubbish in the sea by now wouldn't he? Some salmon would have swallowed him and choked himself, so I reckon I did a good thing by taking that hat! Right we'd better move on then. Have you had a look at this photograph ... Charlie Yelland got a roller stuck up down outside the shop here look and that's for putting a new ?speld, lead in a new ? and this shows you the development, early development in streamline agriculture cos that speld tang? Which is a triangle effort for ?spurting up the ground after you've ploughed it, is one that you got to turn upside down so it hangs up in the air to travel on the road, and when you wanted to use it you had to turn it to hang down, change over the fore carriage so the wheels were down under as well, and then if you wanted to put it deeper you had to knock out all the 9 tangs, all the wedges and put them down and then drive them in again. Well afterwards they put a crank axle on with a lever with a pin and holes and you could lever with tangs down and you could rise and lower to suit the depth you wanted to go. ....[Moving on and people chatting to each other] Are you going to look after it. I'll slip this in the car and then we'll make a move. Rich – is that the rocket wagon house there? It isn't is it?

Richard No.

Roger That was our coastguard, when we were in the coastguard Michael.

Michael That was the coastguard house when were in the coastguard. You'll see the first one when we get out to what we call New Houses. I'll just stick this in the car, so people can sit down. We'll make our way. [lots of wind noise as they are moving] This here is American digger that I found up the banks when the Americans were there during the war while they were doing the training, and that's part of one that came to pieces and they carried it on their jeep, if they wanted to get a hole in the ground this was the gadget they used to make it.

?Richard No that's an English one.

Michael They take it to pieces and it's strapped with leather straps on the side of the jeep. [can't hear the next bit] [something about barbed wire and they pay us a visit] and they

stored it all along in that corner, but things quietened down and although they laid it out like Slapton, all along on the sand, they never used it. And it was up in ?Towers, round towers by the meter strip. No yard square, mustn't go French! And we used to play in it, hide away down in the barbed wire.



Vue Charmanté

This was Trout's shop and the shop window was there where you could buy clay pipes, and liquorice pipes and pretend cigarettes and anything was still in being when you was buying stuff Roger?

Roger Yes. Miss Mapplebeck was here then.

Michael Oh right.

Roger And Mrs Putt used to be in this one.

Michael The one that bit the sweet in half was in here.

Roger We always used to come and get vinegar there. ...

Michael The door, the door was here somewhere. Possibly where that window is.

Roger It was just a galvanised lean-to. Galvanised lean-to went up and down there.

? Did you say Michael, house on the right was another shop?

Michael Yes. The story about that one, the Sisters of the Sea, do you know who I am talking about? Well you read in there that their brother married a lady and went to Prawle, well she then became Mrs Trout and she ran the shop. The husband used to soak all his fishing gear in tar and he used to do it, I'll show you out there, but the significance is that he smelt so much, that he got the nickname of Tarry Trout! So therefore he wasn't allowed in home. He lived in the garage that was out here. [laughter]

Roger Three shops here, one shop there, one shop there and ?

Michael Who ran this one then? [too difficult to hear] We bypass the Pigs Nose which used to be the Union Inn and you all know the story of what we called was the mad Frenchman. In actual fact he was an Italian. Is that right Rich?

Richard Yes.

Michael Now when he got fightable and stabbed different people the coastguards were called because there weren't any police and they came up, and he disappeared out of the pub. He'd been fighting with his mates, and he'd been out New Houses and stabbed the coastguard's wife and a lady, she's playing dead, which I'll show you where that was supposed to have happened later on, and he left her and she survived. But when the coastguard and his understudy with his sword stick came to help and apprehend him,



they couldn't find him and they made their way out here, and what was he, he was hid away down here. It was after dark, down in that corner, crouched round this walled garden that was and he rushed up and went to stab the coastguard officer and his man with the sword stick stabbed him in the back and he died, and he's buried down Chivelstone church. And the tale is that it thundered and lightened and rained like anything when he was buried and it washed out the wall of the church, didn't it Rich? ... And if you go down Chivelstone church in the high wall you can see the place where they rebuilt the wall, I think you'll find. It's a little bit thicker.

? Michael is that what you're going to row to Torcross in?

Michael No what's happening is I've learnt it from an Irishman. Now he was going to cross the Atlantic on a plank of wood and I'm going to do the same, but unfortunately he couldn't find a plank long enough. ... And now here's a question for you Roger where did that one come from? ...

Roger No, don't know.

Michael Who lives down where Bert Stone used to live? This lady lives down where Bert Stone the shoemaker used to live [Sarah Trinick] and he also used to do the boots for the RAF camp which was over there. And you'd go down and back in the corner he'd have a heap of boots and he'd be there mending these boots and that was his main job. His father old Bert Stone, Bert the shoemaker I'm talking about got wounded and was posted missing in the first world war, and then he survived and was brought back to London, I think, to convalesce and be mended and when they got a telegram to say he was up, old Bert Stone went away by train, never been on a train before, to go and visit his son, but what he did take is what we call ?Goanna bag – do you know what a ?Goanna bag is? Don't Roger know?



Rock Cottage on the right

Roger Yes.

Michael Well you tell us then Roger!

Roger Hessian bag.

Michael There you are it was a hessian bag and he carried his sandwiches and all his spare pads and what have we in this hessian bag over his shoulder and away he went.

Roger The man he's talking about is our Granny's brother. Yes.

Richard Goanna was fertiliser droppings that they bought from ?Gowanna.

Michael I never knew that – so well done Rich. So it was a ?Gowanna bag. [laughter] I mean that would help the sandwiches. Where's that lady with that photograph – ah there she is. Can I have it? ... I brought this one cos this is my father with his cart with a horse in 4 chain and a photograph was took here and there's the chimney look. So it was took somewhere round here and why he had a horse in four chains to help him get up the hill you'll see in a minute. ...[moving on] This is Shepherd's House which used to be called Shepherds Farm, one of several farms in the village.

Roger Bought by our grandfather in 1912 for £1000.

Michael Ah there you are.

Roger With 37 acres.

Michael And what I was going to say, who used to live here, was Mr ?Hockridge who was our Captain Mannering in Home Guard. He wasn't captain was he? He was a Lieutenant. His photograph's there. You might see when you are looking at your photographs. Come on then Roger. I want to ask you some questions.

Roger Oh no, I don't know anything.

Michael Well you've got the right hat on for it.

Roger This hat here was given to me, when we were on holiday in Tenerife, and we made friends, Jo and Mary O'Neil were a very elderly couple, and he had diabetes.

Michael What's coming out through there? There you are Gordon.

? Badgers.

Michael Your friends come out through there look. They come out through there and up and over. Roger reckons it's badgers. [can't hear moving along again] When this mad Italian was on the run with his knife there wasn't any wall here, this was a bit of a holy ground and apparently the gypsies used to encamp there, and this is where the woman that he stabbed was supposed to pretend playing being dead and he left her in that area, and Roger has just pointed out something I didn't know. The biggest houses in Prawle, one here which is called Hines Hill, and on the map I've got about Prawle I got the date of when the land was sold to ? Ern Rendle?

Roger Yes.

Michael And he was the publican at the Union Inn where all this took place, which is now the Pigs Nose. He built this house. I got the ?diesel Lister engine that used to generate his electricity up home, and the other house, Welle House at the far end of the village, towards the first world war aerodrome, up by where Rich lives, Welle House, was built by the publican of the Providence Inn, so they were the boys with the money!

? Michael when did you say the Italian with the knife lived?

Michael I've got it in here. No he came ashore on a ship.

? It's sort of a hundred years ago or something like that?

Michael Yes.

Richard 1874. Boat came ashore off Horseley Beach. [?something about trying to save it].

Michael They had agents come and they all had to go out and look to see if anything could be saved, and then this chappie was a troublesome shipmate, he called a fight. They drunk too much cider I reckon! You notice Rich got all the dates. You know now on the internet you can get these books, you look it all up. You press the buttons I think and you can read a book, well Rich does that for me! [walking on]

This is the garages for Hines Hill, Ern Rendle's house. I forget what sort of car he had. Arthur Jarvis had a Morris 8 and he worked ?? as a mechanic and his son worked in there afterwards, and he kept the same Morris 8 running for years and years and years. This is Hines Hill and when we went to the beach, we used to take a short cut through that gate and down over the hill.

Roger Mr Partridge's field?

Michael Yes. And us used to slip on our behinds quite a bit. And Horseley was years before the ??Horseleys were there. Rich knows because Richard Partridge is in the Stokenham record as stopping people from going through there. There was a Richard Partridge stopped them from going down to Horseley and taking the seaweed. This is here is where Dr Webster and Mrs Webster used to put on the Christmas parties for us kids for years and years and years. And the original buildings were huts from the first world war aerodrome. They had one here to live in, just a long wooden building and they had another one back behind that was what they called the Wash house where Christopher, these girls' dad, used to keep his toys and we used to go up there playing, and I don't know what happened to it, but he had a lovely steam train.



First World War hut

Charlotte Still got it.  
 Sarah I've got it.  
 Michael There you are! You'll have to bring it up to the Society and show us. And it's a working model steam train, not a wind up one or electric one, it's a steam train. And you've still got it?  
 Sarah Yes, I don't know how to work it. You'll have to do it for us.  
 Michael All right.  
 ?Richard ... There are photos of the ex first world war – there's pictures up the hall now you can see.  
 Michael Of the hut?  
 Richard Yes. ....  
 Michael Gordon, this used to be grass fields. ??? Is that an asset for the birds or not? If we came here with a tractor and a ? and pulled it all down would you be pleased or would you be cross?  
 ?Gordon You need something like that for all these rare birds that come to Prawle.  
 Michael Something like this?  
 ?Gordon Yes. No scrub. If you stopped doing everything, no farming, it would all be scrub land. So you need a little scrub, don't get rid of it all, and every now and then you need to cut it down and it'll grow up again, but not too much of it.  
 Michael Right. That's what I was going to point out. Gordon's reminded me. This money that we pay our farmers is useful money to us, because if we didn't pay our farmers to look after the land and keep it lovely like we see most of it, it would all be like that. In other words it's money well spent!  
 ?Gordon Bits of it they pay to make it like that because. ... Roger has ... population of Britain's ciril buntings. He's disappeared!  
 Michael Yes, he's gone on down. ...[walking on] Look at this wall, it's built on the original rock look. [walking on] There is where the rocket wagon was kept look in that house behind the van, and out there have you told them, we used to practice – rocket post look in the



corner of the field. Right and that represents the mast of the ship that's come ashore. That's a pretend ship's mast and we used to set up down here where those white rocks are, on that bit of high ground, fire the rocket right out over the Australian rock. I don't know why it's called Australian rock.

Michael Good job you're here I didn't know that.

Roger Because if you stand on that rock you can see Australia! ... Don't you remember doing it when you was a kid?

Michael But I couldn't see Australia.

Roger We did!

Michael And we fired from there out over and they ?? the ship's mast. We did our practice, which again there's photographs up in the hall of that. We did win a cup Rog, we won two cups over the years.



LSA Rocket apparatus:. Coastguard cliff rescue team on Sharpers Hill, coastguard cottages in the background

Roger Yes.

Michael And one thing that happened during the war. The old rocket line was thicker than the new one and it was about the size of your finger and much sought after, after he'd been used, for wagon ropes. And the boys used to be sent, and the young boys used to be sent over to get the rocket, cos the stick of the rocket was used again for a broom stick! You never had one ?? but they made lovely broom stick. They couldn't use the end of the rope because he was burnt, but what I was going to say is, after the war when everybody was a bit rusty, to put the rope in this box which was about that size was a lot of wooden pegs on a frame that went up through holes in the bottom and then when you pack the rope in, two or three would be pulling it in and a couple of fellers would be putting it in the box all around these wooden pegs and then it would be stored there, and then when we had the next practice they set the boxes up at about 45 degrees looking towards the ship and you should take that frame and the wooden pegs out and then when they fired the rocket the rope can run out without tangling. But they forgot to take those wooden pegs out and they fired the rocket and it was like a machine gun. All the wooden pegs were breaking off and flying out in the field.

Roger One important thing Michael. The village. The original village was at the top and all the land below that top level, all – these are all walls, everything is stone walls. It might look like hedges but they're all actually solid stone walls and in about 1700, I can't remember, it doesn't matter. Somebody bought this land, it was a duke or a duchess or

someone, bought this land off the crown, and came down here over a period of thirty to forty years, built all the walls and divided it up into farmland. Is that right Rich?

Richard Yes, that's right.

Roger Yes. It was about 1700, 1730, 1740.

Michael And here we can see those different levels of land. We can see the one down here on top the lower cliff and then that's where the cliff would have been, where Australia rock is. Some places where they've worn away the fields run down between, but this is the next level and that runs right out towards Salcombe. Not right out about quarter of the way. And then the next layer, that's the second layer. The third layer is up where we were on the green. So you can see it exactly where it was.

?Gordon Isn't that right Michael and Roger? The little flat bit down there, that 10,000 years ago went out about 20 miles further? And then the Ice Age began to stop and it's been nibbling it back ever since? And it's almost got back to the old cliff line. 10,000 years ago when it was still the Ice Age, it began to give, that stuff was like chocolate semolina. It poured over the old cliff, the second layer up, poured down there every spring a bit melted and went about 20 miles. Well I can look for growing cauliflowers!

Roger Yes.

Michael ?? I'll tell you more about it up there if I get time, but what I was going to say, bears out what Gordon is saying. He isn't telling any fairy stories, because out towards Prawle Point there's a bit you used to walk out on a little bit jutting out into the sea, or out over the rocks, and now over the years in my lifetime it's fallen away and now you can't get across. In actual fact you can go between it, can't you? You can climb over it from rocks to rock through the gap which was the earth of the cliff. The semolina. Somebody had some semolina just now, that's what we're having for dinner! [laughter and walking] We'll keep walking. This is where Bert Stone the shoemaker, who lived up there, lived in this end cottage and his father lived up there. He lost his wife and he married a young lady in the village. We called her Aunt ?Lou. Shoemaker Stone died and she was a widow and a wizard because when we had a sty in the eye, which in boyhood I had about three or four times, mother sent us down to Aunt Lou. We went down and Aunt Lou would stroke your sty with a wedding ring. I told my doctor that and she said "Well did it do any good". I said yes, the sty went but it might have been it was on its way out before Mother sent me down, I don't know, but it definitely went. [walking on] This is an interesting one. Scoble's big builders that built a lot of the council houses, gentleman lived there had an Austin 7. What was he called Rich?

Richard Alf Moore.

Michael Alf Moore. Right and he was parked there where that wooden affair is to hide the dustbin and Rich and I lived in this first cottage here. Right and from this side window you'd Mrs would come out in the morning. She'd come out, open up the bonnet, switch on the petrol – cos the tank was an old one. It had a gravity feed tank in front of the driver. Out with a bit of rag and put in to choke it, get out the handle and give it a couple of turns and start it up and take the rag out and put away, and warm it up a bit. And then Alf would come up with his lunch bag, which was army bag like you'll see up – the gas mask bag with his sandwiches in it. He'd jump in, and ? in gear, rev it up and a shower of stones would go back and Alf was gone. ... Another vehicle was – over the – that one you see the chimneys? There was a lot of RAF blokes billeted there and one of them at one time had an MG, a three wheeler MG. Sorry three wheeler Morgan. And all these ?pits was full up with ashes before it was tarmacked, from your fire see. Brought them out and tipped them in. And he would come along here with his ?, give him plenty of throttle and shoot up there when he'd get up to Mrs Webster's corner and he'd stall. ??? Morgan with a Vtwin motorbike engine in the front and he'd try about twice to get up the hill and found he couldn't, so he'd come down here, turn it round and then he'd

reverse up because he was lower in reverse gear than what he was in ? [laughter and moving on]

TAPE ENDS

Michael The houses were built – Richard will tell you the year. [too windy to hear sadly]  
Roger Gara Rock Hotel, alright which was and Hallsands, the cottages at the top of the cliff and they walked from here that way until they met the other ones coming the other way and they walked that way until they met the ones coming from Gara Rock, and they patrolled day and night.

? On foot?

Roger On foot, yes. And they patrolled. It was for the prevention of smuggling, where our great grandfather was the person who used to transport the stuff from the beach to Winslade Quarries! [lots of laughter] So these were built as preventative officers which then after, how many years. I've only come along to listen, I haven't come to talk! They then got transferred then it became the coastguards at a later date.

Michael Roger Barrett who's to do with Start Point lighthouse and the boss of the new Coastwatch – he's coming to give us a talk and he's wrote a book about Prawle and about the different signal stations that were out there, and he'll be able to tell us the answers to all these things that we don't know that Roger's talking about, and if you want to you'll be able to buy his book. So that's a few meetings on – keep your eye open for that. Roger Barrett. OK? I don't know what they've done there is that the wash house Roger?

Roger Yes, that's the wash house.

Michael That was a communal wash house and Mr Osmond Moore, my stepfather he became, used to set up and Sunday morning cut your hair there. He had all the villagers come down and he'd cut your hair.

Roger Ninepence.

Michael Ninepence. There you are, you couldn't get it any better than that. Sunday morning. Was a bit like? Thought he knowed quite a lot but when he arrived here from Thurleston Hotel where he was, what do you call a feller who drives the car?

? Chauffeur.

Michael He was a chauffeur, and then in the first world war because he could drive, he was a batman and drove the officers on the Somme, and that's probably why he came back. It's connected with what we've just gone through the last weekend (Remembrance Day). Anyway Osmond, he knew quite a lot, he did. He knew about plumbing, carpentry. He used to work with George Rundle the local postman and builder, who used to the block work and he could do the block work as well. So our Uncle Jack, he soon had the handle of him and he nicknamed him Professor Moore, cos you know he was the professor of anything you wanted to do. Then there were communal bucket toilets further along to keep the gardens manured, which was up there. And what we didn't know in a recent photograph. We've just found that they had gardens from this path down into that field, which is Roger's field. So any little space and different people had little gardens in little spots out around the coast and then they used to hire the fisherman's donkey for a weekend to bring their teddies up?

Richard And to collect wood from the gorse or something.

Michael Yes, because the washer women in the area used to make gorse ricks for to take in washing up in Bowhay House Garden, which is next to where we're going back, where there was a garden before Uncle Jack bought it and extended Bowhay House, the lady there that used to take in washing used to build her gorse ricks and then they hired the donkey to bring it up.

Roger This land down here. This shield ?? up through here the land up to the top, right up through there, belonged to – I can't remember how many greats it is – grandfather,

Richard Tucker, and he leased this piece of land up here, to whoever built the preventative officers houses. He leased it to them for a period of 90 years. I still have all the original documents up home, and when it came back and they then 100 years ago built the houses at Prawle Point, the second generation of coastguard houses. They hadn't quite built them and so they extended the lease on for another maybe twenty years. They built the houses at Prawle Point and finished them at the same time as Hallsands got washed away. Old Hallsands. And because they didn't have nowhere to live these houses were all empty and these houses came back. The first six houses to where the wall is came back to Thomas Henry Harridan Tucker, one brother, and the end officer's house down the end and the garden where Sharpers House is built, the next modern house there was built, came back to our grandfather William Richard Ernest Tucker. And the values of them were absolute peanuts, unbelievable. They were returned to William Richard Ernest Tucker, our grandfather, and Thomas Henry Harridan Tucker, his brother, just gave them back with the houses built on them, and the value were nothing.



Old Coastguard cottages and houses down New Houses, including Bonaventura building from First World War

Exactly the same as that house there which belongs to my Auntie Winnie. When our grandfather died in, when did granfer die? In 1953? That house there was valued at £140 and that was my Auntie Winnie's share of granfer's estate and the value was £140.

- Michael Going on from that the water supply for these houses. Oh listening to you so you're saying some of the fishermen came from Hallsands.
- Roger Hallsands, they came and lived here. That's how the Logins came here.
- Michael Right, I wondered how they came here.
- Roger That's how they came here. Because the houses were all empty so they came from Hallsands. When they were washed away at Hallsands, they all moved here. The Logins.
- Michael Yes they were all there when we used to come out here ploughing. And what I remember is Bob and Johnny Login when I was out here one summer's day to go up playing, they started tickling me on this wall, and I couldn't catch me breath I was laughing so much and screaming for them to stop, and they was tickling and tickling and you know I even remember it today, it was on this ? wall. Right onto the well. The water supply was a well in that corner, probably from your people, that was their land ?? and it runs by gravity and comes out. Is the tap still there Roger?
- Roger No the tap's disconnected.
- Michael There was a lovely brass tap and if you spun it open it'd drop out and you had to find it again. It was a horizontal one, not a vertical one. And you know what the difference between the horizontal and vertical is don't you? One goes shooting that way and the

other [laughter] Oh story about my brother down in Cornwall, the one that had his sweet bit in half. Back to the Logins that used to live here, the fishermen from Hallsands. Wilfie Login had a football. The only one in the village and they wanted to play football, so he had come out here to get him, so Bob said to his mate I'll run you out on the push bike. So he got on the cross bar and Uncle Jack was an agent for Raleigh bike and he had a Raleigh bike with not cable brakes, what do you call them, mechanical rod brakes. And the back brake came down and under the pedal housing and he only had a slider and then he had adjuster, just there to bring the brake blocks into the wheel and he needed adjusting. So he found a better way of doing it – if you had a bit of wood and put in between the rod and the bottom of the bike, he'd adjust the brakes by that means. Well unfortunately they came out and came down over the hill, the bit of wood flew out and they took charge at a great speed and when they came into sight of here the butcher's or baker's van was here parked so they had to go down there and when they come around the corner, Roger's father's lorry was parked because he was out here seeing the bullocks, and they made to go for the passenger's side and the handle, the passenger's door was like a T section great thing, stuck in Bob's muscle, pulled his muscle all out and he's still got a massive scar there to this day, but poor old Wilfie Login was shot off and he was unconscious for about a week. And of course they didn't have no helicopter then. He was home and the doctor came to see him and it was about a week before he come to again, came back to this land.

Ann Lidstone [I think trying to say it was time to go back up]

Michael When we've finished here we'll all race back. One more thing – the canon balls - forgot about those. Do you know how heavy the canon balls are? Are you a canon ball expert?

? No I'm not a canon ball expert!

Michael Is there a 45 pounder? They're 32 pounds. .... Richard's looked it up Nelson's flagship, HMS Victory, his 32 pound canons were mounted fairly low in the ship and obviously because the weight of all the canon balls and the canons they need to be low in the ship, else it would be unstable wouldn't it? [walking] This is where these gardens were which you see in the picture, ? in the fields down there. And see the road is all made of these stones. [a lot of conversation that I can't catch] Fisherman's cottages, I can tell you a few stories about who lived there.

?Ann Looking at the buildings.

Michael Richard and Roger. Ann's asking whether these houses are older than the ones up the village, they aren't are they?

Richard No because.

Michael You'd have trouble with the Frenchmen out here.

Roger There were cottages down here. West End cottage over the end and the one with the white one, Crab Cottage, that's old. That one's modern, we built this for Mother and Father to retire in. These here were the Preventative Officers. Mike going up the steps the lookout which has got an asbestos, I expect the asbestos roof on come from the RAF camp, but the Preventative Officers went up those steps into that little shed half way up and that was their sort of lookout to look around. And while we're at this point here, you've got the Coastguard station at Prawle Point, right? Then if you follow the land back up to the right you come to the highest point out there which is Signal House Point, which was called Herper's Top, but the modern name is Signal House Point. Where that stone wall goes up across the field there, there's only one stone wall going up there's only one.

Michael ??You've knocked them all down, several of them.

Roger Yes, yea, that used to be about seven fields out there. At the very top was, you can see if you go up there, you can see the foundations of the building which was Signal House Point so they built the signal houses in 1700 and something wasn't it?



?Richard 1790, something like that. The Napoleonic wars they wanted to get messages from Falmouth in Cornwall to Admiralty building in London so they built these series of, there was one at the top of Soar, there was one over here. There was one on the top of Start Point, where you had a 50 foot mast up – I’ve got all the gen of it back home. A 50 foot mast with yard arms and then they had different coloured globes, round balls of wood painted in different colours which they hoisted up which was the original samafour, and they could get a message from Falmouth that went up the coast to about Portsmouth I think, and then it went overland, over the hills. They could get a message much faster from Falmouth to London by these signal houses than somebody could ride a horse.

Michael And they were manned by Lieutenants from the Navy, usually ones that had injuries, not very good for sea, so they got the job of manning these stations with about two or three other sailors.

Roger I’ve still got copies of the inventory of when it first started out there, of all the ropes and all the things they ordered to man these houses whenever it was.

Michael Are copies of that going into the Prawle archives?

Roger It can do. The man who’s been dealing with all this – who knows Colin Roberts down at Charleton? The bookbinder Colin Roberts, the chap who binds books. He’s got throat cancer and he’s not very well. He’s still a super man. His daughter studied it, went to university and took up signal houses to study it and he got completely besotted by it and – he has spent unimaginable time looking into it - and that’s where all my information has come from, from Colin Roberts. Like Richard said, he’s writing a book and I hope he does finish it before, while he’s still with us.

Michael One little thing might be of interest is I’ve got the books on the History of the Devonshire regiments. I lent one to Rich, the early one to Rich and in reading it he found that there was a lieutenant that got injured out in Portugal with a ship that was attached to the Devonshire Regiment and it’s mentioned in the book where the ship of ammunition blew up. Right. Transferred to the lieutenant, you don’t know what he’s called Rich? Doesn’t matter. Lieutenant Pavey, and Lieutenant Pavey is writing a letter to the Admiralty asking for his increased pension for his injuries that were sustained on that ship, and we think that’s the same feller in the Devonshire Regiment history. One more thing, all the flat ground on Prawle to stop gliders from landing up there, they put poles up every so often, which lovely rubbing things for sheep and bullocks afterwards, but they was all over the aerodrome. ... What sort of wood is it called? It’s fir?

Richard I think so yes.

Michael Fir tree poles all over, and Bill Hannaford who was a fisherman and rabbit trapper, again comes from me brother down Cornwall and the sweet broke in half, he for his fire when all the panic was gone and nobody was going to land in gliders, he used to take his saw with him and on his way back from rabbit trapping ?? then he’d saw off a bit and lug it back down here for burning in his fire.

Ann We must go back to the top of the hill, and possibly we won’t be able to talk and breathe as we walk up the hill.

Michael There’s a short cut if we go up over there we aren’t very far away. [walking]

Sarah I knew the Italian was done in just down there.

Charlotte Harbours criminals in your garden path.

Michael Keep walking. The significance of the hoop and steam you saw me fooling about with was that I asked Charlie Yelland the blacksmith to make one 65 years ago and it took him several months before he came up with the goods, but eventually he did, and I made that one a few months ago out of a bit of scrap iron as a tribute to Charlie.

Sarah I’ve got some of my father’s.

Michael What have you got?

Sarah Hoops. Yes I’ve still got.

Roger Michael did you say that was the rocket house?



Rocket House in 2011

Michael Yes, that's where the rocket wagon was kept. We've got a photograph of one at Hope Cove which was more or less the same design as that one. But what a thing when the anti-smuggling people arrived here, what did the local people think? They must have been. And you know what – Napoleon he encouraged smuggling out in France, and some British people went out to France to organise the sending of the contraband by our smugglers, and the reason for that was that the more revenue he could keep from the British government the less they had to fight against it, so he encouraged it. [walking] And there was another house here, the ruins when we were boys, the ruined walls of the house were just here. Just out over there in the rocks is where people used to chuck their rubbish before the dustbin lorries and that's where the boys – not me but after me used to go digging for bottles.

Sarah I did.

Charlotte We did..

Michael Oh there you are.

Sarah ??

Charlotte But when we were little we used to play in this field, it was grass. [Must be the field just below Hines Hill]

Sarah We used to go down to the beach and there was a horse in this field and we used to feed it when we were little and one day it went away. We used to sit on the wall here and feed it. It walked off, I didn't want it to go so I hanged onto its ears and as it went it pulled me into the field. It was all stinging nettles!

Charlotte We used to play in this field quite a lot. [walking]

...

Michael There's the buddle hole – do you all know what a buddle hole is? Yes that's a buddle hole. No idea why's it called a buddle hole Rich?

Reg Don't know.

Michael He knew about the Guana bag – I never knew that before. Where Rich lives is where his Uncle Jack used to live and he planted ??? when he retired and he had this bungalow built and moved down and brought his phone number, 228, and called this The Retreat, the same name as what his house was called where Rich lives. His wife didn't like the sound, the roaring of the sea, she didn't like it down here as much. She was a bit of a recluse. So they sold this and the field and moved back to the original and took the phone number and the name back there again. And the Retreat is rather a good name don't you think? He retreated from work and went up there.

Charlotte I can just about remember him doing that.

Sarah I can remember them being here.

Michael Do you, yes. Did you know why they moved back there?

Richard That's what it was. Auntie Dorothy didn't like it down here.

Sarah She used to terrify me, Auntie Dorothy. Terrifying. She had quite severe hair pulled back.

Charlotte She had a hearing aid and it was a big black purse thing and this old fashioned wire attached to her ear, it was petrifying. I was like six or seven years old and because she'd shout.

Sarah She used to carry the thing in a little bag didn't she ??

Charlotte` I remember her.

? Couldn't you play tricks on her ???...

Michael Another little thing you ought to know, I think it was here in this part of the caravan was the sewerage works for the RAF camp and they had brick built ? soak aways and they also had a pipe working thing that revolved. Little ??? and we used it as a roundabout. We used to go down there and stand on. Christopher Trinick was one of them, Gerald Jarvis, Bob Login and me, go round and round on this thing. ??...

? I've heard that name, Chris Trinick he was best man at my sister's wedding.

Sarah He was my father.

? Chris Trinick. He was Bill Raymond's friend. They were in the Navy together.

??can't quite hear

? Well he was best man at my sister's wedding.

Sarah Raymond was his best man as well.

? Probably.

Sarah Because Kate Raymond was the daughter.

? That's right, well she's my sister she's ???

Sarah He died very young didn't he?

? Yes ...? [walking along general talk here and difficult to piece together for quite a few minutes]

Charlotte Our Prawle History Society. 39. Not too bad. I should know I am Treasurer! I think our last count was 39. [about Charlotte's membership but can't really hear!]

? Listen I haven't seen you since you were babes in arms. I can remember her when she was about 6 to 8 years old at Higher Borough. I used to go down to Lower Borough because someone lived there called Wakeham back in those days. Just in the war.

Sarah She went up the field in harvesting and lost her glasses. In the harvest field.

Charlotte She lost her glasses somewhere.

Sarah In the harvest field when she lived at Borough.

Charlotte She was born in 39 and I don't know when they came to Higher Farm.

? I can remember her brother.

Sarah He was born at Higher Farm though.

? I remember the little girl from Higher Borough.

Sarah They'd moved to Higher Farm when Geoffrey was born.

? I remember down at the house closed to Lannacombe called the Pear People and who used to look after them in a little chalet was Miss Don and Miss Don ?? and she had a donkey.



Miss Don with donkey at Craggs Lannacombe

Because the Pears soap people came there to ?? she would go to Prawle and pick up the ?goods. My cousin was Reg Wakeham at Lower Borough and we used to hear Miss Don coming up the road past Lower Borough and Reg would say Miss Don's coming and the poor old soul couldn't see very well and we little boys, I think about 12, 13 years old, we used to hide in the courtyard, wait till Miss Don went up by, because we used to go and catch hold of the donkey's tail. Of course she'd be up in the front "come on, come on my dear". The trouble was the donkey he knew that every so often they went to Prawle, now he didn't like that. We used to hear Miss Don coming back and we'd do it again. That donkey knew because he didn't want to go out to Prawle, but coming back the road we used to catch hold of his tail and he would keep walking, and we used to keep skidding down. Poor old soul. I remember Miss Don. Terrible voice.

Sarah She had a dog called Jackie as well because apparently Mother used to go down there peering through the gates at this dog and they'd ring up and say "Josephine's down here again with Jackie".

? She lived in a little chalet, just inside the gate. I can remember that.

? My husband was best man at your mum and dad's wedding.

Charlotte Yes, we just.

? You have to be awfully careful what you say around here! You might be related to all sorts of people.

? My name is ? you don't know me, you may have heard of me. Kingsbridge School ring a bell?

? Yes, yes.

? Many will be out. [walking on]

...

Charlotte Geoffrey? That's our uncle. ?Something about caterpillars.

? No wheel tractors because ... from Tor Quarry ... went back through Slapton. I remember Geoffrey coming round with his tractor.

Charlotte Yes.

? Across the field where ...?? My daughter, she drives a van for Aune Valley Meat.

Charlotte Yes, I can see it now.

? Susan.

Charlotte I can see it now. Take it into Sally and Geoffrey and we'll collect it.  
 ? She didn't always come out.

Charlotte Once in a while. [sounds like they've arrived at the hall – lot of talking]

Michael And I hope you enjoyed your physical training on the way out to ?? and before Gordon goes I'll tell you this little story about ?spudmen. ...? During the service somebody came in the church and said "Ship ashore". So the parson said "Lock the doors". So they locked all the doors and he went in and got his gear off and got his civilian clothes on and come out and said "There we are, unlock the doors now and we all start equal". [laughter] OK Gordon, thanks very much. First of all thank you for all the Prawle people and all the help they've given us and the lovely welcome for us to come out in their beautiful village hall, which was ex chapel, Bible Christians, and Vicky and Roger and all the helpers all the Prawle people who have joined in, and some from faraway foreign parts is Lannacombe. They've even come up. And thank Gordon and all the rest of you for your input and Rich and I've got any amount that Jane has brought out for me that I haven't touched yet. So if anybody wants to know anything about the cottages and the pub we've got a little story to tell of the Providence Inn and the first cottage supposedly in Prawle across the way and one or two other things in this area. But if you're fed up with us we can tell it another time. ...

? Why was the Providence called the Providence?

Roger I think because of the hall, of the chapel. The Bible Christians had their place here to worship in and then they went next door into the Provident Rooms that's what it was and celebrated afterwards. Like the Roman Catholics, have a little door in the side and they go in the pub next door.

Michael Reminds me of ?? ?? used to tell a few stories and he told, my wife's looking at me cos I've got too much to say ... [laughter] There was a conference I think up at Exeter Cathedral, and all the denominations was invited and three parsons met on Totnes railway station and they was there talking together, a Roman Catholic, a Jewish boy and Church of England, three of them. So in comes the train and they said "Come on the first class carriage is up the front there". So the Church of England said "Oh goodness my wages don't allow me to travel first class. I've got to go in the third class". They said "Come on us'll help you out". So they went up and got in and they said "how's it you can afford first class". ?He said "what do you do with all the collection?" So he said "Us keeps a little bit of it but most of it got to be sent up to Exeter." So the Roman Catholic said "Cor blimey that's a poor system, I wouldn't work for that lot. What us do us go in the back room after everybody's gone and ?? another silver plate and a table in the middle. He said "there's ? up in the air", he said "what falls on the table the lord can have and what goes on the floor is what's in the bucket". The Jew said "Get out, you don't know what you're telling about. Us got a lot better system than that." They said "oh what's that then?", so he said "more or less the same as you but when us counts it out and puts it all on the tray, he said the higher it goes up in the air, what stays up the lord can have, what [lots of laughter so I can't hear the end]

Lots of clapping.

Vicky Just to say to everybody you're very welcome to be with us again and we're very pleased to be with you ... we are a new group as you possibly know and we're trying to collect lots and lots of photos and interesting details of the area, which you will have seen a great deal is here, and we're very sad that we haven't got Mark and Kate Jennings who have done so much of the work with all these pictures and put them on the database and put them onto the website – we've got a lot. So very sad they can't be with us but Kate's brother died and she's at the funeral in London today. That's very sad. She was really looking forward to seeing everybody. ... It's lovely to have you all here and to join together. I am afraid I missed the walk because I wanted to be here in



case people came, but I'll catch up with Roger as to what was what. And do come again if you are ever able and we're pleased to join with you. Thank you.

Clapping.

Michael

Anybody that didn't feel they could walk out, we're going to ? out in the cars. All right, so later on when it quietens down a bit if anybody wants to go out. ... The pictures and the archive they're building, you know if you want to look at them, and also they've got some gadget over here, they've got moving pictures! And that's a rain water tank there look, oh it's gone. Conservation at Prawle in those days. To live in Prawle you've got to be pretty hard because of the weather. You got to be hard and that's why I left.