

## TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW GARRY GIBBONS AND RICHARD HACKER, 28 OCT 2025

**00:00:01,060 --> 00:00:21,860 [Garry Gibbons]**

All right. Well, it's the 28th of October 2025 and we've got an interview here and I just wanted to ask the interviewee their name, where you were born, which decade you were born in and the last school you went to.

**00:00:21,860 --> 00:00:41,340 [Richard Hacker]**

Okay, so my name is Richard Hacker. I was born in a village called Chiseldon which is between Swindon and Marlborough. I was born in the 50s and the last school I attended was Ridgeway Comprehensive in Wroughton.

**00:00:41,340 --> 00:00:48,220 [Garry Gibbons]**

Excellent. Good start. So, Richard, what's your connection with Broad Town?

**00:00:48,220 --> 00:02:30,400 [Richard Hacker]**

Well, most of my memories are on my father's side. I know the Simmons family had connections and possibly rented a farm in Broad Hinton. Broad Town, a vague knowledge about the White Horse that was carved and that we were connected to it in some way and that was all on my mother's side, the Simmons family. And that is about as much as I know at that point. I know more about the Simmons family when they moved to a place called Costow which is sort of at the bottom of Red Barn Hill, which is not far from Broad Town, just outside of Wroughton and my mother and her twin brother were brought up there. And then sometime after the war, I think it was, after the Second World War, my grandfather, my mother's father who was a Pontin, not a Simmons. Simmons was my grandmother's name, my mother's maiden name. He was a Pontin and I don't know how long they were at Costow but at some point, he bought a farm at a place called Wanborough which as the crow flies is probably 10 miles from Costow and I know more about that because I went there as a child. So that's the most I can tell you on that.

**00:02:30,400 --> 00:02:32,360 [Garry Gibbons]**

So, who bought that?

**00:02:32,360 --> 00:03:35,680 [Richard Hacker]**

My grandfather, who I never knew, because he died when I was very very young. But obviously my grandmother, she was one of 11 I think, so we're told and I don't think they all survived which was quite common in those days and quite a few of her siblings emigrated to Australia. I think that was on the £10 one-way ticket deal and so there's a whole tribe out there that occasionally, I think the generation that were interested in their ancestors and coming over to see the birthplace and where it all started; I think that generation is too old to travel now and I don't think the younger ones are that interested. So that's what I know about my mother's side of the family who were connected to the Broad Town White Horse.

**00:03:35,680 --> 00:03:51,860 [Garry Gibbons]**

Nothing from directly down. There was no connection with Broad Town apart from the Simmons family themselves. There were no relatives at the time that you were young that you knew of?

**00:03:51,860 --> 00:04:01,100 [Richard Hacker]**

No. Although your research has shown the lady who had that post office. Was that in Broad Town?

**00:04:01,100 --> 00:04:01,500 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yes.

**00:04:01,500 --> 00:04:19,760 [Richard Hacker]**

I know her married name was Little, but you found out her maiden name, didn't you? And there's quite a lineage of people on that side of the family tree.

**00:04:19,760 --> 00:04:31,080 [Garry Gibbons]**

So, when you were young, when did you become aware of that connection with Broad Town, particularly the White Horse at Broad Town? Was it something that was always there in the background?

**00:04:31,080 --> 00:04:45,740 [Richard Hacker]**

Yes, because mother always had the plans. You know and they would come out and I guess they would come out when these Australian visitors came over because they would have been interested in all of that, you know. But I guess we just took it for granted, you know.

**00:04:45,740 --> 00:04:46,360 [Garry Gibbons]**

Really?

**00:04:46,360 --> 00:04:53,640 [Richard Hacker]**

Yes, didn't see it as some great historical document or achievement or whatever, really.

**00:04:53,640 --> 00:04:56,560 [Garry Gibbons]**

Right. Do you know where your mother got the plan from?

**00:04:56,560 --> 00:04:56,900 [Richard Hacker]**

I don't.

**00:04:56,900 --> 00:04:58,160 [Garry Gibbons]**

Did she ever mention that?

**00:04:58,160 --> 00:04:59,160 [Richard Hacker]**

No.

**00:04:59,160 --> 00:04:59,240 [Garry Gibbons]**

Oh.

**00:04:59,240 --> 00:05:08,100 [Richard Hacker]**

Presumably from her mother. You know. I don't know where else they would have appeared from.

**00:05:08,100 --> 00:05:09,300 [Garry Gibbons]**

No.

**00:05:09,300 --> 00:05:25,560 [Richard Hacker]**

And from the state of them, you know, they've been kept in a drawer in a cupboard, you know, not really held in any sort of esteem or, with any - I don't know.

**00:05:25,560 --> 00:05:29,820 [Garry Gibbons]**

So, you mentioned Mrs. Little. Was that Nora?

**00:05:29,820 --> 00:05:30,039 [Richard Hacker]**

Yes.

**00:05:30,040 --> 00:05:30,980 [Garry Gibbons]**

Your aunt Nora?

**00:05:30,980 --> 00:05:31,380 [Richard Hacker]**

Yes.

**00:05:31,380 --> 00:05:33,760 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yes, because she was in Chiseldon at one point, wasn't she?

**00:05:33,760 --> 00:05:49,500 [Richard Hacker]**

She was. Yes, she moved there, I think, when they sold the shop in Broad Town. Yes, they moved to Chiseldon. So what relation was she to my grandmother?

**00:05:49,500 --> 00:05:59,140 [Garry Gibbons]**

I can't say. I haven't got a visual memory for your family tree. I can't recall. It may have been sister.

**00:05:59,140 --> 00:06:35,880 [Richard Hacker]**

May have been. Yes. I remember my - she would've been a great-aunt because she was the sister of my grandmother and her name was Lucy. And she was Aunt Luce, that's how we always used to know her and she lived with my grandmother in the house that I was born in, in Chiseldon. And that house has got a plaque on the wall was built in 1906 and that's been in the family, you know, until my dad died about five years ago.

**00:06:35,880 --> 00:06:38,599 [Garry Gibbons]**

So, the three brothers all grew up there?

**00:06:38,600 --> 00:06:39,020 [Richard Hacker]**

Yes.

**00:06:39,020 --> 00:06:39,780 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yourself?

**00:06:39,780 --> 00:06:44,100 [Richard Hacker]**

I was actually born in the front bedroom.

**00:06:44,100 --> 00:06:44,580 [Garry Gibbons]**

Were you?

**00:06:44,580 --> 00:07:15,400 [Richard Hacker]**

Yes, and we all lived there, and then through various means my parents acquired a house about six houses up and we all moved there. But they kept that house and my eldest brother moved into it when he got married. And when the house, the second house, got too big and we'd all left the nest, my folks moved back there and my dad died; both my parents died in that house.

**00:07:15,400 --> 00:07:16,580 [Garry Gibbons]**

Right.

**00:07:16,580 --> 00:07:45,320 [Richard Hacker]**

So yes, it's got quite a history, that place, to our family. And that was given to my mother, that property, in lieu of a share of the farm when her parents passed away. It was all left to her brother who always worked on the farm. So, he had that and mum was given a house. Which is remarkable, really.

**00:07:45,320 --> 00:07:55,240 [Garry Gibbons]**

So as brothers you never, like you say, just took it for granted, the whole connection, the Simmons' connection with the Broad Town Horse?

**00:07:55,240 --> 00:07:55,800 [Richard Hacker]**

Yes.

**00:07:55,800 --> 00:08:06,260 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yes, extraordinary must have been at the time and you never visited the horse?

**00:08:06,260 --> 00:08:09,200 [Richard Hacker]**

No. That's strange, isn't it?

**00:08:09,200 --> 00:08:09,940 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yes.

**00:08:09,940 --> 00:08:14,000 [Richard Hacker]**

It is strange. I should make the effort.

**00:08:14,000 --> 00:08:22,380 [Garry Gibbons]**

No, but with that connection, you'd have thought that perhaps, you know, you might've had a trip down there or- but, never did.

**00:08:22,380 --> 00:08:43,620 [Richard Hacker]**

I think possibly when we were children. That would've been one of those dreaded Sunday drives that you used to do with your parents, you know? Get a pack of crisps on the way home. Yes, I probably have been there as a child. But I, yes, I should go and visit. It's a good thing to have in your family, isn't it?

**00:08:43,620 --> 00:08:56,600 [Garry Gibbons]**

It's that connection, certainly. And just as a by the by as well, just for the record, your father's side of the family from Broad Hinton-

**00:08:56,600 --> 00:08:57,600 [Richard Hacker]**

Yes.

**00:08:57,600 --> 00:09:01,980 [Garry Gibbons]**

And they also have a connection with the Hackpen or Broad Hinton White Horse.

**00:09:01,980 --> 00:09:07,290 [Richard Hacker]**

So, I believe, yes. Which is a weird thing, isn't it? From both sides of the family.

**00:09:07,290 --> 00:09:08,360 [Garry Gibbons]**

It's extraordinary.

**00:09:08,360 --> 00:09:15,040 [Richard Hacker]**

Yeah. What a coincidence.

**00:09:15,040 --> 00:09:15,460 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yeah.

**00:09:15,460 --> 00:09:48,300 [Richard Hacker]**

And I don't know if they were aware of that connection. Well, I don't know when the- it's only when my mother married my dad, who was descended from the Eatwells, that any connection would've been made, I would've thought. Unless they knew each other, you know, from just being in that sort of proximity and they were like, "Oh, we've got one of those." You know? Someone in our family did a white horse, carved a white horse. Who knows?

**00:09:48,300 --> 00:09:52,440 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yes, because Broad Town and Broad Hinton, how far apart are they? Mile, two miles?

**00:09:52,440 --> 00:09:54,240 [Richard Hacker]**

Yes.

**00:09:54,240 --> 00:10:10,300 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yes, it's extraordinary. Yes, that coincidence as you said. So, yes, is there anything else you can think of that you might want to add?

**00:10:10,300 --> 00:10:44,940 [Richard Hacker]**

Not really, and just the property in Wanborough is steeped in history. That's another whole new story from what I can gather. But no, nobody else is lining themselves up to carve another white horse anywhere. I don't know if I maybe I've got a great-nephew that might suddenly think there's something that should be continued. But it would be seen as graffiti now probably, you know.

**00:10:44,940 --> 00:10:52,740 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yes. Did you ever recall a lady from America visiting your mother? Did you hear about that?

**00:10:52,740 --> 00:11:11,200 [Richard Hacker]**

No. I mean, I left home when I was about 19. So, a lot of things went on you know, that I'm not aware of. I did see the letter. It's quite a rambling letter, isn't there? Is it? Have I got the right one?

**00:11:11,200 --> 00:11:12,440 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yes, I would say.

**00:11:12,440 --> 00:11:16,420 [Richard Hacker]**

Yes. But no detail of it whatsoever.

**00:11:16,420 --> 00:11:20,710 [Garry Gibbons]**

No. Okay, well, we're in contact with her as well as.

**00:11:20,710 --> 00:11:21,339 [Richard Hacker]**

Are you?

**00:11:21,339 --> 00:11:23,020 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yes, she lives in New Jersey.

**00:11:23,020 --> 00:11:24,740 [Richard Hacker]**

And how old is she?

**00:11:24,740 --> 00:11:26,480 [Garry Gibbons]**

Oh, I don't know.

**00:11:26,480 --> 00:11:27,860 [Richard Hacker]**

Must be old.

**00:11:27,860 --> 00:11:32,339 [Garry Gibbons]**

Well, it's a lady, I wouldn't dream of asking.

**00:11:32,339 --> 00:11:34,180 [Richard Hacker]**

Oh, there are ways.

**00:11:34,180 --> 00:11:38,069 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yes. Probably contemporary with us. I mean.

**00:11:38,069 --> 00:11:46,140 [Richard Hacker]**

Oh, really? Oh, I see. Oh, right. Okay. So, she is a relative?

**00:11:46,140 --> 00:11:56,079 [Garry Gibbons]**

No, but she's, despite living in America, she's got a strong interest in chalk horses.

**00:11:56,079 --> 00:11:56,720 [Richard Hacker]**

Oh, really?

**00:11:56,720 --> 00:12:08,919 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yes, and visited Broad Town and heard about your mother in Chiseldon and phoned her there and then apparently said, "Can I come over and see you tomorrow?"

**00:12:08,920 --> 00:12:09,540 [Richard Hacker]**

Wow.

**00:12:09,540 --> 00:12:10,640 [Garry Gibbons]**

Your mum said yes.

**00:12:10,640 --> 00:12:13,540 [Richard Hacker]**

Yes, well my mum would be like that.

**00:12:13,540 --> 00:12:23,680 [Garry Gibbons]**

And, uh, your mother introduced Patsy to this plan and she took a photograph of it.

**00:12:23,680 --> 00:12:23,790 [Richard Hacker]**

Ah.

**00:12:23,790 --> 00:12:25,339 [Garry Gibbons]**

And that's how I became aware of it.

**00:12:25,339 --> 00:12:27,000 [Richard Hacker]**

That's the picture with the magnifying glass?

**00:12:27,000 --> 00:12:32,839 [Garry Gibbons]**

Yes, that's right. Yes. So, far and wide, fame.

**00:12:32,839 --> 00:12:42,740 [Richard Hacker]**

Yes. That's Australia, America. Great.

**00:12:42,740 --> 00:12:44,839 [Garry Gibbons]**

Okay. Well, thank you very much, Richard.

**00:12:44,839 --> 00:12:45,740 [Richard Hacker]**

Pleasure, Gary.

**00:12:45,740 --> 00:12:46,200 [Garry Gibbons]**

Okay.

**00:12:46,200 --> 00:12:48,970 [Richard Hacker]**

Thanks for all the hard work you've done as well.

**00:12:48,970 --> 00:12:49,200 [Garry Gibbons]**

Thank you.