

Remembrance of Sir Ian Isham, Bart., by a Friend

Written by Mrs. Rosemary Eady of Pytchley Lodge for Northamptonshire Past and Present, the Magazine of the Northamptonshire Record Society, circa November 2009

Sir Ian Vere Gyles Isham, 13th Baronet of Lamport, was the elder son of Vere Arthur Richard and Edith Irene Isham who was born on the 17th July 1923. He succeeded his distant cousin Gyles on 29th January 1976. He succeeded to the title but not the property for the Estate came under the newly formed Lamport Hall Preservation Trust to protect the continuance of the estate from destructive taxation.

After schooling at Eton College, Ian attended Worcester College, Oxford before being called-up for Army Service in 1941 where he joined the 4th County of London Yeomanry- a tank regiment. He was severely injured when his tank was blown up during the Normandy invasion in the advance on Caen. Flown home, he spent many months in hospital in Wales receiving treatment for the burns he had suffered.

After his discharge, he took-up duties with the British Army of Occupation of the Rhine until he was de-mobbed in 1948 with the rank of Captain.

By now his family had [emigrated](#) to Buenos Aires in Argentina and he joined them and worked for a British accountancy firm.

Although he was asked by Sir Gyles to help in the restoration of the family seat at Lamport - this having been left in a deplorable condition after it had been commandeered as an Italian prisoner of war 'camp' – Ian felt that he could not greatly contribute much to the task and returned to London working for Rediffusion in the early days of television. He worked in Market Research and as a Cartographer and became a member of that Institute.

As Sir Gyles had converted to Roman Catholicism he was not able to accept the Patronage of the living of the Parish Church of All Hallows' at Lamport. Over the years this role was to be willingly and diligently performed by Ian.

The journey from his home in Croydon, and later from Alton Hampshire, to Northamptonshire and Lamport was frequently undertaken. Equally, Sir Ian could be found travelling abroad to many countries, visiting those areas where the Isham family had settled, he, proclaiming the attributes of Northamptonshire.

At most lectures of the Record Society, Sir Ian would bring guests. Often these would be visitors from abroad who were following the path to Lamport from where their forbears had originated. Sometimes it was to Pytchley to see the church and the environs of, and where, the famous Pytchley Hall (built by Euseby Isham, who was knighted by James 1st on the 11th May 1603) once stood. The Queen Consort of James 1st, Anne of Denmark, was a guest at this new mansion in 1605. This arena, from whence the family had been since Saxon times, had also bred Capt. Henry Isham. A descendant 'of Pytchley', rather than 'of Lamport,' he was the progenitor of several "first families of Virginia" and founding families of the United States of America (e.g., Randolph, Eppes, Jefferson, Lee, Marshall) as well as more recently celebrated American-born British descendants (most notably, Nancy, Lady Astor, and her niece Nancy Lancaster, once resident at Kelmarsh Hall)!

Picnics were a great delight for Sir Ian. Those friends of his who were bidden to celebrate his July birthday with him in the gardens at Lamport will find immeasurable joy in the remembrance of those occasions for they were followed by an erudite guiding through the house with an exemplary distillation of the art and the family connections!

Sir Ian Isham died on 20th Oct 2009 in Hampshire. He is succeeded by his brother, Norman Murray Crawford Isham, the 14th Baronet. A Service of Thanksgiving was held at Lamport Church on 8th June 2010.

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