

**Memorial Service for  
Sir Ian Isham, Bart. at  
Lampport Village Church on  
8 June 2010  
ADDRESS BY RICHARD ISHAM**

Thank you so much for coming. Ian will be smiling on us, so pleased to see such a gathering.

We are here to mourn Sir Ian's passing, but also to celebrate a life remarkably well lived.

For those of you who were able to attend Ian's funeral, you would have heard from my sister, Libby, about Ian's voracious sociability, addiction to correspondence and his passion beyond joy in putting people in touch and rooting out connections hitherto unknown; from my brother Vere, V, with his personal remembrances of our dear uncle; his ubiquitous, always kindly, generous and idiosyncratic presence during our childhoods and into our adult lives and from me about Ian the soldier and hero, a man capable of true courage.

Today, however, it is appropriate to say something about Ian and Lampport. I shall not dwell on his time here as Dad will say a little bit about that later, rather I want to say something of his passion for Lampport and its family history. For Ian history was perhaps the greatest form of social science, the description and explanation of human affairs and intrigues – not in a gossipy way, but he could "have a good natter", but because Ian was interested in and concerned for people.

Although our relationship to Sir Gyles Isham, the last Baronet to actually live at Lampport, is relatively (excuse the pun) distant – Sir Gyles was Sir Ian's second cousin, with a remove I believe – Ian seemed to have a natural affinity with Lampport, an enthusiasm to chase down links (particularly with the Americas – he once confided that there were 3,000 Ishams in America "some of them black" ; you can picture the twinkle in those kind eyes). He also had a cartographer's desire for neat and certain delineations – how exactly is x related to y. Ian was always "a people person", but not in the modern day, cuddly and banal sense, rather because he actually wanted to know who your people were, thus who you are, or could be.

Ian's legacy to my generation of the family is that the oddity – and believe you me a Baronetcy in Northamptonshire when you are growing up in Croydon or South London is an oddity, or at least that's one word for it – the oddity of Lampport has been transcended from a form of embarrassment, even guilt for something not deserved or earned, into a sense of pride and with the negativity of guilt being supplanted by the positive attitude of responsibility – not in the patrician sense, much more in the Aboriginal sense, as custodians of history, or at least a small part of it.

It is largely thanks to Ian's passion for the history of Lampport, his assiduous involvement in the Orton and Isham Trusts, the friendships he made in the village and the County, that I am proud to say, and I know that Libby is too, that we are both Trustees of the Lampport Hall Preservation Trust that, long before we became Trustees, under the guidance initially of Brian Porteous, who is with us today and latterly George Drye, its Executive Director, who is also with us, our former Chairman, Colonel Edward Aubrey Fletcher, also here today and our current Chairman, Willum Butterfield, looks after the Hall, Park and Estate so well. The Byzantine complexities of our tax and inheritance laws made it impossible for Sir Ian (or indeed my Dad, Sir Norman) to be involved in any ostensible way, but thanks to Ian and with the ready support of George and the Trustees, Libby and me are now able to play a small role in the affairs of Lampport.

Ian would dislike this metaphor – he would consider it vulgar – but having a warm heart and a great capacity for affection, he would smile and forgive me when I say that he was the "midwife" to Libby and me becoming Trustees and thereby achieving a form of family continuity that was so important to Ian – not one-upmanship, nor any sense of superiority, but simply because Lampport stands for something; its story and that of the Isham family forms part and a traceable and verifiable part of the course of human affairs – Ian's passion.

We will all remember Sir Ian Vere Gyles Isham in our own ways and his great legacy to us is that we are all here because of his tenacious friendship and we all share a common memory of him – a common memory of a very far from common man, whom we are all privileged to have known. Thank you.