



**Pete Lofthouse** interviewed by Sue Eldridge

Pete Lofthouse was employed as a gardener at the Red House where the owner, Mr Smith, was a customer of Caldwell's.

Duration:	00:25:05
Recording date:	11.09.2011
Recording Location:	Pete Lofthouse's home
Access restrictions:	None
Recording equipment:	Zoom H4N
Recording notes:	-
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**Interview summary**

00.00.00	Introduced himself and gave an overview of how he worked as a gardener at the Red House, with an old gardener and how he was then tutored by Mr. Trill from Caldwell's.
00.02.09	Describes growing up in Ivy Cottages in Chelford, where he still lives with his brother. Describes his childhood in Chelford as idyllic. Describes going to school in Chelford then Congleton.
00.03.25	Describes leaving school and starting at The Red House (owned by Mr Smith) as an assistant gardener at age 15 and staying for 12 years. Describes the first 6 months as being hard. Describes the garden with rose garden, lawns, vegetable garden, and orchard. After Fred, the 72 year old gardener, left Pete was on his own with occasional tutoring from Mr Trill.
00.07.21	Describes what happened when he left The Red House, working for himself for 18 months/2 years and then going to Tatton Park, where he has worked for 26 years. Describes the work at Tatton Park, including the restoration in the Italian garden, Charlotte's lawn, the L-border, orangery, Japanese Garden and parterre. And then the vegetable gardens and greenhouses.
00.09.52	Describes his link with Caldwell's as a customer (while at The Red House). Describes Caldwell's itself, especially the nursery/garden centre at Knutsford. Describes what was grown in the greenhouses, as well as the fields growing dahlias, trees and shrubs, at Barnshaw and Ollerton as well as Knutsford. Pete himself was more familiar with the shop where he bought bedding plants and seeds (including Caldwell's own seeds).

00.15.24	Describes the shop, similar to a garden centre today and the (4?) greenhouses, selling bedding plants and hanging baskets.
00.17.06	Describes some of the staff at Caldwell's including Mr Caldwell and Don Leaman. Describes how it was a very family orientated firm.
00.19.00	Describes his contact with Caldwell's while at Tatton, including buying on behalf of the Tatton Garden Society garden (now the fruit garden). Describes shrubs bought from Caldwell's when they were selling up, and where these might have gone in the garden. Mentions staff who moved from Caldwell's, including John Prince who moved to Tatton. Describes how he visited Caldwell's 4 or 5 times a year while at The Red House.



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