



Name: Micheal O'hÉidhin
From: Carnmore, Claregalway
Age: 64 years
Interviewers: Brona Gallagher
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Brona Was any member of your family involved in the 1916 rising?

Micheal No, no member of my family.

Brona Were there many in the locality?

Micheal There were plenty in the locality. Tom Ruane, John Collins, John Lardner, Pat Walsh, Mick Cummins ... I can't remember any more.

Brona Are they all dead now?

Micheal Yes.

Brona Are any members of their families around Carnmore still?

Micheal Oh, they are.

Brona Were they put in jail?

Micheal Apart from Ruane, I don't think the rest were. They went from there then (Carnmore) to Moyode, a place outside Athenry. They were there a few days and I think the hunger eventually got them.

Brona They were not prepared for anything?

Micheal They were not really and they were badly armed ...some shotguns, I believe, and maybe a few pikes and forks and those kind of things. Liam Mellowes was a leader there in Athenry. I don't think he wanted them to disband at the time when they broke up. He wanted them to stay ... he thought more might come about.

Brona After 1916, what sort of build-up was there to the troubles?

Micheal The troubles were terrible really because people had to be for or against one thing or another, there could be no neutrals, hardly, especially among the younger folk and it caused great bitterness. They went on the run.

Brona Were the locals actually for the British?

Micheal Very little in my area, I would say.

Brona So they were all united in that sense?

Micheal They were. It was only later on, during the civil war, when the split came.

Brona Was there a division in Carnmore?

Micheal They were more or less on the same side. It didn't cause any major difficulties. It left quite a bit of bitterness though. I remember when we were children, it was there very much – not too long after the troubles – we didn't understand much what was going on.

Brona Do you remember any stories about the Black and Tans?

Micheal I do remember alright where they were out at the mountain, with their marching and all that.

Brona Was your house ever raided?

Micheal It was, yeah. Me father was often put out during the night. They used to go to bed fully clothed in the end because they knew from other stories and parts from experience as well, that if they didn't answer the door almost immediately, the door would be broken down.

Brona And what were they looking for from your father?

Micheal They would be searching chiefly to see would he be protecting anyone.

Brona Was he involved himself?

Micheal He was not, he was a bit on the old side – he was born in 1877.

Brona Were there any of your uncles involved?

Micheal Well, he had no brothers. On my mother's side, there were alright, but they didn't live very near me. They were outside of the parish.

Brona How did they organize themselves? Was there a meeting place?

Micheal They used to do it through hurling matches quite a bit, I think – they used to congregate that way.

Brona So they didn't talk about hurling?

Micheal Oh they did that as well, but ...

Brona So they would not really arouse suspicion?

Micheal Yeah, that's it.

Brona Did the **Black and Tans** kill anybody locally?

Micheal There was an Egan man killed, a publican there in Cashlea – just outside the parish. Am...he was questioned and they were not satisfied with his answers – I forget the details of it.

Brona How did they kill him?

Micheal I would say shot through the head or something like that. There was another man killed some nights before that and the police were supposed to be questioning him (Egan) and he denied hearing any shots, and I suppose they thought he was lying, so they shot him.

Brona When you were growing up, was the memory of the **Black and Tans** planted in people's minds? Were they considered really evil?

Micheal They were. People were afraid to go in the road much or anything. That time they were going to bogs drawing turf and they were afraid. They would be looking long distances ahead of them, as far as possible and if they saw any of those – they used to call them tanks, the types of lorries they had – they would go off the road into a gateway or something because they would hit them for sport.

Brona They were really ruthless?

Micheal Yes, ruthless. Or if they were even a half a mile, they would creep low because they were liable to take pot shots at any live figure or animals or anything like that.

Brona Were they stationed in Renmore?

Micheal Well, everywhere. They took over various barracks, you know.

Brona Did you ever hear of the republicans using local houses as prisons?

Micheal They provisionally established themselves as local authorities until such time as better would come. Tom Ruane was one of them, and a man called Lally, I believe he was a great authority as well. They established themselves as the Community Protection Force, for to enforce law and order.

Brona And they used local homes as H.Q.'s?

Micheal They used certain houses, now I couldn't name the houses.

Brona What kind of people used they take in? Free Staters?

Micheal Looters and things like that. I don't think there was political, just law and order as far as I can recall. They were taking advantage of lawlessness with no right order in the country.

Brona Were you involved in anything during the Second World War?

Micheal No, I was not. I was a bit young. There was the L.D.F. (Local Defence Force) and there was the L.S.F. (Local Security Force). I can't tell you the real difference

between them, not, but they were both there, I know. There were plenty out of the parish that were there, not too many in Carnmore maybe – Larry Fox, he died a year or two ago. He was a platoon leader or something in that line.

Brona Did they get paid?

Micheal I would say very little, now I'm not sure.

Brona What were they looking out for?

Micheal Any aeroplanes or anything like that, suspicious foreign aeroplanes. I know they were all called out one night – a strange aeroplane was over Galway. I don't know the end of it, but I know there was a great alert.

Brona Was it the Germans or the British they were looking out for?

Micheal I would say any of them because the country was neutral ... any foreign invader of any kind.

Brona Do you remember the food rationings?

Micheal I do indeed. Scarcity. Things were bad really. People today couldn't realise at all what things were like. Foodstuffs were terrible.

Brona What sort of stuff?

Micheal Flour, bread, pastry and those things were almost non-existent. There was not a banana seen for about six years or an orange. Currants and raisins .. a small amount might get in at Christmas time or else they would be storing them up for the rest of the year.

Brona Anything that was imported in, was scarce?

Micheal The idea was to be self-sufficient. The farms were obliged by law to grow wheat. I think it's two acres they were obliged to grow of about 50 acres.

Brona And bread was still scarce after that?

Micheal And to make it worse, the flour that was there was worse ... it was mixed with barley or something and it would not bake right unless you were lucky. It would be half raw dough in at the bottom.

Brona So they put barley in it to make it last longer?

Micheal It was really black as well... there was no sign of bran much. There was no white flour at all in that length of time. It seems to be ground very fine cause you would see no trace of bran.

Brona Was there a mill in the area or used you go into Galway?

Micheal Oh, there were small mills set up at the time to cater for this emergency.

Brona Were there any in Claregalway or Carnmore?

Micheal I don't remember, at that time we used to go to Lisheenavala, just outside the boundary. JVO - a kind of oil, the paraffin... it was called tractor vaporising oil and that was used to turn the mill.

Brona Did you have meat?

Micheal Well, people used to kill pigs lot at that time. It was mostly a farming community at that time.

Brona So you were better off than the ones in the town?

Micheal That's true in many ways, but they used to buy the meat from the Germans. It was self-sufficiency.

Brona Did you grow your own vegetables?

Micheal Yeah, to a fair extent.

Brona What about clothes?

Micheal Clothes were rationed. We had to have so many coupons before you would get a suit of clothes. The first thing you would be asked is have you coupons before they would even consider selling to you. And as well as that, the tweed was war-rated - poor quality. Footwear was terrible. It was very hard to get.

Brona So, it proves that we really relied on imports?

Micheal Yes. Of course, the country was not as well equipped that time. It was only a young state at the time. They were not very well established in the line of factories or anything to make things. Even polish... it would not put a shine on a shoe in a hundred years. They were all second rate goods. And the tyres were only wardway?? on bicycles ... there wasn't a bicycle on the road, unless people used the old jigglers they had. You'd be lucky to get a tyre. You had to have your name in for months and you'd only get a wardway?? tyre ... you daren't go over a stone.

Brona So were cars out of the question so?

Micheal You were forbidden by law to bring out a car, even if they had them. Since the very start of the war, petrol was reserved for doctors and soldiers and priests, even though the priest had no car. Paraffin oil...you'd get a half gallon in the month or something like that. No light. There were no candles to be had, even they were very scarce and very poor quality as well, and of course as well as that, everything doubled in price.

Brona How long after the war, did it take things to settle down?

Micheal Well, immediately after the war, things began to improve. There was no petrol for some time after that, but it wasn't very long.

Brona What was the average size of the farm in Carnmore?

Micheal Between 20-50 acres, I'd say. 40 acres was considered good enough that time because people relied mostly on tillage, and that would give enough tillage and support a few animals as well.

Brona **What did you grow?**

Micheal Wheat, oats, barley, potatoes, turnips, mangles. Of course, they all had horses...they had to grow to provide for the horses as well, which was a lot. And they were lucky they had only horses because if they had tractors, they'd be stuck completely at that time (during the war). There'd be nothing to fuel them or parts to repair them.

Brona **Did farming change during the war?**

Micheal It didn't change during the war and it was slow enough to change after the war, for some years after the war.

Brona **When did it change ... around the 60's?**

Micheal Yes, around that, I'd say so.

Brona **What brought that about?**

Micheal It's not easy put into...I would say getting into milk, it brought a major change anyhow. I think the coming of tractors as well, would have made a difference. They got rid of the horse by degrees.

Brona **Is that how you make your living...by selling the ? of the farm?**

Micheal Yes, that mostly and a few cattle, even though the Carnmore area was quite handicapped...it was a very bad place for water...there were very few wells. It's kind of sandy land and there were no wells where water could be collected... they were relying on water from roofs of houses and all that. You couldn't have very many livestock easy. When they had to draw water, it had to come from a long way in barrels... barrels on a horse cart.

Brona **So how did you survive for washing and cleaning and cooking, things like that?**

Micheal Well, people began to build tanks and collect rain water and a lot of water had to be drawn all the time. Tanks would not last very long in a spell of dry weather in summertime.

Brona **Was there a pump?**

Micheal There was not even a pump in our young days, but a pump was built...I remember when they were building the pump...there, not so far from the Carnmore school.

Brona **Do you remember when that was built?**

Micheal I would say the late '40's.

Brona When did the water scheme come into Carnmore?

Micheal 1973, I think. About 15 houses got it at the start...there is about 40 now. It was extended a bit and a lot more houses came out then in that area. It made a great difference.

Brona Where is the reservoir?

Micheal Where the old county council pump was.

Brona So there was a good spring there?

Micheal A mighty spring. But I would say they went down an extra 100 ft or something. A mighty spring ... it never failed yet. It can fail ... not because is not sufficient water underneath, I would say ... but if the electricity goes off it fails or if everything goes wrong with the machinery, it would fail ... and it often happened for 3-4 days or maybe a week. There would be no water and it creates a new emergency because there is no-one really prepared.

Brona Is it good water?

Micheal Great water and so far, thank God, there was never any problem with pollution.

Brona Did you keep pigs or sheep?

Micheal Most people had pigs.

Brona Were they easier than cattle to keep?

Micheal No. They are different to keep, difficult enough... you would need proper housing. People fed them mostly by boiling potatoes for them over an open fire and that was not easy. Very few people have pigs now... it's too much trouble for them. People began to feed them mostly on grain afterwards, and balancing the ration by giving protein and the like.

Brona So pig farming is not as popular today as it was?

Micheal It is. Most people had a few pigs anyhow, and today if they have pigs, it's big time.

Brona Did this change happen in the 60's as well?

Micheal Oh, I would say so.

Brona So, they dropped the pig and concentrated more on livestock?

Micheal That's right, yeah, especially the dairy. During the war, there were lot of houses with large families and they were at home mostly because they had no work...they survived at home...they were glad to be safe.

Brona So there was no emigration for those few years?

Micheal Very little, except some that, were prepared to take the risks.

Brona Would some have actually joined the different armies?

Micheal Lot of them joined the Irish Army, yeah.

Brona Did they join the British Army?

Micheal I would say very few unless they had been in England before that or something. When times began to get good again, people began to go away, so they were not working at home...there is no-one around today around this part of the country. Labour is very scarce, so that's why lot of people get tractors, even because one person could do more.

Brona When did people start selling produce to the creamery?

Micheal The early 60's, I would say.

Brona So, in the 60's, was there a great change ever in farming altogether?

Micheal There was ... different systems, different machinery and improvements in machinery.

Brona What sort of equipment was used before the 60's? For example, how did the plough improve?

Micheal The plough changed a lot. When I was a child, a lot of people had swing ploughs, which was quite heavy manual work. There were no wheels or anything to guide them, a person had to for the scrape? By using his hands on the plough...holding the handles and guiding the plough and two reins driving two horses.

Brona The horses pulled the plough and he guided it?

Micheal That's right. The next one then was the wheel plough...they were factory ploughs really... the swing plough were blacksmith's plough mostly...as far as I understand.

Brona Were they popular before or after the war?

Micheal Some were in a small way before the war, but am...it was nearly change over to all wheel ploughs then after the war until tractors came in. Then, in the late 50's, we'll say, people started getting tractors and ...

Brona So, there was a new sort of plough then?

Micheal That's right. The tractor plough. They are improving on them all the time.

Brona Are there any bogs in Carnmore?

Micheal No. No bogs at all.

Brona So, if you had a bit of bog, would it be in a different townland?

Micheal Yes, we cut turf in Gort...Gortcloonmore in Claregalway.

Brona Did you walk?

Micheal We walked sometimes and we cycled and brought horse and cart more times.

Brona How did you bring the turf home?

Micheal In horse and cart and creels.

Brona Did you use a slane?

Micheal Yes, we used a hand slane. Later, we went to bogs around Monivea and those places. We cycled there and back, with a slane as well, with the slane tied to the bike. We used to draw it home on hired lorries then.

Brona Was this after the war?

Micheal Oh yes.

Brona Do you still use a slane?

Micheal Hardly anyone uses a slane now, various types of machine came out...Bord na Mona got machines first and it made square kinds of sods...a large machine...and white tracks and all that. In later years, a machine pulled by tractor came out and it used to cut round type sods...it was called sausage turf. They have even better now. I believe it's better...it makes it in a different way called hopper turf...a hopper machine.

Brona What does it do?

Micheal It seems as if the machine digs the bog first, and it mixes it up and you get square sods.

Brona With all this machinery, what do people do in the bog now?

Micheal Generally, the machines are on contract...they will cut your bog for so much per yard or metre, but you have to turn the turf then and there's no machine involved in that. But some people sell plots of turf spread and it's up to you to turn it. Three pounds a yard I think they charge for it generally. When you cut it with a slane, it had to be spread... you had to have one person slaning two spreaders. The spreader fills the turf into a barrow, 10-12 sods and he wheels out the barrow and he empties it on the ground...there is a knack in emptying it as well, so you could break the soft sods.

Brona And that's called spreading?

Micheal That's called spreading the turf. Rows of turf...partly lined over each other and partly single, and you couldn't touch that for about a fortnight and you would put it in to what's called "groigins", then or "foots"... "groigins" we used to call it... "groigin mona"... footing turf. They were both lying on the flat and four standing up... six sods... in this area, in other areas then, they didn't put those first two at all... they put 6-7 sods standing on edges it was not easy to in a way, but it dried faster. We put

them both standing up in this area, and you re-footed it then depending on the weather in another week to a fortnight..."aithghroige" we called the re-footing. They put 2-3 of the others into 1?? And used to make "cruachans" then (small stacks). There would be a leg of standing sods in the bottom and it would be like a stack coming to a point, and the following stage was to put it out in the roadside for collection or for drying sometimes. If there was a bad summer, they would make a thin reek and leave it there for a few weeks and it would dry well in that...mature. Bring it home as best you could and store it.

Brona So it is a big process?

Micheal It ismost of the summer. It's generally cut in May or early June maybe and brought in at August-September.

Brona Did everyone have hay?

Micheal Oh yes. The horses consumed lot of hay.

Brona Did you all chip in together or did everyone do his own patch?

Micheal Most people did their own. Some scythes were used when we were young. Everyone had a scythe, almost, and they cut small patches. Of course, there was no weed killers or anything to tend the seeds and all that, especially around the bogsides, they cut cieronns? Of hay with scythes, and bits of corn as well. But, am.....most people had a horse mowing machine drawn by two horses and that was instead of a scythe.

Brona Was this in the '30s?

Micheal Yes, I would say.....maybe a little bit before. There were a few at the start, but more and more people were getting them by degrees. They were a vast improvement on the scythe. But they used to spoil the horses as well.....it is not all horses that would work them. There was a pole between the two horses you know, and the pole was tied to the collars of the two horses in front, and they were chained on to ? It was a very unusual thing, uncomfortable. The way it was if horses stood at all, you couldn't start the machine again unless you reserved a little bit to get full start. If they stood, the knife would be clogged and it would not start without reversing and clearing the blockage. Things would go wrong then if one horse pulled and the other one stayed.

Brona What came after the mowing machines?

Micheal When people got tractors then they got tractor mowers and they were a great improvement again. In the middle '50s....the '60s, there were as well that time.....farmers would hire them, but that became awkward enough they would not come when you would need them and the fine weather would be going by. Today, no there are very little of those mowers.....they have rotary mowers and disc mowers and they do the thing lot better...they don't clog or anything. But a lot of people cannot afford them...they are too dear to buy.

Brona Did the community ever buy anything and share it?

Micheal They did, but it's very hard for them to work satisfactorily because different people do different things different ways and some people would wreck and break anything and are very slow to repair and in the case of a lot of things, a lot of people want them the same day, if possible.....depending on the weather and all this and there would be the thing about storing it in the wintertime.....who would mind it?

Brona **What kind of machines, were shared around?**

Micheal A lot of machines, it's hard to specify, but lot of people tried with one machine and then another, and it was very hard for it to work properly.

Brona **Was there a co-op in the area? I heard about one in Claregalway.**

Micheal Well in the '50s, there were branches of Macra na Feirme and Young Farmers Associations. They got manures and things in a co-operative way, but even that didn't work very well. I remember in a certain area manure came loose in lorries and farmers had to get weighing equipment and bag it, and they didn't try it a second time.

Brona **It was a bit messy, I would say!**

Micheal Oh, a bit messy and different to what they expected. They thought they would save a lot, you know, but it didn't work out.

Brona **Was there another co-op?**

Micheal There was a co-op in Oranmore, a farmer's co-op. That was a bit before my time now. There was a number of people in the Carnmore area who had shares there. It turned out bad. It left farmers with a debt which they didn't expect, so co-ops had a bad history in this area. They were very slow to enter into co-ops or anything of a co-operative nature again. Even when the marts were starting...the Athenry mart, there was a lot of people very suspicious about getting into it on account of the history of co-ops before that.

Brona **Can you tell me about the trashing?**

Micheal My father often used the flail for trashing corn when he was going. Two sticks tied corn together one longer than the other. The long one was used as a handle and the other one was used as a beater. "An Suist", they used to call the flail. There were 3 parts in it...the "colpan"(long stick), "buailtean" (short stick)and "ail an suiste" (sheep gut or something tied to the both sticks). I have seen older men using it. They would put down a row shears on the floor and beat it. There was an art in using it.....you had to be at it quite a while and be fairly used to it as well. They could do it handy enough than I believe. It was hard work. They would strip out in their shirts and they would be going at it. It used to be done a lot at winter time and even winter nights, I believe, by candle-light.....or lantern lights. They used to have old lanterns with a candle lit inside them and sometimes storm? Lanterns as well used paraffin oil.

Brona **This was in the barn?**

Micheal Yes. And then of course, the seed and chaff were mixed, so it had to be winnowed. Most of the old barns had generally 2 doors, one opposite the other and when they were opened, a great current of wind would go across between them. And the person would stand up on a stool or something and then they would be handed basins of this oats, which they would let down slowly and the wind would blow the chaff away and the seed would fall down straight.

Brona **How come the seed was not blown away?**

Micheal The seed was heavier than the chaff.

Brona **Winnowing that was called, and what sort of technique was used next?**

Micheal Well, machines came out then and I have one of them still there. They were pulled by horses. They had to be set down on the yard outside the barn and they were pulled by horses going round in a circle, and they worked a trashing machine inside in the barn, which was connected to the outside by a round iron shaft at ground level, and the person inside, they fed into this machine and the seed and chaff came out together. It was great improvement on the flail.

Brona **You still had to winnow it, though?**

Micheal You still had to winnow it. I have seen it winnowed that way and I have done it myself....between 2 doors.

Brona **When was this thrasher...in the 40's and 50's?**

Micheal That's right...a bit of it went on during the war. Some people got winnowing machines. You put it in and you had to twist it by hand, which was hard work, but it was quite good. But few people got them because they were quite expensive. Most stuck to the old way, but I have seen those machines and I have seen them work and they were fairly good.

Brona **What was the Irish for winnowing?**

Micheal "Cathadh arbhair" (winnowing corn). After that, contractor got fairly big mills that would be pulled around from haggard to haggard by a horse...a strong horse now...and an engine pulled by another horse, and they would be set up a distance apart and connected by a belt or pulley and scorched? So that they would not move. So the engine would be started up by swinging this thing. It was much the same as the ones worked by a tractor with the belt connected on a stationary engine...it would not go on its own. They were alright...they were good in their time.

Brona **So, when did the flail cease to be popular?**

Micheal Well, there was occasion to see one out even in the 40's, I would say. I would say before the war, there was an occasional one.

Brona **Did the more modern ones do the winnowing?**

Micheal Yes, the mills that were drawn from haggard to haggard.....they winnowed.

Brona When did electricity come into the area?

Micheal I would say 1955 it came.

Brona Did every house get it at the same time?

Micheal They did, but they were waiting for it the most of two years, I would say...a lot of the houses were wired.

Brona What were you saying about the different handles on the flail?

Micheal Oh yes, the Culpan was twice as long as the buailtean – they used to favour a hazel handle – hazel wood and for the beater, they used to favour wood of the holly tree. The reason was, I believe, holly tree wood would not split easily – the culpan col and the buailtean cuillean – I don't know if everyone favoured it like that, but in some parts of the country anyway.

Brona Were there local fairs?

Micheal Yes, both in Galway and in Athenry. We walked, which is near enough 8 car miles. We would leave about anytime between 1 o'clock in the morning and 4 o'clock depending circumstances. It was tough going.

Brona What did you do at the fair?

Micheal The fair was held in Eyre Square in front of the Bank of Ireland and all along there – around Prospect Hill. We would just surround the animals there and hold them, see would buyers come and try to a make a bargain and sell. And even after having them sold, you still had to hold them until they were taken away, which could be anytime. Usually a lot of them went by train, so you had to make arrangements for the railway and all this thing and you got paid then sometime after the banks opened, usually around 10-11 o'clock in the day.

Brona Is it livestock ye used to sell?

Micheal Yes – cattle. In the case of sheep then, they generally have a pen – the creels of the cart or something like that or they might bring other crates and they would be penned around the green in Eyre Square. There were railings around the green that time and they would tie those pens to the railings and the sheep would be put in there. The same procedure as the cattle, you'd wait for buyers to come and you would sell them.

Brona Did ye sell vegetables or corn or oats?

Micheal Oh yes, oats and potatoes and sometimes hay, and sometimes turnips – bring them in by horse and cart.

Brona Is it the town's people that used to buy them?

Micheal In the case of potatoes, mostly town's people, but in the Springtime, farmers might buy them for seed or farmers might be running out of potatoes and might buy

some. In the case of oats, it was the same - it was mostly....There were a lot of horses that time- a lot of oats for horses. As well as that, stores would buy often- there was Palmers and McDonaghs - they had horses of their own- their business was done by horses, as well as being millers. Palmers and McDonaghs of the Bridge Mills. In my time now, it was Geraghty in the Bridge Mills, and he was quite good. And various other people who needed corn for one thing or another. Mostly, town people bought potatoes, and shops for selling out again and making a bit of profit on them. They were the middle men.

Brona Did you do any buying yourself or was it just to sell stuff you went?

Micheal Mostly to sell. Sometimes you might buy in springtime - seed or something like that. Mostly to sell.

Brona Was there clothes for sale or was it just farming produce?

Micheal Only farm produce, and hazel scollops for thatch. They used to be on sale as well, and the Connemara side used to bring in a lot of turf - little carts of turf and they would stand there until they got a buyer and country people would often buy those you know- they would run out of turf. Some people bought turf all year through - they would not have turf themselves. You would have to pull over your cart next to theirs and empty one into the other. There was no mechanical loaders.

Brona It was a real life of activity.

Micheal Oh yeah.

Brona Would you go shopping then?

Micheal Yes, unless it would be too late in the market, which can happen - you might be a long time in the market and be in danger of not selling at all. You may have to go a long way to deliver the stuff then and maybe go various places as well.

Brona Were there any methods of selling? Was there haggling going on? Did you have regular buyers?

Micheal No. No regular buyers. There may be a few people that might buy from you if your produce was good, but if it was not, it would be another story - you would be depending on strangers. Hay was bought in the same way and sold in the market - it was an awkward load. You had to weigh itself and the cart you know on your way in at a weigh house and you would have the gross weight and when you had the weight sold you would have to come back and weigh the empty cart and you would have another docket and you would subtract one from the other.

Brona To keep it all above board?

Micheal That's it. So you see, it would take quite a while to get paid, would it not?

Brona So, it was a hard days work. It was on once a month in Galway and once a month in Athenry?

Micheal No, they were the fairs for livestock. There was a market every Saturday in Galway.

Brona So, did you go every Saturday?

Micheal No, indeed.

Brona How often did you go in?

Micheal Well, in my case, we were poor enough - we didn't have that much. Not too often, but some people went weekly.

Brona The bigger farmers?

Micheal Yes, the farmers that had plenty of produce for sale. They might have oats or potatoes or something. Turnips were sold in the market as well. They were another awkward load. They were fed to livestock. And of course mangles were grown as well for the livestock. There are very few mangles grown now - they are replaced by fodder beet, which has more dry matter in it.

Brona Do you know anything about the fair in Turloughmore?

Micheal That was twice yearly. It was very famous before our time, but it was declining a bit in our time. But it was still held regularly. Mostly horses and sheep. I have seen some cattle in it, but the place was too open and too awkward and too dirty. At Turlough, if the weather was not good, you would be sinking.

Brona What times of the year was it held?

Michal The second one was held in September after the harvest, but the first one, I can't remember the date.

Brona Were there faction fights there?

Micheal That was before our time as well. I have heard stories all right.

Brona Between people from Carnmore and Claregalway?

Micheal That's right.

Brona What would happen?

Micheal They would have sticks, I believe.

Brona What would they be fighting over? Were there feuds?

Micheal No, it would be more of a game, as far as I can see. It's kind of a game - the law was not very strict at the time. One crowd of one side would have a good name and there would be another crowd of young men and they would think they might be able to get the better of them. As far as I can see, there would be a leader on each side then. As far as I can see, one of the leaders would insult the other somehow or something.

The  End