



Name: Sarah Moran
From: Lakeview, Claregalway
Age: 62
Interviewers: Angela Glynn & Tara Forde
Date: 27th May 1991

- Tara** *What were the sizes of the farms?*
Sarah Roughly 20 statute acres.
- Tara** *What type of farming was practised?*
Sarah Mixed farming mostly.
- Tara** *What sort of stock did you have?*
Sarah 2 horses, 2 cows, 4 calves, 4 yearlings and 4 two-year olds.
- Tara** *What equipment did you use on the farm?*
Sarah Mowing machine, wheel plough, spring harrow, wooden harrow, double plough, that was the usual.
- Tara** *Where did you buy your stock?*
Sarah They were bought at the market in Galway.
- Tara** *Where was the local fair?*
Sarah In Galway, on the streets in Eyre Square.
- Tara** *Was there a fair anywhere else?*
Sarah There was a fair in Athenry and there was one in Tuam, but the people around this area went to the one in Galway as a rule.
- Tara** *Was it very busy?*
Sarah Fairly busy, yeah, very busy.
- Angela** *How did ye get to the fairs?*
Sarah You walked all the animals to the fairs.
- Tara** *Would anyone have a bicycle or anything?*
Sarah Well, maybe an odd one would have a bicycle, it was mostly walking.
- Tara** *What did you do when the livestock got sick, was there a vet?*
Sarah No, there was never a vet. We never saw a vet, you would treat them yourself, as a rule, that was what was done.
- Tara** *Where did you sell the farm produce?*
Sarah In Galway market as well. There was a market every Saturday.

- Tara** *What kind of produce did you sell?*
Sarah Well, potatoes, oats and turnips, that was the usual.
- Tara** *Can you remember when they first started bringing milk to the creamery?*
Sarah I'd say it was about 1960 roughly, but I'm not sure.
- Tara** *What, in your opinion, do you think the difference was after 1960 in farming?*
Sarah Well, work was much harder before 1960, much, much harder.
- Tara** *What did they do before they started bringing milk to the creamery?*
Sarah Well, they had more root crops, I suppose. They sowed more beet and potatoes. They cut down on them then, when they started keeping extra cows.
- Angela** *Did emigration affect the size of the farms?*
Sarah Oh, it did, I'd say it did. Well, not that much, as there was always one or two that stayed at home.
- Angela** *How did the people cut the turf?*
Sarah With the slane. That was the only way that time.
- Tara** *How did they cope?*
Sarah Well, it was cut by the slane and there had to be two people to spread it with a wheelbarrow.
- Tara** *How do you mean spread it with the wheelbarrow?*
Sarah You put it into a wheelbarrow and then you walked along the bog with it and left it down in rows, so you could save it that way. It would dry faster.
- Angela** *How were the farms divided between the families?*
Sarah Well, the way it was, the eldest of the family always stayed at home and ran the farm, and, as a rule, the rest of the young ones would be gone away I'd say.
- Tara** *Did you find electricity an advantage?*
Sarah Ah, we did, it was very handy. First of all, it made work easier and we didn't have to be going to the shop buying paraffin oil.
- Tara** *Would you spend much on paraffin oil?*
Sarah Not that time. You wouldn't really. A gallon of paraffin oil would last for ages.
- Tara** *Where would you get it?*
Sarah We'd get it in the shops in Claregalway. In Hessions shop at that time.
- Tara** *Were they related to Hession in the pub?*
Sarah No relation at all.

- Tara** *Did all of the houses get electricity at the same time?*
Almost, I think they did, maybe there was a week or two in the difference. That was all.
- Tara** *Were you afraid of the electricity?*
Sarah No, not really, I don't think so anyhow.
- Tara** *How about the people in the parish, the older generation?*
Sarah Some people were afraid of it and they didn't take it in the beginning, but after a while then, when they saw it to other people, they got it themselves.
- Tara** *When did most of the modern changes come about?*
Sarah Oh, I'd say it was after 1970. When the turf machines came and the combine harvester. New mowers came – rotary mowers came for cutting the hay. All the machinery, the new machinery came.
- Tara** *Did people settle here from other parts of the country?*
Sarah No, not that many, I don't think so. People moved in and bought plots and built houses and worked in Galway, that's all. No-one bought land around here.
- Tara** *Did they mix well in the community?*
Sarah Ah, well they did, very well.
- Tara** *Did their children go to school in Galway or did they go here?*
Sarah They went to school down here in the local.
- Angela** *Did they bring any new skills or customs with them?*
Sarah No, I don't think so. Some might have been teachers, but they taught in Galway. They were all well liked, anyone that did settle in.
- Tara** *How about people in the parish, did they settle elsewhere apart from Claregalway?*
Sarah They did, some people left Claregalway and some of them went to Kildare. Four or five families went to Kildare and a few families went to Meath and more went to Dublin. They got bigger farms in Kildare.
- Angela** *When they left, what happened to their property?*
Sarah They were divided up among the other neighbours because they had very little land. The land commission took it over and divided it. The Land Commission took it and gave them the other land in exchange.
- Tara** *Are there any fields around here that have names?*
Sarah I don't think so, no.
- Angela** *What age did you start school at?*
Sarah Six years of age. Everyone started at 6 at the time.

Tara *Was it compulsory?*

Sarah Yes, it was.

Tara *What would happen if you didn't go?*

Sarah The guards would come to the house and take you there.

Tara *Was there a guard especially appointed for this?*

Sarah Not really, there were 4 or 5 guards, but everyone went to school.

Tara *Did the teacher take the rolls?*

Sarah Yeah, they did. The guards would come to the school every month. Any child that wasn't coming, the teacher would mention it. There were very few that stayed at home.

Angela *Where were the primary schools in the parish?*

Sarah Down here at the church and the other one in Carnmore. Just the two schools.

Angela *Were the schools mixed?*

Sarah No, they weren't. The boys were separate from the girls.

Tara *Did you go here, to the school in Claregalway?*

Sarah Yeah, that's right. The one that's there now. There was an addition put on to it 4 or 5 years ago. It was built in 1929 that one. It really is a fairly new school.

Angela *How many teachers were there?*

Sarah Four teachers. Two in Carnmore. It was a smaller area.

Angela *Did farm work interfere with school?*

Sarah Well, I suppose it did a bit because the time of picking potatoes or saving hay, you were kept home to help.

Tara *What would happen in the case of the rolls when you weren't supposed to stay at home?*

Sarah They didn't mind for a few days and in fact the time of picking potatoes, we got 4 or 5 days off to pick them – special holidays. The hay wasn't saved as early, so we'd have the summer holidays for saving the hay.

Angela *Did the pupils have respect for the teachers?*

Sarah They did, mind you. Great respect for them.

Angela *Were the teachers cross?*

Sarah Ah no, not that cross. They were crosser than now. You got a slap if you hadn't your lessons done and all that, but otherwise they weren't I'd say, not really.

Angela *Were you taught through English or Irish?*

All Irish, except the English lesson. Everything was Irish – Catechism, Geography, History – everything. When we were let out to play, we had to speak Irish outside

in the playground. Canon Moran was the Parish Priest at the time and you just had to speak Irish or else you'd get a wallop.

Angela *Did the Inspector call around often?*

Sarah Once a year, roughly.

Angela *What kind of furniture was in the school?*

Sarah Well, there was just 1 table, 1 chair and maybe there were 2 presses and the desks for sitting on and the little tables in front of them.

Angela *What was your means of transport?*

Sarah Just walked to school, that was it.

Angela *What age did you leave National School?*

Sarah Fourteen. Everyone stayed at home when they were about 14 and that was it then.

Tara *Did many go to Secondary?*

Sarah No, not really that many now, just a few maybe, 3 or 4 from every class. They went to Secondary and did the Leaving.

Tara *Did many go to Third Level?*

Sarah Very few went to third level at that time.

Tara *What did they qualify to be if they succeeded?*

Sarah Well, maybe teachers.

Tara *Did they go on to a teacher training college?*

Sarah Well I suppose they did. They must have.

Tara *Would many of them have boarded in boarding schools?*

Sarah Well, I only knew about 2 pupils. They were Cullinanes down there. They went to Crossmolina in Mayo.

Tara *How would they travel?*

Sarah They got a bus or else their parents had a pony and trap and that's how they went.

Tara *What do you think of the education standards now, of the teachers then and now? Do you think they are better qualified?*

Sarah I'd say they are better qualified now. They learned more Irish that time. Irish was better that time. They have different ways of teaching now than that time.

Tara *Were there many traders in the area?*

Sarah There was just a blacksmith and a carpenter, that was all. The carpenter was Michael Skerritt. The blacksmiths were Smiths in Loughgeorge. They were there for years back. The carpenter lived in that little house beside Hughes. There's nobody there now.

Tara *Have they any family now?*

Sarah No. The last of them died about 2 years ago.

Tara *Did any of the family emigrate?*

They didn't, they got married and left but, no-one stayed there.

Tara *Were they full-time carpenters?*

Sarah They were. The Smiths had a little farm, I think alright, but the Skerritts had no land whatsoever.

Tara *How did the people pay them?*

Sarah When they did a job, they paid them for it. That's how it was.

Tara *Where did they get the equipment to make the furniture?*

Sarah The equipment was bought in the shops in Galway.

Angela *Did they sell their stuff locally?*

Sarah They did. They just made carts, anything they made, it was just old stuff. They weren't supplying shops at all.

Tara *Were there many thatched houses in the area?*

Sarah Oh, almost all. Every second house I'd say was thatched.

Tara *Who were the thatcher's?*

Sarah Tom Forde was a thatcher. Stephen Lynskey? Pat Clancy and there was a Seamus Duggan then later, that used to do thatch as well.

Tara *Who was the best?*

Sarah I don't really know. I think Tom Forde was very good, God rest him. He's dead now. He was a very good thatcher. He was one of the best.

Tara *Would he be dear?*

Sarah Arah, he wasn't. I don't remember now, but they weren't really.

Angela *Was thatching expensive?*

Sarah It wasn't expensive, that time, no. It is awful expensive now. That time, it would be five pounds or six pounds at least.

Tara *What were the water facilities in the house?*

Sarah You drew water from the well, and that was it, in buckets.

Angela *Where was the well?*

Sarah There was 3 or 4 wells down in Cahergowan. If there wasn't a well, then there was a tank. Everyone had a little tank. You'd drink the spring water from the well.

Tara *What cooking facilities did you have?*

Sarah An open hearth, pots and pans and little pots they used to call a skillet, a small little pot for boiling the dinner. Bacon and cabbage.

Tara *Was that a regular dish?*

Sarah That was a regular dish. You would have something special on Sunday. Chicken or something like that. Chicken was a novelty. You'd rear chickens yourself and cook them and all. You'd have ducks at Christmas, then you'd have geese, but we never had turkeys. We didn't like them.

Tara *Were you fashion conscious?*

Sarah No, not really, I'd say.

Tara *Would ye wear trousers?*

Sarah No, never. We wouldn't be caught dead in them. Well no-one was wearing them anyway. You wouldn't wear them. That time you made your own clothes. You bought material, you went to a dressmaker if you weren't able to make them yourself. There was no "Penneys" or "Dunnes" that time. Ryans, Moons, that shop now was all material. If your mother was handy, she made the clothes, if not, you went to the dressmaker and that was it.

Tara *Was it a big thing to bring it to the dressmaker?*

Sarah There was an old dressmaker in the country and there was loads of them in the town and kinds, you always stuck to the one dressmaker.

Tara *Were the Egan girls around in your time?*

Sarah No. They were before me. What they did mostly was weaving, I think. I never saw them sew. They were weavers, I think.

Tara *Could you describe the old sewing machine for me?*

Sarah I never saw any of them now, they were huge things. My mother had one a "Singer", an old machine, but it was a hand one. But then it broke, and she bought a new one in 1950 and she still has it and it's still going. They were very strong. Today's ones are a lot lighter.

Angela *Did ye go into Galway much?*

Sarah Well. Everyone went on a Saturday and they went to the market, and brought eggs, chickens and anything else for selling, and brought home the groceries for the week. There was no shops that time. Not much anyhow.

Tara *Where was the market?*

Sarah The market is still there, we used to call it the "egg market", there at the end of Shop Street, to the right.

Angela *How did you travel there?*

Sarah We travelled on a bus or else on bicycle.

Tara *When you were travelling to Galway on foot, would you bring anything to eat with you?*

Sarah You'd bring something along with you or else you had someone belonging to you living in Galway, a lot of people around here had, and you popped into them for a cup of tea. That was handy, or else you went in and had a cup of tea.

- Tara** *Did the public houses have tea and sandwiches?*
Sarah No, they didn't have then, I don't think so. I used to hear my mother saying there was a shop and you got tea and bread and butter. Two pence you paid for it.
- Tara** *Was there much of an attraction in the area for tourists?*
Sarah Salthill was there, but not really.
- Tara** *How about the Friary and Castle?*
Sarah Well, people came and looked at it, but not as much as they do today.
- Tara** *Was there a historian in the parish that would come down and talk about them?*
Sarah I don't think so now. I don't remember any historian, the majority of people had a bit of history alright, but there was no-one in particular.
- Angela** *What sort of vehicles did they have?*
Sarah Just horses, carts and ponies and traps, also sidecars. But it was mostly horses and carts.
- Angela** *When did the motor car come into the parish?*
Sarah It would be the very late 40's or early 50's, they started to come.
- Tara** *When did the car become popular?*
Sarah They became really popular in the sixties. The late 60's and into the 70's. Before that, there were very few.
- Tara** *Who would have them now in the parish?*
Sarah Most of the big farmers had them I'd say and just an odd man had a taxi. You depended on that then. There was one or two taxis.
- Tara** *How much would they charge?*
Sarah I don't really know, it wasn't much now. You'd get to Claregalway from Galway for about 2 shillings – 10 pence now. A fair day 3 or 4 would get together and get a taxi home. Each paid 2 shillings.
- Angela** *Where did the landlords live?*
Sarah The Grateheads live in Lydican. The Ffrenches lived in Cloon – I remember them. The Holmes lived in the big house. Do you know Holmes Hill? Well that big house – it belongs to Divillys now in Galway – Divilly's butchers. It's falling down now.
- Tara** *Could you tell us a bit about the Ffrenches?*
Sarah Not really that much now.
- Tara** *Did they have a big family?*
Sarah In fact, the family I saw, they had no family. A husband and wife and her sister. When they went then, there was nobody left.

- Angela** *Were they liked by the locals?*
Sarah Well, they were I'd say, I'd imagine they were.
- Angela** *Did the gentry keep to themselves?*
Sarah I'd say they did. The Ffrenches were Catholics anyhow. The Grateheads weren't. The Holmes were Catholic too.
- Tara** *Is there any old photograph or painting of Lydican House when it was it's former glory?*
Sarah I don't know now.
- Tara** *Did the children go to the local schools or did they have a private teacher?*
Sarah The Ffrenches in Cloon had their own private tutor. She was from Annaghdown.
- Tara** *Did they treat her with respect?*
Sarah Oh, they did. She lived in with them and was treated very well.
- Tara** *How was she treated in the parish?*
Sarah Oh, she was well liked in the parish. She was Catholic. She ended up marrying one of the local farmers.
- Tara** *Did the Ffrenches go to mass in the parish?*
Sarah Yes, they did.
- Tara** *Were they very religious?*
Sarah No, not really, I wouldn't really think so. No more religious than any other one. The Holmes' probably went into Galway to services.
- Angela** *Did they own much land?*
Sarah They did. The Grateheads owned all the land in Lydican, Goratleva and all that area. The Ffrenches owned all Cloon and Holmes owned the area around here, as well as Holme's Hill. They owned this area around Lakeview as well. They had a lot of land.
- Tara** *Do you remember any of the evictions?*
Sarah No, I don't.
- Tara** *Did many people go to the workhouse?*
Sarah A very odd one, I'd say. I don't remember people going.
- Tara** *Do you know where the workhouse was?*
Sarah In Loughrea.
- Tara** *Are you fluent in Irish?*
Sarah I can speak Irish, but not fluent, not any more, I'm afraid.

- Angela** *Did the other members of your family speak Irish?*
Sarah Bernadette can speak it alright. She learned a bit of it at college, but my husband doesn't speak it. He's from here, but still hasn't much Irish.
- Tara** *What's your husband's name?*
Sarah P.J. Moran (Paddy Joe)
- Tara** *Was he from Lakeview?*
Sarah Yes, I married into this house. I'm from Cahergowan, the farthest house in.
- Tara** *Did you meet at a dance?*
Sarah I met him at a dance in Galway. "The Hanger" in Salthill.
- Tara** *How do you feel about the younger generation not speaking Irish?*
Sarah It would be nice to know the Irish, but then again it's not much use to them. When I went to school down here, there was an Irish Inspector coming once a year and two pound you got for knowing your Irish answers. You got a cheque at Christmas time. It was posted to your parents. When the Inspector came, he knew well if you spoke Irish at home.
- Tara** *How far does the Gaeltacht area spread?*
Sarah I think it's around Cahergowan, that area. I'm not too sure now, but it was one time.
- Tara** *Do you think it will last long?*
Sarah I'm afraid it won't. After another while, it will die down.
- Angela** *Was the local priest influential in the parish?*
Sarah Well, he was, we were terrified of him. I'll never forget him. Canon Moran from Castlebar, County Mayo. We, as children were terrified of him. I remember one day when Bishop Brown, the Bishop of this area was down here at mass. One of the boys were fooling around or went in the wrong seat or something. Canon Moran jumped out over the altar rails and ran down to them. Bishop Brown told him to leave the poor children alone and so he turned again and went back up.
- Angela** *Do you know anything about Jack O'Lantern?*
Sarah Well, he was a bird that used to be in the bog at summertime and he had a shiny tail and we used to think it was a person, but we found out it wasn't, that it was a bird.
- Tara** *What about the Phoidin Mhairbhe?*
Sarah Well, I often heard about that alright. It was in some field. Something that would come on you and you couldn't find your way out. Down near Saddle's, there's a huge big field next to her and they say if you went in there at night now, that you would surely come on you late at night and you just couldn't get out of it. I know this woman that was going around for an hour before she got out.

- Angela** ***How did she break the spell?***
Sarah I don't know, she finally got out.
- Tara** ***What were the closing hours of the pubs?***
Sarah Much the same as today.
- Tara** ***What was the age limit?***
Sarah I'd say about 18 or 19. They were stricter than they are now. Young people weren't going as much to the pub, because they hadn't the money.
- Tara** ***Did the women go into the pubs?***
Sarah No, never. They stayed at home, they went to visit or anywhere, but never to the pub.
- Tara** ***Did any travelling shows visit the area?***
Sarah McFaddens, I think at one stage came down there before the road was changed. Just once. I went to it once. A play and a competition for singers and accordion players. Some local person won.
- Tara** ***Do you know anything about Hedge Schools?***
Sarah No, I don't think there were any Hedge Schools.
- Tara** ***Did any famous people visit the area?***
Sarah When Canon Moran died, Sean T. O'Kelly came and DeValera came to the funeral. We weren't sorry for Canon Moran, because he was too cross. People were lonely after him, but I don't know why.
- Tara** ***Did he have a wake?***
Sarah No, I don't think so.
- Tara** ***What kind of burial did he have?***
Sarah He was buried outside the church. I wasn't at it.
- Tara** ***Were there any local characters in the area?***
Sarah No, I never heard of anyone.
- Angela** ***Who were the local doctors?***
Sarah There was Dr. Joyce from Turloughmore. He was the local doctor.
- Angela** ***Were there any Quacks?***
Sarah No, I don't think so. There was a Flaherty man in Cahergowan, he was supposed to have some cure. He used to boil herbs and things like that.
- Angela** ***What illnesses were common?***
Sarah The common cold and all the children's chicken pox and so on. No-one ever went to a doctor unless you were awful bad altogether. The home remedies were used. If you had a terrible cough, you got buttermilk going to bed at night. Boil

buttermilk and put butter and sugar in it. Another cure: you boil garlic and put some hot water into it and when it was boiled soft, you drank the juice. It was hard to drink and tasted terrible. It worked.

Tara *How did they cope with complicated births?*

Sarah They finally went to them then. There were very few complicated births.

Tara *Were you born at home?*

Sarah Yes, I was. Everyone in our family were born at home. There was seven of us.

Tara *Who was the mid-wife?*

Sarah Nurse Keane. She lived over in Loughgeorge in Hanleys.

Tara *Were the husbands present?*

Sarah No, I'd say they wouldn't have been allowed to be present that time.

Tara *After their first child, how would they get rid of the weight?*

Sarah The weight would go that time, because they were working so hard on the farm.

Tara *Did the locals have any healing powers?*

Sarah No.

Angela *Would you go to the doctors first or try the home remedy?*

Sarah I'd try the home remedy first.

Tara *Do you know anything about the 1916 rising?*

Sarah No, I don't.

Tara *Do you remember the rationing in World War II?*

Sarah Yes, I do, clothes were rationed, but you had enough. You got a book of coupons for the year. The most scarce things were tea and sugar. It was terrible, because everything was so scarce. There was nothing imported.

Tara *How about fruit?*

Sarah There was no fruit coming in.

Tara *What happened the market in Galway?*

Sarah Anything that was growing here, was all they were selling.

Angela *Did any local people go to fight in the war?*

Sarah I don't think so. Everyone got involved in it. The older people were the F.C.A. The younger people were the L.D.F.

Tara *What do you know about the River Clare?*

Sarah I only ever saw flat bottom boats. They were very big boats. They brought home the hay and turf in them. They were called "Flats". A few people had small boats

that they fished out of, but most fished from the bridge. Anyone that did fish, I'd say it was poaching they were.

Tara *Did any of the locals go out to sea fishing?*
Sarah No, they didn't. The river was very important, because at the time, the river wasn't ever running in around the land. They brought the hay and turf home in the boats.

Tara *Do you know anything about the Friary?*
Sarah The old building behind the ball alley belonged to the abbey. It was a hospital. The river wasn't there that time. The river was further on.

Tara *Were there any ceremonies held in the Friary?*
Sarah There's mass said every year in it now. Canon Callanan says it. A lot of people turn up for it. There's a square inside a green patch and the altar was placed there.

Tara *Have you any relations buried there?*
Sarah My father is buried there and my sister. All the people on my mother's side are buried there. My father was from Corrandrum, my mother is a native of Cahergowan.

Tara *Would many of the girls be going out with foreigners?*
Sarah No, there weren't any foreigners.

Tara *How long were you dating your husband?*
Sarah I was dating him 2 or 3 years. He went off to England, he came back after 9 or 10 years. I started going out with him again then.

