Bridie (Morgan) & Mary (Casey) Meaney 2

Female

0:00:00 – 0:07:26
FAMILY LOSS –

Bridie and Mary's grandfather died young and their grandmother at 27 already had five children and was expecting their father at the time. The ladies explain that it was a type of oedema in the throat and Mary had inherited it, there is choking as part of the symptoms.

The house that they came from was a single storey house with garrets and would be considered a large farmers house.
The ladies describe the types of furniture that were in use for those times.

On being asked about their ancestry they said there was no mention of Meaney' in the 1855 census.

Their grandfather Paddy Meaney farmed about 110 acres and go into an explanation of the types of farming that was done.
There was cattle and tillage being done including mangles for the cattle.

There were sheep and horses for ploughing and there would be about twelve cows that would have to be milked.

0:07:28 – 0:09:16
MADE MATCHED –

When asked about the conditions that their grandmother had to live in Bridie and Mary explain that though 27 their Grandfather was in his forties and they say it

was a 'made matched' relationship,

Mary explained that her Grandmother said he had her asked since she was fifteen to marry her and they married at eighteen.She also said that before the birth her husband appeared to her and told her she was having a son.

Whilst pregnant, their grandmother had her brother come to run the farm. The Granduncle was known as Michael 'hardnail' Hayes. One sister says this is because he was strict the other says that he was tight with money.

When the children were reared he bought his own land.

0:09:17 – 0:10:42
WEEKEND TRADITION –

Although untidy during the week it was tradition to be spruced up going to the Saturday market, and also the boots would be polished Saturday night for mass on Sunday morning and if not they would not be done on the Sunday.

The ladies tell the story of picking up a neighbouring woman on the way to market and because she wouldn't be too tidy she would be dropped off at the county hospital on the outskirts of Ennis and picked up there on the way back, because the uncle would not be seen with someone that was untidy on a day when you should be dressed up.
It was all about respect.

0:10:43 – 0:17:56
TRADITIONS AND FOLKLORE ON HOME LIFE –

Whilst their father was raised on the farm he attended school in the village in the school that closed.

It was said that as he had not seen his father he could cure thrush, the ladies explain the tradition associated with this.

Their mother was a local woman also and when she married they lived in the O Shea home and moved in to the present home when it was built.

The family farm was worked in unison with others in the family.

The houses were built by themselves and this is where the four children from the ladies family were reared.

The house was always whitewashed and there were scraws used on the roof.

There were two hobs at the fire. At Christmas the men would go to the wood and bring home ash for the fire for cooking because of the value of the heat from the embers.

They would bring home a Christmas candle and the ladies explain how this was made.

They would grind their own wheat also.

Their father's older brother used to look after them when the father got sick. He was a brilliant hurler but he would often end up in hospital after a game after playing well.

Hurling was big around the area.

0:17:57 – 0:22:20
COOKING –

Ann-Marie said that granny Meany used to train as a cook in Ballyalla at a school where there would also be embroidery lessons.

She was a beautiful cook and used to make cakes etc. for household gambles for the neighbours to eat (a tradition still ongoing) and it was done without electricity.

The ladies mention a dish called Corragima made from seaweed and explain how this was made. It would be consumed at tea; The ladies also speak of how their granny would roast meat and how game was cooked.

It was also told how the game was trapped using ferrets and would be prepared and excess would be sold. If the ferrets tore the animal the girls would sow it up to make it more presentable for sale.

0:22:21 – 0:30:55
CHILDHOOD MEMORIES-WORKING WITH ASSES AND HORSES –

The order of siblings in the family was Christy, Josie, Patsy, Mary, Bridie and Anthony.

The earliest memories were of all of them going down the field and bring in the asses and the chaos when they were doing jumps. Or if 'Hard Nail' came they would have to clean out after the horses from the age of seven.

They speak of the variety of animals and fowl that they would be rearing for sale and the care that went into them.

To feed the pigs they would have to boil two big pots of spuds on a Saturday night because it wouldn't be allowed on Sunday.

The girls would have to do a lot of the work as the boys would be allowed have their rest because of the hurling.

The travelling creamery was also catered for.

The house was never empty with people always calling and no one would be turned away.

Veg would also be grown and the ladies give a lot of information on what was grown and how it was used.

0:30:56 – 0:43:30
SCHOOLDAYS –

Bridie and Mary speak of their time at school in Ruan national School and how hard they had it with their teacher a Mr. John Leyden. And it was obvious that he was a hard taskmaster.

Mrs Halloran was lovely and they her until third class and they had to bring a log of wood to school every day and if it wasn't brought there would be three hard slaps as punishment.
The teacher would heat bottles of cocoa or milk beside the fire for them.

There would be no shoes during the summer and they would cross the fields at summer.

The ladies tell a funny story about a pupil and a block of wood.

On asked if the fire kept the place warm the ladies said they never took any notice of it.

Mr Leyden in their minds was a savage and administered a lot of physical abuse to the pupils,(and told no one) the ladies still have no good word for him and have no happy memories of school.

They said that for the confirmation, four schools would get together and there would be a series of questions to be answered. Mr Leyden's class was always called forward first by Bishop Fogarty as they were always supposed to be the best but they used to get beaten in advance and he used to tell them that â€œthey weren't going to be the first class to disgrace himâ€.

Everyone got slapped, no matter if they were good or not.

Neither Bridie nor Mary can recall the communion but they tell a funny story about the communion dress they wore.

Fr Corry was the parish priest at one stage and the ladies tell a funny story of the Ruan sports day involving herself and Fr. Corry.

There were subjects at school and there was a lot of teaching through Irish, there would be lessons in Latin including the songs in the choir.
The ladies speak about their school friends and the boys playing hurling and that they were very young when they would have started.
The ladies mentioned Jimmy Smith debuting for Clare. (The ladies mention in the interview that he played railway cup at 14 but in actual fact he was 17 on his debut).

0:43:31 – 0:48:00
CAREER –

After primary school Mary went on to secondary school in 'The Tech' (now Ennis Community School) but Bridie went hairdressing in No. 3 Abbey Street in Ennis in the building where Tommy O'Donnell now has his sports shop.

They used to cycle to Ennis and Bridie went to the Tech for a year for school in Ennis. It would take forty five min to get there.

In those times their parents had to purchase an apprenticeship and Bridie began to learn her trade with Helen Collins from Corofin. The Employers approached to school for an apprentice and the man running the school a Mr Sexton went to Bridie and then her parents.

0:48:01 – 0:51:36
FAMILY LIFE –

The ladies go on to an explanation of their father's illness and the progress in the medical science in treating it. There were a number of the family that had contracted it.

The ladies tell a story of their Christy cycling to visit them. Christy had moved to Tubber to look after a relative's farm and used to cycle everywhere. When the girls broke the bike their father got mad with them (he had never done that before).

Their mother had good health but every one worked hard on the farm. They used to make pillow cases from the calico flour bags and the ladies go through the process of how it was done.

The ladies speak at length of the grandmother who liked to have a smoke and a drink.

The card nights would be one of the social events but there would often be dancing in the local houses. The dancing would start at about eight o clock until about one. There would be singing also as there were many good singers.

CéilÃ music was played by local musicians and the ladies say there were some very good players but some mediocre also. Bridie and Mary go through the families that were very good musicians in the community.

The ladies also say that they have joined a new history club formed by Michael Leahy and come up from Ennis every week to visit and attend the meetings.

Ann-Marie O Shea's sister and niece went to America to New York and Corona, Long Island. The ladies speak of the jewellery that they had from America and how it was all given away.

They also sent home other items that wouldn't be seen around Ireland.