

# Grania Weir

Female

0:00:00 - 0:06:19

DROMOLAND -

Grania's father inherited Dromoland after grandfather's death in 1929 but due to difficult relationship with her grandmother the family remained living in London. Visiting Dromoland as a child, the self-sufficiency of the estate with forge, sawmill & dairy. Army billeted there for the war from 1940. First pasteurisation of milk.

0:06:20 - 0:13:50

EVACUATED TO CANADA -

Her mother's decision to live in Dromoland, her father's war career. Grania sent as evacuee to Canada with a school during WWII, returning unaccompanied at age of 13 in 1943 to find that her father didn't recognise her - the only creature to recognise her was her dog. Her experiences in Canada.

0:13:51 - 0:22:25

SCHOOL IN CAMBRIDGE -

School in Cambridge in England with difficult journeys over and back to Clare. Very unhappy time at school but loved spending holidays at home in Dromoland. Finished in Oxfordshire in a secretarial school.

0:22:26 - 0:24:15

FIRST JOB -

First job in London as a secretary to an MP for 5 years.

0:24:16 - 0:27:30

## MADRID -

Moved to Madrid age 22 as a social secretary to the British Ambassador Lord Balfour and his wife. Her status was low in Madrid as being a working woman wasn't seen as an acceptable thing to do. When King George VI died after three months there the embassy went into mourning and she had nothing to do so had to leave and she returned to Clare.

0:27:31 - 0:39:01

## JAPAN -

Took a posting in Japan with the British Foreign Office. Expected to be almost completely self-sufficient by her parents. Flight to Japan took 5 days stopping in Frankfurt, Cyprus, Basra, Damascus, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Hong Kong. Told she wasn't allowed to land in Basra, was brought back to the plane because her middle name was Rachel and they thought she was Jewish. In Japan, she lived in a mess or dormitory. Stayed for 2.5 years.

0:34:50 - 0:39:35

## AMERICAN EMBASSY LONDON

Back in London got a job in the American Embassy as a social secretary to wealthy people. Stayed a short time before getting a temporary job as a typist in a highly bureaucratic office, then taking a posting in Peru.

0:39:36- 0:41:20

## PERU

Travelled to Lima by plane to become secretary to the British Ambassador to Peru, Sir Gage and his wife. Her first task was to get their gardener out of jail.

0:41:21 - 0:47:49

## DROMOLAND

Moving out of Dromoland: family built a new house and farm on the 1000 acres not sold. Grania was the last family member to sleep in Dromoland before the contents were auctioned. Her father continued to farm there until he died in 1968 and her uncle inherited. Difficulties arose with her uncle's family over the inheritance. Had to empty the house and move out two weeks before her wedding to Hugh Weir. Her mother died three weeks afterwards. Her thoughts on Dromoland as it is now.

1:06:01 - 1:15:30

#### WORKING LIFE IN LONDON

Working life in London, the life of a working woman in the British government in the 1940s/50s. Her dislike of being a debutante. The pressure to become married off.

1:15:31 - 1:26:10

#### LIFE IN CLARE

Seeing positive changes when returning home to Clare with prosperity coming gradually. Travelling by pony and trap and going shopping in Limerick. Taking American tourists around the west- the Cliffs of Moher, the Burren, Kerry & Cashel. Grania speaks of her sister, who never really lived at Dromoland.

1:26:11 - 1:31:00

#### DROMOLAND DURING THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Her grandparent's life, between Dromoland and Shropshire, living in Dromoland through the Troubles before Independence. Grania has letters written by her grandfather to her father about those times. A car was commandeered from Dromoland and subsequently seen driving about with De Valera in it. The difficulties her father and grandfather had with changes in the social order at the time.

1:31:01 - 1:05:00

## WORKERS ON THE DROMOLAND ESTATE

Workers on the Dromoland estate, a major employer in the days before Shannon Airport. Employment created for people during the Famine so they didn't starve. Little talk in the family about difficult times, such subjects were not discussed.