Mary Crowe

Female

File 1 0:00:32 – 0:03:14
FAMILY AND SCHOOL –

Mary was born in Kilimer in 1920. All her neighbours had big families around her. She went to school in Kilimer which was built in 1895; it was giving by Mr Reeves of Bessborough House. It was a two teacher school. Mr Tom Neenan and Delia Irwin were there names of the teachers. There was a big population in the school for that time of over 60 people. She mentioned that school wasn't very strict that the teachers were very good and very kind to all the students. Delia taught from Infants up until 3rd class and then you moved to the next room to do 4th, 5th and 6th. They were never taught in Irish always English there was very little Irish, they said their prayers in Irish though. They also had their 1st holy communion and confirmation. When she finished school in Kilimer she was sent to Kilrush for secondary school. When they were going to school they either had to walk or cycle there was no cars or buses back then. Mary married in 1945 she was only 25 years old, she had 2 children a boy and a girl and she lost two babies. Her son Joseph married in Kilimer were they're from and her daughter Mary married down in Bunratty.

0:03:15 – 0:04:48
HOME –

Mary said back then there was no television so when you came home from school you took off your clothes and put working clothes on. You'd to go out and bring in the water and turf. You had to pulp turnips and mangles for the cows. You get you three legged stool and went out milking the cows in the evening. They'd milk three or four cows in an evening they'd be spread out in the family, at that point Mary said you'd only have about 16-20 cows. After you milked the cows you came

in and ate your supper, then you'd sit down next to the fire and done your lessons and off to bed. Mary said that her family wasn't very religious but no one went to bed without saying the rosary.

0:04:49 – 0:06:15
JOBS AND EMIGRATION –

Mary said that the big families got jobs in shops and some went off to do carpentry or a blacksmith. There weren't very many jobs back then and very few went for education because they needed to get jobs and start earning, there was no money there. Then as the years went by the immigration too America came along and as soon as they finished their education they immigrated. A lot of the big families all went too America. Mary said a lot of her friends and neighbours went to America, some of them never came back some of them did that was back in the 1930-1950's. Mary said that the boys would go off and get jobs like plastering and building all that crack and that there was an awful lot of people immigrating over to England that time as well, the girls would go over to do nursing courses and come back when they get there degree and they'd all get jobs in Kilrush or some place. Mary remembers her neighbours going over to England that would have been about 1940 or 1950.

0:06:36 – 0:11:47
FOOD AND CREAMERY –

Mary says how food would have been very scarce back in that time, you'd to grow your own wheat and vegetables, even kill a pig for their bacon. She said when the pigs sorted in the barrel the fleshes of meat would be taking out of the insides of the pig and they'd be put into crooks you take them up out of the pickle after three weeks and hung up to dry they'd be left there until their eating. They had laying hens all year round and their own milk. Back then they had no creamery's so they separated the milk and put it was put into cream with the separator and then the skimmed milk was giving to the calf's and the cream was put into a tub

and then twice a week they put it into a churn barrel and you made butter of the cream, you'd go into Kilrush then and sell your butter. She remembers her mother going in every week to Kilrush to sell the butter. Mary mentioned there was no creamery's around until about 1945/46 and it was local to Kilimer it was up in Derrylough. The main creamery was in Kilrush. For breakfast you'd have an egg and a slice of brown bread. She speaks of bringing the wheat to the mill in Tullycrine.

0:11:48 – 0:22:20
WAR OF INDEPENDENCE –

Mary said that back in the 1920's everyone was caught up with the Black in Tans and the Free stators when they captured them and sent them up to Ballykinlar. They were captured by the Black in Tans. Mary mentioned she didn't remember the people who got captured but remembered their names. They were neighbours of hers, she named them as Willie Cooper, Rob Neale, James Driscoll, Paddy Rochford, Pat Hassett and Nick Driscoll they were all kept imprisoned. The Black in Tans had captured them there was a war going on between them to get the best of the Republicans and put it in for the Free stators. The Free stators were the black in tans and they were more plentiful Mary said. They were trying to take over but they didn't, it was like when the landlord's long time ago when they came in the people were nothing but pure slaves. Reeves, Vandeleur and all of them came in, you owned nothing. Vandeleur could have a party in the big house and he could come out take the pig out of your cabin and you'd have nothing then. Mary said she couldn't remember it but she remembers her parents talking about it. Mary then went back to talk about 1900, she said in 1900 Michael Davitt from county Mayo was the only person with a head on him at the time, he said that if ye continue on the way ye are he says ye will never own nothing. They were taking rent from the farmers and if you didn't pay the rent you were evicted they were all evicting them, but they got tired of evicting them then when the money didn't come in they had to pull out. They took you away from your house and your cattle

had to go away and everything you were out of your house for nearly a year and a half and if you didn't take the cattle out of the field they'd have them gone, they'd distribute the cattle amongst the neighbours close friends, brothers and sisters. Mary's grandfather was evicted from the house she owns they had to bring the cattle and all up to the top of a hill to a cabin. They had to build the shed. Mary's house was the last house in Vandelure's and in the next field was Reeves. Vandeleur evicted them and they built a shed in Reeves it was the boundary wall and they were there for 18 months and when they went back to Vandeleur's they had nothing. Mary sad that was only one house that got evicted, Clearys were evicted, Birminghams were evicted there was an awful lot of them evicted. It was an awful time Mary said. Eventually then they didn't get there rent so Vandeleur eventually had to pull in his horns and next they had to go. In 1900 then the divide was made through Michael Davitt in Co Mayo he said, â€œif ye don't put down your heels ye will never get anywhereâ€. So we had the misfortune to be in Vandeleur and the other one was Reeves. Reeves married Vandeleur's sister and they all accumulated and they all fitted together. Reeves never evicted anyone it was Vandeleur who was the villain there was nothing thought of him Mary said. He opened a soup school then and invited in everyone that got evicted and a priest inside in Kilrush said their having a feast inside in the big house this evening and tomorrow morning the crows will fly out threw the roofs and the houses burned on the Saturday night inside and the Vandeleur went off and he was never again seen. That was between the 1820s and 1900s. No one ever saw Vandeleur or Reeves after that. She says nly for Michael Davitt and his plan of campaign they wouldn't be here, he kicked up a fuss and said â€œah here don't be giving them any moneyâ€ and they were evicted then but the money didn't come so they had to pull out. Mary's grandmother died in 1927.

0:23:20 – 0:33:55
CUAIRD/HOUSE DANCES –

She said at night time they'd all go in to someone's house, neighbours and all

they'd have a big fire going and they'd have a story about this one and a story about that one. It was all business, no television no nothing and there was no papers. There were a lot of good story tellers back in the day like Paddy Rochford and he'd tell the good stories. The neighbours back then were great help if there was a cow calving or if someone was sick at night there were no rejections the neighbours would stay up with you all night. We'd have a meeting place Mary said and all the neighbours would gather and tell stories and then walk home in the night. Mary said now days you don't have that neighbourly feel anymore, back in her time if you'd make scones and you had a few left you'd say aww sure we'll bring them over to Bridgie but they've nothing like that. They all worried about each other if there was anything wrong you always had someone's back like a support group. Then as time went on they started getting playing cards and playing games of cards. In about 1950 the dance halls started up, there was dancing in ever house of a Sunday night the neighbours would collect there and they'd have special houses and they had all the players back the playing the fiddle and what not. Mary mentioned she played the fiddle herself long ago and she'd go playing at the houses were they are dancing everyone had their party piece and there was always some joke or crack about somebody. They were wonderful times Marys said, she said she often said to her lads that they never had enjoyable times that they had. It was more sociable and there were bigger families so more people. Now a days Mary said there's no one to mind the old people like back in her day everyone had someone too mind them when they got old and they all died at home but now there all moved into a nursing home. They'd meet at dances and all that. She married in 1945. In her time you'd marry and that was it there was no divorce or anything. They were wonderful times everyone respected one another you could walk the roads anytime of the night and everyone would know and nothing would happen to you amazing times Mary said. There were no crimes or murders and very little people consumed drink.

0:34:00 – 0:39:48
MONEYPOINT/KILIMER CAR FERRY –

Moneypoint started up in about 1950. It didn't have a good impact around Kilimer, they had bought up the land and employ people then but it was people from other county's getting the jobs very few local people got jobs apart from the land that was bought. Very little it did for Kilimer at that time. Moneypoint now is gone down to its 26th winter and there are no replacements. The Kilimer car ferry was a great investment .It's there about 40 years now. It was a German that started that. They had bought another place and they said they move over more for a bit of shelter. They were in Poulnadaree and there was a strong current there so they moved over to Brad with it then. It brought a lot of tourists to and from the county. Although they never really went do Kilrush,

0:39:59 – 0:46:33
AN CAILÃN BÃN –

Mary went on to talk about the famous story from Kilimer, the 'CailÃn Bán', her real name was Eileen Hanlon was her name. It all happened back in 1819 when a young girl was found were Moneypoint is now by a man who was going fishing, Podge Collin was his name. He saw the seagulls below at the shore and wondered what they were doing down they so he walked down to see a load of seaweed there and the body of a young girl so he had to get in contact with the Gardai but she didn't know how he did that because there were no phones back then but someone contacted them so they came down and removed the young girls body and brought it up to the chambers and laid her out in a cabin. They had her there trying to identify her to see who she was and they then discovered by her teeth who she was she had very uneven teeth or something. She was a beautiful girl only about 17 or 18 and this man fell in love with her and then he got tired of her very quickly, he couldn't bring her home to his mother because it was only royalty that got into the big houses. So he decided then that if he could drowned her in the Shannon he'd get rid of her, so across at Glin which would be only across from Kilimer about a month before CailÃn Bán was found he bought a rope off of a fisherman he said he wanted the rope for tying up his boat. Back them when a

rope was worn the fishermen would cut open the rope and put another bit of rope in to make it stronger, so he got Danny Mann to do his dirty work and he gave him some whiskey, he came back and told Scanlan that he couldn't do it when he looked at her so Scanlan gave Danny more whiskey brought him to Cappa and told him not to come back till it was done. So he got him to throw her in the Shannon he also was suppose too of had cut off her fingers. All they had as evidence was the rope so it took them awhile to find out who she was because there was no post-mortems to go on. So they brought the rope anyways to find out if they could find anything on it so they went to the fishermen and the fisherman that sold the rope said he sold it to Scanlan and that's what got him caught. Scanlan was a big shot like Reeves. Scanlan then was taking up for it and he said he hadn't had act or part in it. He was about to be hung, the gallows was some place below in Limerick and as they were bringing him to the gallows the horses stopped at the bridge and he thought he was getting out so they took him out and he was brought down then to be hung. So about 5 years after Danny Mann was found after he told the whole story, Desmond Glynn he was down looking in to the prisons he was a governor or something, so didn't he see Danny and asked him where he saw him before he said aren't you the man that helped Scanlan with the boat so it came to him realisation then that it was him who told the story and so he was hung too. Her grave is still there, but Mary said back then long ago people were very sensitive about losing family members. Peadar O'Connell was there anyways and they didn't know what to do with her no notion as to who she was at the time so Peadar said â€œsure bury her in my grave there's plenty of room thereâ€. That's how she go buried. Mary said theirs a book about the full story.

0:46:37 – 0:48:10
DE VALERA /POLITICS –

Mary said she can't remember anything from them times the country people wouldn't have much interest. A country man would have nothing but his shovel and spade milking his cow, the country men took what they got and that was the

way it was.

0:49:30 – 0:50:25
CHURCH –

Mary said everyone would go to church. They'd all say there prayers, you'd have your prayers said before you go out you'd sit down and say the rosary. The rosary was always there.

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FOOD/CATTLE/TRANSPORT/CHANGES –
Mary goes on to talk about how there was no money back then but they were all still happy go lucky people. There was no jelly or bon bons; you'd get a bowl of rice and that was it, there was none of that high class food. Mary said you wouldn't come in from school and say you didn't like you dinner you'd eat what was in front of you and you'd be glad to get it. Back then it was all horses they had no machinery. Mary went on to say she was in Kilrush one day at Regina House when some fella came in talking. He said to all us elderly people what is the greatest thing that has come to help farmers and someone said then the dehorning of the cattle. They take the horns off the cattle, their horns were huge and very dangerous to people. Someone else said then about the calving jack, long ago you use to have the neighbours pulling the calf it was such cruelty but thank god that someone like Michael David used his brain. Mary said they'd love to go out on summer days and the cattle would be let out at about 10 or 11 after the milking and they'd be out tearing up and down the streets and if you were outside and you met them they'd jump up on top of you. After a while anyways along the cattle's backs there was some bee stinging them or something but nobody knew, so these lumps came up and eventually anyways a big maggot came out of it he'd be as big as my thumb now Mary said. Well with the grace of god anyways someone used there brain above in the agriculture and they got inspectors to come around and you got this wash it was in a jam pot and you'd get a piece of a rag but before you put it on the cows back you'd have to scrap it the

cows back with a scrubbing brush that was used to wash the floor with and there was a scab on top of this and if you didn't scrap it with the scrubbing brush you wouldn't be able to get off the scab, we use to take off the scab then and you'd go along with your dab of wash and put it into it. After about 2 weeks and this thing came up. All the Tannery's were kicking up about it, the hives were coming back up and leaving holes and they couldn't know what was in them and it was a warble fly. That would have been about 1940/50. The bee must have stung the cow in the leg but how did it come up along his leg. They always ran for a pond of water to leave there legs in. The horses got attacked and when they did they would kick. When the horse would be tackled up on the double mower and the bees would attack the horses the horses would start tearing and jumping and the horse would get its leg inside the pole, so here was the job so Mary said you'd have to untack the horse to get the horses leg out. It was an awful time with flies Mary described. Mary said she would have worked with the horses taking in the hay and raking up the hay. They'd spend about an hour or two cutting the hay. In the 1950's then Mary said she can remember when the tractors came in, it was a big change she said. In Mary's day going to school and church there was only ever one car and that was at Reeve's house at Bessborough. Mary often heard her father talking about the bicycle when it came in-the Penny Farthing is what they called it. They were up in Chapel Hill once about 55 years ago and this lady was coming down Chapel Hill and she had this bicycle and there was a small when on the front and a big wheel on the back or the other way around Mary said. So she came down on this contraption down Chapel Hill to show the lads they would have been playing football or something, they thought the lady was going to get killed on it because they never saw it before it was the first bicycle the ever seen. They didn't know where this lady came out of with this contraption Mary said. Mary went on to talk about the change from a woman's perspective about woman been able to get jobs and been able to go into pubs. There wasn't that many jobs the girls that got married into the farms all came from a farming ground themselves ad they got their money off of the home place and they'd to pay a dowry going into the land of about 300 or 400 pounds which was a big amount of

money those days. Mary says there's big changes in 70 years, she said that everything has changed including the people, People expect an awful lot more these days in there ways for living there not contented. When the dole came in they had nothing you see the craters Mary said, if they had a little bit of land they could grow a bit of vegetables. Times were very poor. The dole had come in, in the 1950/60s.