

Mortimer ‘Murt’ O’Loughlin

Male

0:00:00 – 0:02:55

GRANDFATHER AND FAMILY BACKGROUND –

Murt explains that his grandfather returned from Australia in 1900 and purchased forty acres in Ballyvaughan. His name was also Mortimer O’Loughlin who was a native of Maurice’s Mills. Outlines that Mortimer was a very progressive farmer and introduced some new ideas in his farming including supplementing winter feeding with kale and rape.

0:02:56 – 0:04:35

THE CREAMERY –

Murt speaks about farming in general and outlines the impact of the creamery on the farming community in the 1950s. It was the first consistent payment that farmers got.

Speaks briefly about emigration and the importance of emigrants sending back money to help small farmers paying rent and rates to the Land Commission.

0:04:36 – 0:06:29

THE FARM ECONOMY –

Murt speaks about farming in his father’s time and explains that a system of bartering was still in practice at this stage. Murt speaks generally about the farm economy including, selling butter, and market days. Speaks about the making of butter in his parents’ home.

0:06:30 – 0:08:34

MAKING THE BUTTER –

Murt describes his memories of butter making and outlines the process. Speaks about the butter buyers and how barter was again a large part of the economy at the time.

0:08:34 - 0:11:08

LAND OWNERSHIP AND WINTERAGE -

Speaks about Land Ownership in the Burren and states that a lot of the major land owners are people from outside the area. Refers to the Bruton family who own a significant amount of land in the Burren (family of former Irish Taoiseach John Bruton). Murt speaks about the practice of winterage and speaks about the type of cattle used. He states that cattle from areas outside the limestone region of the Burren would have difficulties with Red Water.

Speaks briefly about the division of land by the Land Commission. Speaks about the general history of Burren family and the challenges of Burren farming over the years.

0:12:16 - 0:15:31

HISTORY OF WINTERAGE AND DEPOPULATION OF THE BURREN -

Murt suggests that the Irish Famine actually helps some people like the landlords to amass large areas of land which had previously been inhabited by smaller farmers.

He explains that there were three churches in Ballyvaughan during the Irish Famine and that this dwindled over time. The Marquis of Buckingham gave land to the church in Ballyvaughan which was never fully accepted by the local people. Murt's grandfather later bought this land. Speaks about a Father Ryder who was the local priest during the famine.

Murt speaks about the division between the small farmers and large farmers/landlords.

0:15:32 - 0:19:25

IMPORTANCE OF LAND -

Speaks about the hunger for land in the Burren in his father's and grandfather's time. He speaks about his own grandfather's difficulty in integrating into Ballyvaughan because he was not from the area.

Speaks about the farm and farm house that his father bought in 1900 in Ballyvaughan. There was an orchard on the farm and Murt's family produced apples for the local community. Speaks about the sale of sweet apples to tourist in Lisdoonvarna

0:19:26 - 0:23:35

MEMORIES OF WINTERAGE -

Murt outlines his own memories of winterage including the buying and selling of fairs at Kilfenora and Ennistymon. He recalls driving cattle for farmers. Speaks about his uncle MartÁn Vaughan who was a well-known cattle drover.

Speaks about driving cattle and the issues you might face as well as the provision you would have to take. Speaks about the payment drovers would get and offers an example of the value of money and how it has changed so much over the years.

0:23:36 - 0:28:30

COW DOCTORS -

Murt recalls that Martin Keane, Paddy Callinan and Martin Callinan were well known cow doctors. He explains how these men treated ailments in cows.

Speaks about an animal getting their legs caught in the rocks of the Burren which Murt refers to as a 'Scalp'. Speaks about oral tradition he heard about Cow Doctors in his father's time.

Murt states that the women were also very good with animal's ailments. Speaks

about the trouble with Dry Murren and Red Murren (Red Water).

File 2 0:03:00 – 0:03:18

THE FAIRS AND WINTERAGE –

Murt explains that for the small farmers, the fairs of October and November were the most important. The fairs following the Winterage were only important to the owners of winterage.

Murt recalls cattle being taken off the winterage. Recalls cattle being loaded onto trailers after the winterage. Refers to the McCartan brothers (Down Footballers) and how Burren winterage was recognised on a national level. He outlines the benefit of winterage and how these cattle would thrive in the rich midlands after being purchased from the winterage.

0:03:19 – 0:05:53

WINTERAGE TODAY –

Murt speaks about winterage today and outlines the changes he has seen over the years. He speaks about the depopulation of wild goats and the consequent scrub encroachment.

Speaks about the change to suckler cows on the winterage and the evolution of farming over the decades.

0:05:54 – 0:09:58

REFLECTIONS –

Murt speaks about the changes to farming and to rural life in his life time. He laments many of the change that have occurred including the way in which people are less connected to each other than they were. Speaks about the increasing independence in contemporary society.

Murt reflects on the importance of taking care of our environment and outlines

the mission he feels we all have in the area.

He speaks about 'Muintir na TÁire' which was set up by a Canon Hayes and the positive impact it had for farming communities in the Burren.

0:09:59 - 0:11:43

EVOLUTION OF FARMING -

Murt states that there was always a great hunger for information and for education in farming. Speaks about how people of different political persuasions came together in order to develop aspects of farming in the 1950s.

0:11:44 - 0:25:16

KILLING THE PIG -

Murt recalls the day the pig was killed. He recalls a Martin Keane, Tom Howard and Christy Callinan who were the main people who killed the pig. Murt describes in detail the way in which the pig was killed. Murt also recalls Tom Hillery from Lisdoonvarna who was licenced to kill the pigs. He used to travel around north Clare killing pigs from people.

He describes the various aspects of killing the pig and recalls using the bladder as a football. He recalled Tom McNamara from Crusheen who purposefully burst the ball and replaced them with hurleys!!

0:25:16 - 0:34:56

HURLING IN NORTH CLARE -

Murt speaks about hurling in North Clare and reflects on his own interest in the sport. Outlines his memories of local hurlers and his own memories of hurling.

He recalls going to matches and seeing Christy Ring and Johnny Doyle playing. Also refers to Jimmy Smythe from Ruan. Recalls playing football and hurling locally in the townland.

Murt and his friends bought hurleys from Spellissys in Ennis. States that the local club used their Ballyea jerseys and that Micheál McTeigue from Ballyea was very helpful.