Nora Canavan 2

Female

File 1 0:00:00 – 0:04:00
FAMILY –

Nora was born on 2nd March 1908 in Monreel. She says she is 104 years old at the time of the interview. Her father was Maurice Mullins from Monreel and her mother was Mary Shannon from Gortbofarna. Her paternal grandfather was Johnny Rua Mullins and she can't recall her grandmother's maiden name but she thinks it was Marrinan. Her maternal grandfather was Thady Shannon and her grandmother was Leahy. Nora remembers both of them.

0: 04:00 – 0:09:44
EARLY MEMORIES –

Her earliest memory was when her young sister was born. She was about seven years old. It was a very happy memory for her. Her name was Bridget but she was called Bea. She was married to Mick Healy in Kilcornan, Ennistymon. She had another sister called Mary who was known as May. There were six years between her sisters. She had no brother so the girls had to work in the farm. Nora was called after an aunt Nora Mullins who became a Mrs Marrinan in Clouna. She lived to be 105 and Nora says she has been told that it was from her she brought the longevity. She recalls her neighbours the Mees, her uncle John Mullins and his family and Dohertys who had a little shop. They adopted a little girl. They sold tea, sugar, sweets and biscuits. They bought most of the shopping in Ennistymon. Any penny they had they ran to Dohertys to buy sweets. She recalls buying nice hard sweets from a tin can. You'd get eight for a penny. She talks again about her Mullins family.

0:09:44 – 0:11:05

THE HOUSE –

Nora's parents had a farm. She describes the house as an ordinary one storey house. It had three bedrooms, two on one side and one on the other side of the house. It has two storeys now. The roof was stated. She thinks it was her father who slated it. They had an open fire. They had their own bog so they had plenty turf. Nora often went to the bog and she footed the turf.

0:11:05 – 0:21:10
THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE –

She recalls her memories of the time of the Black and Tans. She says you couldn't have a spark of light. The windows had to be covered over. She recalls the Tans coming to the house early in the morning before they got up searching for the volunteers involved in the Monreel Ambush. It took place very near her home. No one ever stayed in their house. She remembers the terrible shooting and the burning of the hay. They were trying to save the hay for the cattle. They were lucky the house wasn't burned. She remembers coming home from school the Friday of the Christmas holidays. The Ambush took place the following day. Nora didn't know any of the volunteers involved. Some were from the Clouna area.

She recalls the time of the Easter Rising. Her father would read all about the Rising in the newspaper. They didn't have a radio at the time.

She mentions the killing of Francis Murphy who was only a young lad. He was shot through the window of his home. People were very upset and very sad.

She saw the funeral of Martin Devitt being carried across the land. He was left in a shed overnight. Then he was taken out in the morning and buried in a bank of turf in Clouna. The following morning the Black and Tans came and took the coffin out. They had been told by an informer where he was buried. Her aunt was home from England at the time. They were very afraid during that period of time.

She relates her memories of the Burning of Ennistymon in reprisal for the Rineen Ambush. There were a lot of soldiers and Tans killed there. She describes the strategic location of the ambush site.

0:21:10 – 0:25:23
SCHOOL –

Nora attended Furglan School. She began school when she was 5 or 6 years old. Her teachers were Mrs. Garrihy and Mrs.Devitt. The new classroom had a glass partition between it and the old classroom. She hated Irish as she found it difficult. She liked reading and cookery. They had cookery on Friday evenings and she loved it. They used to eat what they cooked on the way home from school. They would use their hands to eat the dish that they cooked. They made lovely brown bread.

File 2 0:00:00 – 0:02:15
SCHOOL CONTINUED –

Nora learned needlework and knitting at school. They used two quills as knitting needles. They knit scarves using the plain stitch. The day of the interview Nora was knitting a little pink jacket for a child. Her pals were Barrys and the Mullins who lived at the railway crossing.

0:02:15 – 0:03:47
HOBBIES/GAMES –

They would dance on the frozen logs of water in the bog. She also played skipping and marbles. They used to get the marbles on the tops of lemonade bottles. They would be in the necks of the bottles.

0:03:47 – 0:07:56
FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION –

Nora's tells that her house was the last one on that side of the Corofin parish. One day she went with her mother to The Stations. The priest examined her there and she knew all the answers so she made her First Confession and Communion. She made her Communion again with the children in her class in Ennistymon Church. She wore a white dress and veil which was bought in either Kerin's or Hynes'. Nora was confirmed in Inagh Church with 3 or 4 of her classmates.

0:07:56 – 0:08:48
BUTTERMAKING –

Her mother would collect the week's supply of cream from the milk. Then she would put it into the churn to make the butter. It would take a lot of twisting of the handle to make butter. Some of her neighbours would bring their butter to fill a firkin. The following week her mother would bring her butter to the neighbour. The butter was brought to the butter market at the Market House. Martin Shannon was the butter buyer there. He was a cousin of her mother's. She recalls seeing the rows of firkins in the Market House. The butter would be tested for quality. Then it would be transported on the West Clare Railway and sent on to England.

The firkins they used were made by Denis Cullinan, a local carpenter. If a visitor arrived he would have to take a turn twisting the handle. If this wasn't done the butter could have been taken. Nora herself is not superstitious but she believes her mother was. Her mother sold the surplus eggs to Marrinan's at the bottom of Churchill in Ennistymon. They were family friends. Nora was never in town on a fair day. She says it would have been too crowded and too dirty.

0:11:18 – 0:13:39
FARM WORK –

Nora left school at 14 to help work on the farm as her father was unwell. They had a great man called Seamus Curtin working on the farm. He left when her

sister got married. She milked the cows at home. She also helped with the milking when she married.

0:13:39 – 0:23:32
MEETING HER HUSBAND –

Nora met her husband at a house dance at her neighbour's house. Pat Morgan played there for the set dancing. The girls of the house were step-dancers.

Her husband Stephen was born in Doolin. His father got sick one night. It was the time of the Black and Tans and they were afraid to go out by night. He died that night of a burst appendix. Stephen was reared by an uncle. He inherited the farm when he was 21. They married in 1928. He developed a heart condition and was on medication but he got worse so her son Micheál came home from England to work the farm. Then Nora talks about Micheál's ill health. Nora then talks about how several members of her family had heart conditions. Her daughter died suddenly some years ago. Nora had seven children. Her eldest son was killed as a young man in a car crash

0:23:32 – 0:25:44
INTERESTS/ CHANGES IN HER LIFETIME/ ADVICE –

Nora's interests include reading and knitting. She loves reading especially romance stories. She has several books beside her chair. She attributes her long life to hard work and to her taking an interest in everything.

Nora lists the water being brought into the house and the availability of a car to go where you like anytime as being great advances in her lifetime. Her mother told her that she herself ran miles and crossed walls to see her first motor car. She recalls the first aeroplane she saw. Nora saw her first aeroplane at home. She travelled by plane to visit her daughter in England a couple of times and she went to Lourdes.
Nora talks about the Emergency, rationing books and giving a grain of tea to a

neighbour when he had none. They were tough times.
Nora's advice is to be careful with money and to live a good honest life and you won't have to worry. Her faith is also very important to Nora.