

Palkie McNamara

Male

0:05:30 - 0:14:36

FAIRS AND RACING -

Palkie says that the Fair day in Scariff was a very important one. On the day you would have stalls selling goods along with the cattle. Everyone got the day off from school so they could go to the fair.

Scariff once held a race which was famous according to Palkie. He goes on to outline where the race course was located. He remembers it taking place as far back as his school days. It would take place once a month and the most important one took place on the 1st May. Palkie talks about a few of the jockeys that would participate in the races. These events were organised by people that were known as the 'Hawkers'. It didn't occur during the war years and the last race was in 1949.

Palkie says that the Scariff Fair was finished when the Mart started up.

0:14:36 - 0:17:32

SCHOOL DAYS -

His school was located next to his home. Both of the teachers in the school were locals. At that time there was up to 60 students in the school and the boys and girls were separated. Sean goes on to talk briefly about his time studying in this school.

0:17:32 - 0:20:46

SPORTS -

Palkie says that he was able to play hurling but he never played with the school or

any other team. Handball was another popular game at the time. Palkie remembers Pat Kirby playing who went on to become world champion. Palkie says that games would be held every Sunday and people would go to the alley to watch it.

Palkie says that the old Protestant church was used every Sunday when he was growing up.

0:00:00 – 0:05:30

FAMILY BACKGROUND –

Palkie says that his grandparents weren't alive at the same time as him. His grandfather on his father side was a farmer from Feakle and had a family of five. His name was Patrick and his son Tomas was Palkie's father.

His mother only had one brother who went to America and died in 1948. His mother also spent some time in America as well. While she was there she worked in house keeping. His parents got married in 1914.

His father spent some time working as a building labourer and a well with the butchers. His father was a labourer also and Palkie says that back in those days, kids were likely to continue the same profession as their parents.

0:20:46 – 0:32:23

THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE –

Palkie says that in 1920 soldiers camped in his family's field. These soldiers were the Welsh Guards and were camped there for a month or two. He then tells a funny story about one of the sentries on duty.

Palkie remembers the work house been burned. The night before, the IRA moved patients from the hospital over to the school. The IRA burned the workhouse because the Black and Tans had plans to take it over. This resulted in a mix reaction among the people.

The Black and Tans searched Palkie's home once. The Welsh Guard were different to the Black and Tans with them been made of only English.

Palkie remembers hearing about the assault on the RIC barracks in Scariff. He does remember hearing about the Scariff Martyrs until later on in life because he was too young when it happened. He didn't attend their funeral because of the same reason. He goes on to talk what he can remember hearing about it. He says that his parents would talk about it frequently because they were local people involved in it. He knew the families. Palkie says that he worked with Frank McMahon who was Brud McMahon's brother.

There was a monument unveiled in 1947 outside the church where the Scariff Martyr's were buried.

Palkie then talks about a few more volunteers that were active in the area during the War of Independence. He also mentions a RIC member been shot in Feakle.

According to Palkie, 75% of the people supported the IRA volunteers. People that supported the IRA were generally poorer.

0:32:23 - 0:43:34

1932 GENERAL ELECTION -

Palkie finished up school when he was 15. He got a job in June 1931 on the drainage scheme as a messenger and was in charge of keeping time. He was paid a pound a week. While working here there was an election and Fianna Fail were voted into power. His father took a day off from work to go and vote. Palkie says that de Valera came to Scariff several times campaigning. After this election Council Houses started to be built across the country. Palkie talks about local men elected.

0:43:34 - 0:49:47

WORKING AND THE IRISH ARMY -

When the drainage scheme finished up, Palkie did a few other jobs. One of these included working for the County Council on the roads or in the quarry.

Palkie says that he enjoyed working in the bog.

Palkie joined the Irish Army in 1938. He was stationed in Galway and he says all the commands were giving in Irish. The only Irish that Palkie knew was what he learned in National School. The first three to four months was training and it involved marching and the firing range.

Note: Interview concludes here