Tom Linnane

Male

File 1 0:00:01 – 0:00:00
TOM DESCRIBES HIS FAMILY –

Tom was born in Lough House across the land from the pub in Bellharbour. He was the third youngest of a family of nine. Three emigrated to England and three to America. His mother was also Linnane from Ballyhane. His parents married young, his mother about 18 and his father about 22. His grandparents died when his father was very young and their uncle reared them. His father and uncle were sent to Ballyfin College, Laois and the girls went to the Convent of Mercy in Tuam. All the family received secondary education which was rare at that time. His father joined the British Army and took part in WW1 and returned to take over the farm. The other uncle took over an outside farm in Ballyvaughan (Kiloghil). This uncle went to America to raise money to stock the Ballyvaughan farm, met his future wife and never returned. The Ballyvaughan farm was sold to the land Commission for 'a trifle of money'. His eldest sister Una immigrated to England in 1942, trained as a nurse and worked for the United Nations in Geneva subsequently. Another sister trained as a nurse also in England. A third sister married into Kilroy's pub in Gort. John, his brother joined the British Police and became chief superintendent in the Home Office in London. A brother joined the Fire Dept. in New York. His sister Noreen worked as a bank official in Connecticut but died quiet young. Raymond became a secondary school teacher and taught with the Marist Brothers in Athlone. Tom stayed at home and took over the farm.

0:08:00 – 0:21:36
FAMILY CONNECTIONS, SCHOOL AND FARMING –

Tom describes the old stone Lough House. In 1958 it was re-constructed from a

storey and a half to a two storey house. The walls were three feet thick and it was slated as long as he remembers it. Tom took it over in 1971. The Linnanes were resident there since 1850 but a Moloney was mentioned as living in it at some time. He describes his mother's family which included six brothers (three were priests) and two sisters. He was introduced to working on the farm having left the primary school in Turlough. It was a two teacher school but both teachers taught in one room and he was the only pupil in his class. There were 17 pupils in the school when he finished. He learned to plough and work horses at an early age. Tillage was the main farming practise and the tractor was got in 1948. Sugar beet (for the beet factory in Tuam), wheat, barley, mangolds and turnips were grown. They kept cows, cattle and 30 or 40 ewes. Tom started the creamery in 1963/64. He kept more cows then and applied more artificial manure to produce better grass. Hand milking was done before the milking machine was bought. The milk cans were taken to the public road where they were collected by lorry at 7.45am and taken to Corofin creamery and the skim milk was delivered back in the evening to be fed to the calves. In later years the refrigerated bulk tank was installed and the milk lorry collected the milk at the farmyard. In 1992 Tom gave up supplying milk to the creamery. His eldest son married and farmed his mother's farm and Tom changed to a 'suckler herd' as it didn't involve as much labour.

0:21:37 – 0:32:20
MAY DAY PISEROGS & THE POWER OF THE PRIEST –

Tom mentions that certain people stole the neighbour's cream by milking their cows on May night and the cream would not produce butter no matter how much it was churned. The neighbour who stole the cream would have an abundance of butter. As a safeguard against losing the cream cows were often locked in the cow houses on May Eve. Burying eggs in the potato garden was another misdeed so that the offender would have a bumper crop themselves and the offended party would produce a very poor crop. The power of the priest was once used in New

Quay in an effort to return the cream to the churn of a farmer who had it stolen from him on May Eve.
The working horses were treated very well on the farm. In winter they were stabled and hand fed and readied for the spring and summer work. The local horse healer, Pat Joe Curtis of Kilnaboy, had a gift to cure sick horses. He filled a jar with blood from the jugular vein of the horse, he let it rest and was able to diagnose the condition. It was believed that Pat Joe received the gift from a priest whom he had saved from British soldiers.

0:32:21 – 0:35:00
DANCES IN KINVARA –

Dances were held in Johnson's Hall in Kinvara and Tom and his neighbours generally cycled there. Getting to the picture house or plays in Kinvara was also part of the social outings. In the 60's marquees were held in Kinvara with the leading dance bands of the time. He describes how Bishop Browne was feared by the local people and clergy alike. Tom kept sows, reared bonhams and sold them in Kinvara and Gort. His family killed two pigs every year, often 22 stone weight. He describes the process of killing, scalding and salting the pig. His uncle, Patrick Healy or Mikie Donohoe were the local men who killed the pigs in the locality. Black puddings were made from the blood and these with pork steak and some of the 'bones' were given to the neighbours. It was unusual to pay a man for work done on the farm unless they had particular skills when they got about.

0:35:01 – 0:41:30
PIG REARING AND KILLING –

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the neighbours. It was unusual to pay a man for work done on the farm unless they had particular skills when they got about 5 shillings a day.

0:41:31 – 0:50:00
COMING OF ELECTRICITY TO BELLHARBOUR –

The electricity came to Tom's area about 1953. Up to then it was all oil lamps and oil was scarce during the war. Tom tells stories relating to his father and mother in relation to the oil lamps and changing electric bulbs. Early Christmas morning the church was lighted by lamps and candles. The Christmas shopping was important and done locally at Daly's shop or in Gort. The 'travelling shop', Piggott's of Gort, delivered tea, sugar, paraffin oil etc. The travelling shop bought eggs, butter and coming near Christmas turkeys. This service came to an end about 1980.