

# Tommy Fitzpatrick

Male

File 1 0:00:00 – 0:00:38

PERSONAL INFORMATION –

Tommy was born in Tullassa, parish of Inch & Kilmaley in 1919 and lived there up to 60 years ago.

0:00:38 – 0:02:42

MATCH MADE, MARRIAGE & MOVING TO CONNOLLY –

He stayed in digs in Parnell Street in Ennis (he left home when his brother got married) before marrying to Mary Reidy (Mary Jim Dan), Glaun, Connolly at age 31 – match made by John Shannon, Cloonanaha; got married Fr. Stewart in Kilmaley church on Shrove Tuesday 1951; dowry of £150 given to wife's parents; reception at Ennis; party at wife's house; moved to wife's home place in Connolly; preferred to live in the country; reconstructed the house. Glaun townland.

Wife's mother lived to age 86 – kidneys problems

0:02:42 – 0:06:03

FAMILY –

12 siblings; 9 siblings survived – 6 brothers and 3 sisters; Tommy youngest of family; 3 died young – gone to the grave (Paddy, Gretta & Timmy) before Tommy was born – probably ailments such as diphtheria & whooping cough; parents from Tullassa –

his father Paddy married Mary Barry – a match; all matches then; one sister went to USA on the Star Line & 40 years passed before she made a visit home (by plane);

another sister Lily went to Dublin & later married Pato Barry, Inagh (son of

Garrett Barry, blind piper);

2 siblings alive now - Micho at home place in Tullassa & his sister Kathy (now 92 & in good health) in Inagh (married Michael Callinan & had family of 10)

His brother Jack took over the Tullassa home place married Teresa Hehir & had family of 5; Micko, single stayed in Tullassa too. His nephews P.J. and Bernie live nearby.

Tommy 10th youngest - born on 25th November 1919.

0:06:14 - 0:07:03

HOUSE, FARM & FARMING -

Description of his parents' 2 farms - home place & outside farm at Cappanlea (18 Irish acres bought by his father); location in the parish - 4 miles from Ennis.

0:07:03 - 0:09:40

SCHOOL DAYS, TEACHERS, DISCIPLINE, SUBJECTS -

School days in Kilnamona (nearer than Inch or Kilmaley); walked to school across the fields & some by road; recalls going barefoot on fine days; story of jumping over a hay-machine in a field;

recalls names of teachers -Brigid & Joe Keating (not husband & wife), Julia Keating, Mrs Hegarty & Michael Kelleher (from Kilnaboy/Corofin); mentions some 'œwicked' & slaps with sticks V no hitting now; he enjoyed school - liked reading & writing; left at age 16; recalls playing hurling & kicking football.

0:09:40 - 0:11:23

MORE ABOUT HIMSELF & HIS FAMILY -

More about his siblings; one sister, still alive is older than him; another sister, Bridie went to Ballynacally (married - match); hard times & health in past times; effects of flu.

Tommy was born on 25th November 1919. He is now 'œon the road to 92'.

0:11:24 - 0:12:12

SCHOOL DAYS, GAMES PLAYED, BRINGING FIREWOOD TO SCHOOL AT WINTER -

Parents brought half creel of turf by ass & cart.

0:12:13 - 0:12:36

BOGS & TURF -

Carmody's bog, between Inagh & Connolly - 365 acres - 1/2p an acre then

0:12:37 - 0:13:12

JOBS IN THE HOUSE & FARM, COMPULSORY TILLAGE -

5 acres of arable land - barley, oats, potatoes, mangles & vegetables; ploughed with horse; plenty of mouths to feed but lots of help

0:13:58 - 0:14:19

DIFFERENT TIMES THEN TO NOW -

No soft hand-outs, dole, social welfare or much education. People 'lived off the land'

0:14:20 - 0:15:12

HOUSE DANCES & WORK DAYS -

House dances held when yanks came home from USA; often walked to the dances; often little sleep before going to work; 'youth of today wouldn't do it'

0:15:13 - 0:15:50

WORK LIFE WITH CLARE CO. COUNCIL -

Tommy worked with Clare County Council at aged 21/22 on the 'new line', the tar road from Inagh to Ennis through Shallee for 9 months; he travelled all the

local roads by bicycle

0:15:50 – 0:18:20

MUSIC, DANCING, RECITATIONS, STORY-TELLING & SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENT –

Dancing, house dances when ‘œyanks’ returned home from America or England; Tommy walked with his neighbour Gerdie Commene and his cousin Johnny Hickey; more house dances at Kilnamona than Connolly; names some houses; 7 or 8 musicians on stage; names some musicians; not much crossroads dancing – mostly in houses; they often gathered at Fitz’s house before going to a house dance & often this was better than the actual house dance; recalls platform dancing in Kilnamona;

Tommy didn’t play music but his brother Micho plays harmonica & regularly plays in pubs; Tommy’s brother Jack played melodeon; his uncle played concertina; danced Caledonian set & waltzes; songs & recitations popular at house dances; refers to a neighbour’s recitation; Tommy often danced as a girl & taught by Tommy Hogan; often went from dances to work without any sleep.

0:18:20 – 0:19:10

FARM WORK –

Farm jobs after school – looking after cattle, gathering hay, picking stones, building walls, spreading manure, etc

Tommy worked at home on the farm, other farmers & a gardener after leaving school as a teenager; in the evenings; not much free time; digging potatoes ‘œpraties’; Tommy often worked for local farmers when not with the Council – cutting turf, etc – paid work. low wages

0:19:10 – 0:19:25

CLOTHES –

Recalls his grandfather buying him a short trousers & pullover

0:19:25 - 0:19:46

DRUMCLIFF -

Some family members buried in Drumcliff, near Ennis

0:19:46 - 0:22:00

MORE ABOUT FARM WORK -

Animals - 8 cows, horses, pony, no sheep, milked cows by hand;

Butter-making - separating the milk churns & selling 1 or 2 firkins (some kept for own use) to Joe Malone in the Cornmarket in Ennis on Saturdays - done to the 40s/50s; sent 60-70lbs butter by bus to Ennis; mentions Reidy's yard; testing the butter for water

main form of income was selling cattle (weanlings) & butter; he often with his parents to the market in Ennis on Saturdays

0:22:00 - 0:24:15

FAIRS -

Held during the summer & in winter at the Fairgreen in Ennis & Clarecastle; Tommy helped with taking animals to fairs; often got up at 3am & walked with his cousins in Garrynagry (2 miles west) to Kilmaley (3 miles away) with over 20 cattle, bought by one buyer & taken to the railway station in Ennis; payment of 5 shillings & dinner for helping

0:24:15 - 0:24:49

STONE WALLS & THATCHING -

He could build stone walls & thatched his house at Connolly.

0:24:49 - 0:26:07

WAGES -

First wages at Clare County Council were small - 35 shillings weekly.

Best money he ever got was working with ESB (digging holes & laying pole lines) for few months in 1942 at Kilnamona & West Clare; gave some money to parents; Tommy worked at home on the farm when not employed with the Council.

0:26:07 - 0:26:33

PARISH INVOLVEMENT -

Mostly with Kilnamona though in the parish of Inch/Kilmaley; went to Kilnamona church.

0:26:33 - 0:26:56

SPORT -

Played hurling & kicked football as a pastime at Tullassa in Hickey's field.

0:26:56 - 0:28:04

F.C.A. & SPORT & SOCIAL ACTIVITIES -

Tommy went to summer (2 week) training camps in Lahinch from age 18/19 for 11 years; also Collins Barracks in Cork; had a great time - played football on the strands at Lahinch & Youghal & went to dances in Cork City hall (ballroom & sets).

0:28:04 - 0:30:16

CHURCH, MISSIONS, STATIONS & HOLY WELLS -

Went to church in Kilnamona (nearer) though in Kilmaley/Inch/Connolly parish (crossed up through the felds); recalls the missions held every few years; stalls - rosary beads, holy medals, etc sold; Holy Father - great voice & preacher; sermons at the 3 masses;

Recalls house stations at Tullassa; every house got a turn; mass & confessions

held; describes the breakfasts; tells a story - "Mass was both good for the body & soul!"

0:30:16 - 0:31:20

GARDA -

Story of cycling home by night & stopped by Garda. Local Garda station in Inagh; had been a station in Maurices Mills

0:31:20 - 0:32:45

HOLY WELLS -

Holy Well of the 9 Yellow Daughters at Gortmore near Tullassa - cure for sore eyes; story of his eye cured; St. Peter & Paul Well, Newhall on 29th June - recalls doing rounds & saying prayers; more about the Holy Well of the 9 Fridays at Gortmore near Tullassa

0:32:45 - 0:33:22

WREN DANCES/SOIREES -

Recalls wren dances/soirees - held at Inch & Lough Burke; often 2 nights held at Christmas

0:33:22 - 0:33:42

MUSIC -

Says his family got the music (strain) from his mother's side (Barrys) - learned out of their own heads or heard from others; his brothers played - Micho plays harmonica & regularly plays in pubs & Jack played melodeon.

0:33:42 - 0:35:07

TULLASSA PIPE BAND -

His brother Jack, melodeon, 2 Commanes & Bernie Moran played in drums &

pipes; started by Michael McMahon; band played at sports days eg Cree & Clonbony; collected money to support the band.

0:35:07 – 0:36:06

SPORTS DAYS –

At Inagh & Kilnamona, shot putt, races, wheel of fortune, skittles; recalls rhyme at wheel of fortune- ‘devil of hair’; mentions athletics; played for fun & exercise; recalls drinks – pints 10p.

File 2: 0:00:00 – 0:00:52

SONG –

Sings song ‘Brigid Hogan’ (Patsy McGann)

File 3: 0:00:00 – 0:01:32

FAMILY INFORMATION –

More about his family and the farm in Tullassa; his father passed away in his 80s; his mother was married at 19 & passed away at age 55 (heart attack).

0:01:33 – 0:01:54

LONGEVITY & HEALTH –

Blessed with good health due to work & exercise; age is only a number.

File 4: 0:00:00 – 0:00:25

HOLY WELL –

More about the Holy Well of the Nine Yellow Daughters at Gortmore near Tullassa.

0:00:26 – 0:02:21

SPORTS & GAMES –



Road bowling played before he was born; recalls pitch & toss - coins at crossroads in Tullassa; value of money.