

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	22 nd Feb 2011
Location	Interviewee's home, near Moynalty, Co. Meath
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Mattie Gilsenan
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1915 Home County: Meath
Education	Primary: Mullagh NS, Co. Meath Secondary: Kells CBS and Warrenstown Agricultural College Third Level: Glasnevin Agricultural College
Family	Siblings: 7 sisters & 4 brothers Current Family if Different: Married to Eileen with 1 son and 7 daughters
Club(s)	Moynalty GFC; Gaeil Colmcille, Kells
Occupation	Farmer
Parents' Occupation	Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	IFA

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Date of Report	6 th August 2012
Period Covered	1915 – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Meath, Cavan, Dublin, Americas, USA, Great Britain, England
Key Themes Covered	Playing, Training, Coaching, Refereeing, Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Administration, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Education, Role of Clergy, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Identity, Rivalries, Media, Religion, Earliest Memories, Childhood, Family Involvement, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, GAA Abroad, Material Culture
Interview Summary	<p>Mattie talks about his early playing days with Mullagh in Cavan and goes on to describe his involvement with Moynalty club in Meath. He recalls travelling to the 1928 All-Ireland in the back of a lorry and talks about his keen interest in football as a young child. Mattie talks about family involvement in the GAA. He describes his playing career with Meath, his involvement in the 1939 All-Ireland as a player and his role as selector in the 1949 winning All-Ireland team. Mattie talks about travelling to New York in 1951 for a National League final. He describes the importance of GAA in his life.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:35 Talks about earliest GAA memory – Went to school in Mullagh in Cavan – lorry organised by the teachers to travel to the 1928 All Ireland final. Recalls the Sam Maguire Cup being presented for the first time.</p> <p>02:04 Describes Croke Park in 1928.</p> <p>02:47 Recalls the crowd and excitement at the match. Mentions that 2 of the Mullagh teachers were former Cavan players.</p> <p>03:51 GAA in school – recalls football being a big part of school life. Mentions that hurling and soccer were not played in school.</p> <p>04:18 Describes playing football with a leather ball.</p> <p>04:30 Talks about playing football in his early days at school. Mentions matches played against other National Schools. Notes that competitions were not held for underage level at that time.</p>

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	<p>04:59 Recalls playing football with Moynalty in his early days.</p> <p>06:25 Talks about the facilities in Moynalty. Recalls using fields belonging to local farmers to play matches.</p> <p>07:18 Talks about the successful team in Moynalty in the 1930s. Notes that they won a senior championship in 1932. Recalls travelling to matches by bicycle.</p> <p>09:18 Discusses characters involved in Moynalty club. Mentions families such as the Clintons, Coles, McEnroes and the Russells.</p> <p>10:40 Describes training at club level in Moynalty.</p> <p>11:40 Talks about training at county level with Meath. Notes that training only came into effect if the team progressed well in the championship.</p> <p>12:01 Talks about his call up to the county team in 1935. Mentions Fr McManus.</p> <p>15:51 Discusses training in Navan with the Meath County team. Recalls being taken for 3 weeks "live in" training and resting before the 1939 final.</p> <p>17:04 Mentions that the County Board paid for hired help to look after the farm for the 3 weeks he was away before the All-Ireland final.</p> <p>18:09 Recalls the broadcaster Micheal O'Hehir attending their training sessions.</p> <p>18:49 Discusses the 1939 All-Ireland campaign.</p> <p>20:14 Talks about the excitement in Meath in the lead up to the 1939 All-Ireland. Recalls big crowds at the final, talks about the issues of travelling to matches.</p> <p>23:12 Recalls travelling around the country to play matches with Meath. Notes that Waterford is the only county he didn't play in.</p> <p>23:40 Notes that Meath were progressive in terms of facilities and playing football compared with other counties.</p> <p>25:40 Talks about All-Ireland weekend. Recalls travelling up the morning of the match by car. Mentions that they travelled home that night.</p> <p>26:48 Talks about the great spirit between Meath and Kerry.</p> <p>28:00 Discusses the impact of World War Two on football.</p>
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	<p>Recalls petrol being rationed.</p> <p>28:34 Discusses family involvement in the GAA – his father was involved in club football and encouraged him to play. Mentions Johnny Gilsean.</p> <p>29:22 Discusses being the eldest of 12 children. Recalls playing a National League match against Dublin and returning home to the birth of his youngest brother.</p> <p>31:03 Recalls listening to his first match on the radio at a local house in the community in the early 1930s.</p> <p>32:35 Discusses Micheal O’Hehir.</p> <p>33:20 Talks about the heavy knitted jersey worn by the Meath team in his early playing days.</p> <p>33:52 Discusses the Moynalty Club “Moynalty Owen Roes”. Notes that songs were written about the club.</p> <p>37:22 Discusses the changes in the style of football in Meath from his early playing days to now.</p> <p>39:04 Talks about the success of the Meath team after 1939.</p> <p>40:48 Recalls ending his county career in 1945 and moving straight into a role as selector.</p> <p>41:37 Discusses the National League.</p> <p>42:56 Mentions famous players he played against on other county teams.</p> <p>44:14 Recalls seeing the Sam Maguire being presented for the first time to Kildare in 1928 and again in 1987 to Meath. Talks about being present for the presentation of the new Sam Maguire Cup in 1988.</p> <p>45:24 Talks about travelling to All-Irelands. Notes that he still attends the All-Ireland football final.</p> <p>46:46 Discusses the changes in All-Ireland finals. Talks about the improvements to facilities in Croke Park, the crowds.</p> <p>48:42 Recalls marking John Joe O’Reilly, Tom O’Reilly on the Cavan team. Mentions Jimmy Smith.</p> <p>49:16 Discusses playing on the Railway Cup team. Recalls an Ulster Railway Cup team being comprised of 14 Cavan men and one Armagh man.</p> <p>51:38 Talks about the decline of the Railway Cup.</p>
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	<p>52:05 Describes his duties as selector in 1949 – keeping players focused, making sure there was no trouble in the team.</p> <p>53:53 Discusses Fr Tully, Chairman of the Meath County Board in 1949, who trained the team.</p> <p>54:37 Describes his role as selector.</p> <p>55:44 Reflects upon the celebrations that ensued after the 1949 All-Ireland victory. Talks about the homecoming to Meath.</p> <p>57:33 Recalls attending a National League final in New York in 1951.</p> <p>59:45 Talks about changes in Meath football – discusses the improvements in facilities and structured training.</p> <p>01:00:52 Discusses his current role as President of the GAA in Meath.</p> <p>01:02:32 Describes the big issues that faced the Meath County Board in the past.</p> <p>01:03:37 Notes that soccer and rugby were not played in Moynalty in his younger days.</p> <p>01:04:23 Talks about his support for the lifting of the ban. Discusses illegal players in county boundaries.</p> <p>01:06:44 Most memorable match – the 4 matches between Dublin and Meath in 1991.</p> <p>01:08:28 Reflects upon the role of teachers and priests in the community.</p> <p>01:09:14 Talks about the lack of hurling in Moynalty. Recalls a few people in the community playing hurling with a neighbouring parish.</p> <p>01:09:50 Discusses his father's interest in club football in Mullagh in Cavan. Mentions Ned, Pat and Edwin Carolan and Alfie and Simon Deignan.</p> <p>01:12:05 Talks about Handball in Kells. Mentions Paddy Bell. Chooses Colm O'Rourke as his GAA hero.</p> <p>01:14:08 Describes his best memories of being involved in the GAA.</p> <p>01:17:20 Discusses the enjoyment he obtained from playing football. Notes that his wife is a sister of Jim Kearney, a</p>
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	<p>former Meath player who played in both the 1939 and 1949 All-Ireland finals.</p> <p>01:19:13 Talks about how he met his wife. Discusses his children's involvement in GAA.</p> <p>01:21:55 Discusses his biggest disappointments within the GAA.</p> <p>01:22:32 Talks about rule changes within the GAA in current times.</p> <p>01:23:09 Discusses the growing professionalism within the GAA.</p> <p>01:24:33 Describes what being involved in the GAA has meant to him in his lifetime.</p> <p>01:25:20 Talks about progress in the GAA over the years. Mentions facilities in clubs around the country.</p> <p>01:25:35 Discusses his involvement in acquiring the playing field in Moynalty from the Land Commission.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach ✓ Steward</p> <p>✓ Chairperson ✓ Committee Member ✓ Grounds-person</p> <p>✓ Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer ✓ Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p>✓ Other (please specify): <u>_Selector for All-Ireland winning teams_</u></p>
<p>Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Played for 10 years.</p> <p>Club: Won a senior championship and Feis Cup</p> <p>County: Won Leinster Senior Championships in 1939 and 1940</p> <p>Provincial: Won 3 Railway Cups</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Has been involved in administration since 1935.</p> <p>Club: Chairman, Delegate to County Board and President</p> <p>County: Joint President</p>

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Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:26:46
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: _____Arlene Crampsie_____

Date: _____06/08/12_____