

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	15 th March 2010
Location	Interviewee's home, near Dring, Co. Longford
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	John Galligan
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1915 Home County: Longford
Education	Primary: Cloonagh NS, Co. Longford
Family	Siblings: 3 brothers & 1 sister Current Family if Different: Got Married in England, no children
Club(s)	Mullinalaghta [Longford]; Halifax [England]
Occupation	Bus Driver
Parents' Occupation	Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

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Date of Report	5 th June 2012
Period Covered	1958 – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Dublin, Cavan, Roscommon, Westmeath, Longford
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Education, Emigration, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Rivalries, Irish Language, All-Ireland, Club History, Earliest Memories, Impact on Life, Challenges, Sacrifices, Politics, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Relationship with the Association
Interview Summary	<p>John talks about how he founded his local club, Mullinalaghta, in Longford in the late 1950s with a friend of his. They had little or no facilities but they did establish a team and it quickly enjoyed success. As John was involved in the running of the club as well as playing, he was kept very busy all the time. Sometimes there were disagreements with GAA officials on organisational matters, and this eventually led to John cutting his ties with the club. He also discusses his time spent in England, and his trips to see All-Ireland finals in Croke Park through the years.</p> <p>00:35 Recalls starting the team in the local parish in 1958, which went on to win the first division championship, getting to lots of finals along the way. They appointed a priest as chairman of the club.</p> <p>03:15 Initially they played down the local park and had little or no facilities. Somebody might bring a football from Dublin but money was scarce.</p> <p>04:50 Recalls going to county board meetings after a day's work in the bog. You had to stand up for yourself at those meetings if you wanted to achieve anything.</p> <p>06:50 Jimmy Reilly helped him set up the club, he became captain and his brother Francie also played with them. It was hard trying to raise money for the club.</p> <p>09:15 They played a lot of matches in Pearse Park in Longford. When they needed a lift they got one on a lorry, or from local people who had cars. Other times they cycled.</p> <p>10:25 Support for the team was good so long as they were</p>

	<p>winning. They wore brown and yellow and lots of people helped out with washing jerseys.</p> <p>11:50 They won the junior championship very fast, then some leagues and eventually a senior championship. There were celebrations in the local hall when they won</p> <p>13:00 The style of play was better back then - there was a lot of catching and kicking.</p> <p>14:00 He was involved in running the team so he had a lot of work to do off the field of play which kept him busy.</p> <p>15:20 He went to England in the 1950s and became involved in the GAA there, in Halifax. He was involved for 3-4 years. The English people had little or no interest in the game.</p> <p>18:00 He still supports the local team and attends matches.</p> <p>19:15 The first GAA match he heard on the radio was when the Cavan team travelled to New York to play. Nobody in the locality had a television at the time. He also went to see some All-Irelands, getting a lift from people who had cars. They sometimes stopped on the road home from the All-Ireland.</p> <p>22:10 The ban was not a problem in the area as soccer was not popular among people.</p> <p>23:00 He met some interesting characters down through the years. The first big game he went to see was between Cavan and Mayo in Mullingar. He travelled by bicycle and train.</p> <p>24:15 One of the players he admired a lot was his friend Jimmy Reilly, who helped him start the club.</p> <p>25:45 The first club in his area was started in the 1950s.</p> <p>26:30 All-Ireland finals were always the best games to watch and Cavan had good teams.</p> <p>27:30 Drumlish were their local rivals and the two teams often met.</p> <p>29:00 Best GAA memory would be the celebratory parties after winning. Bad memories were when organising fixtures went wrong, this happened once when fixing a game against Drumlish, there were arguments over who would referee the game and that was the end of his involvement with the club.</p>
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	<p>34:40 The Irish language was not a big part of his GAA experiences. He recites a poem about the local team written by a local school teacher named Master Murphy who was originally from Donegal.</p> <p>36:40 The team is not as successful today as it was in the past.</p> <p>38:05 The GAA meant nothing but trouble to him, though he did enjoy some parts of it. There was a lot of work involved, doing things others wouldn't do. They would put up goalposts for matches, and would make them using what they found in the woods. A man named McCartan let them use his wood, he was from the west of Ireland.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>
<p>Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>John didn't play often, unless the team was short players</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Delegate to Longford County Board; describes himself as a 'Jack of All Trades'</p>
<p>Format</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
<p>Duration</p>	<p>Length of Interview: 00:41:46</p>
<p>Language</p>	<p>English</p>

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To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: _____Arlene Crampsie_____

Date: _____05/06/12_____