

INTERVIEW WITH BETTY O' CONNOR ABOUT HER MOTHER JOHANNA
(JOAN) O' SULLIVAN NEE O' NEILL, MY GREAT GRANDMOTHER

My great grandmother was a very interesting lady, who would have many spectacular stories to tell if she were still alive today. She lived to the great age of 103 and witnessed many historical events. Here are a couple of intriguing facts about her life. Her name was Johanna O' Neill and she was born on 09/05/1910 to John O' Neill and Kate Healy at Dunderrow. She had 2 brothers and 6 sisters, two of whom died due to smallpox at a young age.

It was tough back in her time since there were no machines for transport, housework or farm work. Everything had to be made by hand including their food, clothes and toys. They rarely had time to play. They used to drive to Mass in a horse and cart having fasted since 12 midnight the night before. They ate very plain foods such as eggs, white or brown soda bread, plain currant bread with hand churned butter, home cured bacon, homemade black or white pudding and salty ling fish with onion sauce. Instead of porridge they would have 'stirabout' made from maize or yellow meal.

To get to school they would have to walk a long way through big fields, with no shoes on. If it was raining, they would have a fire in the classroom, to warm and dry themselves. Sometimes as a treat they would bring hot chocolate to school and heat it up by the fire. Every year the farmer would kill their pig and divide it equally with their neighbours, and they did the same thing when they harvested their crops. Everything was eaten.

Joan married Tim O' Sullivan on the 11th of February 1939 and moved to Innishannon to the new farm that Tim had bought after returning from America. She had seven children, but sadly lost her youngest son Tadhg on the 16th of April 1957, aged only 3. Ten years later she lost her husband Tim on the 9th of March 1967 but continued working on the farm, even milking the cows until well into her eighties! For the last couple of years of Joan's life her son looked after her with the help of friends and family. We once asked her how she thought she lived such a long life and she replied "Plenty hard work!"

Ainm: Críostóir Ó' Caoinleáin,

Scoil: Gaelscoil Dhroichead na
Bandan,

Colas balaithe ó: Betty O' Connor

Seoladh: Burren,

Killbrittain,

Co. Cork



Order of Service & Hymnal
For
The 100th Birthday Mass



of
Celebration and Thanksgiving
For
Johanna O'Sullivan