

# Folklore Story

I talked to my granny, Mary O,Connell of Moneyvollahane and asked her had she any stories of long ago. She told me her dad, my great grandfather, John O,Donovan, who lived in the townland of Ballyally, which is only about a mile "as th crow flies", she said , from Loughine to Skibbereen,

his father and mother had a small farm adjoining the coast guard station in Ballyally. There is a strand called Trá na mBó just down the road from the station, where the coast guard had a boat house with a boat slip, and they also had a "watch hut" right up on top of the highest part of the hill nearly,which had a full view of the sea almost as far as the "kedges Rocks" (outside Baltimore) to the "the stags Rocks" off Castlehaven. My great grandfather got a job from the British coast guards as a "watchman" checking the sea for any passing ships or boats, keeping a log and reporting any such sightings to the coast guards. There was no Light allowed in this watch-hut at night so no passing boat could detect it. It used to get extremely cold sitting there in this very small hut but my great grandfather's big dog "Tobán" always kept him company and on really cold nights tobáns warm tummy kept my great grandfather's toes nice, warm and comfy. At some stage during this time there was a body washed up on the beach with no head attached as a result of the time it was in the sea and part of his dutie was to "mind" the unfortunate persons remains until such time as it was taken away for buriel. At another time during this period a short lenght of wood about 3 or 4 feet long, which had beautiful carving, was washed up on the beach and the markings on it showed that it came from the Lusitania. My great grandfather,

who loved making model ships and was a really good handyman, incorporated it into a side board he was making and it graced the parlor in his home for very many years. The coast guard station was burned to the ground on June 11th 1921 and my great grandfather purchased the ruins and adjoining land in 1926. He proceeded to renovate and re-roof part of it. When this was done he went to live there. My grandmother was born and raised there and till this day my granduncle lives there. There was a mass altar dating back to the penal days on my great grandparents farm up against a rock at the side of a secluded little field at the bottom of a hill , and till this day it is still there.

told by: Mary O. Connell  
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written  
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IN 1930 MY GRANNY WAS A LITTLE GIRL SHE LIVED DURING WORLD WAR 2 THAT IS WHAT MY STORY IS ABOUT

EVERY MORNING SHE WOULD GET READY FOR SCHOOL LIKE WE DO TODAY. BACK THEN THEY WOULD NOT HAVE HAD AS MUCH CLOTHES AND FOOD SO THEY WOULD BE QUICKER AT GETTING READY THEN US. THEN SHE WOULD HAVE TO WALK TO SCHOOL. THE SCHOOL WAS THREE MILES AWAY FROM HER HOUSE IN BALLINEEN. SHE WOULD HAVE TO WALK TO SCHOOL WITH HER BROTHERS

AND SISTERS. IF IT WAS RAINING THEIR DAD WOULD TAKE THEM BY HORSE AND CAR. THEY WERE EACH GIVEN A MORNING TO BRING KIPPENS TO SCHOOL TO LIGHT THE FIRE.

THEY WOULD HAVE TO HAVE THE FIRE LIT BEFORE THEIR TEACHER ARRIVED. WHEN SCHOOL WAS OVER THEY WOULD HAVE TO WALK HOME AGAIN OR ELSE THEIR DAD WOULD COLLECT THEM IN THE HORSE AND CAR. WHEN THEY GOT HOME THEY GOT CHANGED INTO THEIR OLD CLOTHES AND GO STRAIGHT OUT TO THE FARM. THEY WOULD HAVE TO PUT THE FODDER BEET THROUGH THE PULPER TO FEED THE COWS THEN THEY HAD TO GO GET SOME HAY TO GIVE TO THEM.

ON THE FARM THEY ALSO HAD TURKEYS, HORSES, PIGS, CHICKENS AND HENS. THEY HAD AROUND 20 TURKEYS THEY WOULD SELL THEM AT CHRISTMAS £6 EACH. THEY HAD THE HORSES FOR PLOUGHING

AND THEY WERE THEIR MAIN SORT OF TRANSPORT  
THEY WERE ALSO USED FOR DRAWING IN THE HAY  
AND CARRYING THEM TO THE VILLAGE.  
THE PIGS WERE FED WELL AND KILLED TO BE EATEN.  
THE HENS WERE USED FOR THEIR EGGS AND THE  
CHICKENS WERE FED WELL AND KILLED TO BE EATEN.  
THEN EVERY COUPLE OF DAYS THEY TOOK THE SUGAR  
BEET TO THE SUGAR FACTORY IN MALLOW THEY GOT  
THE TRAIN TO MALLOW AND THEN THEY WOULD HAVE  
TO WALK TO THE FACTORY. WHEN THEY GOT HOME  
THEY WOULD HAVE TO MILK THE COWS THEY WOULD  
HAVE TO BE MILKED BY HAND. AFTER THE MILKING  
DURING THE SUMMER THEY WOULD HAVE TO BRING  
THE CHURNS TO BALLINEEN CREAMERY THERE THEY  
WOULD HAVE TO LIFT THE CHURNS OFF THE HORSE  
AND CAR EMPTY THEM AND THEN SHE HAD TO BRING  
THEM HOME AGAIN. DURING WINTER THEY DRIED OFF  
THE COWS SO THEY DID NOT HAVE TO GO TO THE  
CREAMERY. WITH THE MILK THEY KEPT THEY DRANK THE  
MILK AND MADE THEIR OWN BUTTER. TO BUY THE  
TIMBER FOR A SHED IT COSTED £18. MY GRANNY'S  
FATHER WOULD TAKE CATTLE TO BALLINEEN FAIR.  
THIS FAIR WOULD TAKE PLACE ONCE A MONTH.  
THEY WOULD TRY SELL THE CATTLE ON THE OPEN  
STREET. BECAUSE OF THIS ALL THE HOUSES GOT  
COVERED IN MUD. WHEN SHE WAS AROUND 13 YEARS  
OF AGE AND HER SISTER WAS 12  
THEY WENT TO BANDON CONVENT THIS WAS IN 1942  
TO GET TO SECONDRY SCHOOL THEY HAD TO GET THE  
TRAIN.

SEEN AS THIS WAS DURING THE WAR THERE WAS VERY  
LITTLE COAL SO THE TRAIN WENT VERY SLOW.

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## CHRISTMAS:

On christmas eve their father would bring in a big chunk of wood that he would have cut from one of their Own tree's. He would leave it beside the fire. Then they would get ready for midnight mass. They would have to walk to midnight mass the Church was 2 and a half miles from their house. When they got home after mass their dad lit a red candle While everyone made a circle around the candle and all said a prayer. Then they went over to the fire and put in the big block of wood in to the fire. Then they said the rosary. They left the door open incase mary was passing with baby jesus so they could come in and sit by the fire.

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