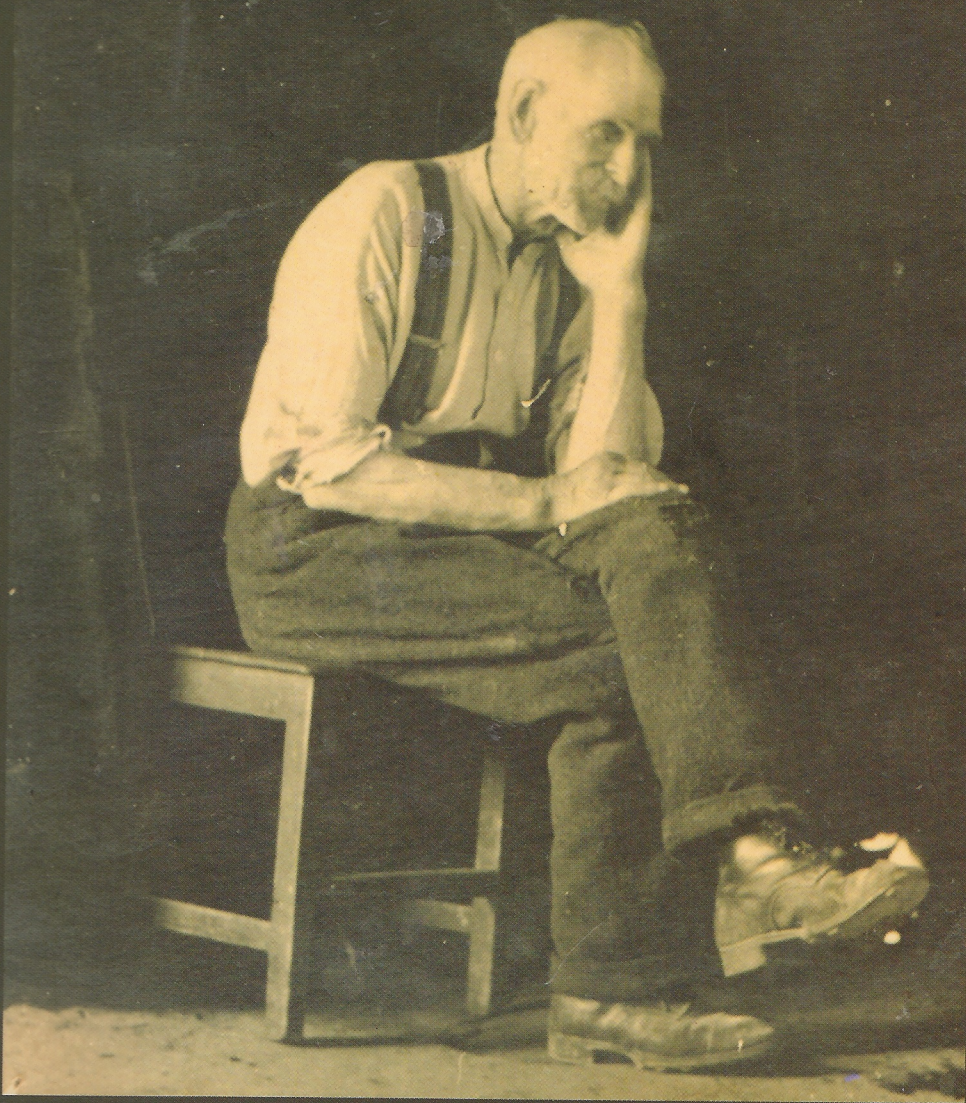


# Hidden Gold



*History and Folklore of the Coomhola and Borlin Valleys*

Julia Kemp

Based on research undertaken by the  
Coomhola Borlin Community Development Association





After a long climb, the top is finally reached. Here on the border between Cork and Kerry, there are fine views over the surrounding area: one can look down on places one might have visited, and some of the places referred to in this book. In the south the majestic sweep of Bantry Bay can be seen, with Whiddy Island and its oil terminal; in the distant south west, the Mizen Peninsula and the twin radar dishes of Mount Gabriel on the south coast; from the top of the pass, looking north, the barren landscape of the mountain gives way to green fields, and beyond that the imposing mountain range known as Macgillycuddy Reeks, in County Kerry, which includes Beenkeragh, Caher, Mangerton, and the highest of them all, Carrantouhill.

And what better place to end this book, on the site of a historic event, surrounded by the even deeper history of the distant past, with many local places and townlands in view, and with the opportunity to set the beautiful Coomhola and Borlin valleys in their natural wider context of West Cork, a place apart.

## APPENDIX 1

### Focal – Irish/English Glossary

Hundreds of Irish words and phrases are still used in the everyday conversations of the people of this district, particularly among the middle-aged and elderly inhabitants. The following is a list of some of the more commonly used words.

<i>ablach</i>	carcass; an inert, grossly overweight, ungainly person
<i>aerach</i>	merry, light-hearted
<i>aguisín</i>	an addition, addendum
<i>airneán</i>	up late at night, lingering, night work
<i>ainniseóir</i>	a miserable, wretched person
<i>aiteann muire</i>	club-moss ( <i>Lycopodium selago</i> )
<i>aiteann gaedhlach</i>	gorse about 18 inches high (0.5m)
<i>aiteanna gallda</i>	tall gorse up to 8 feet high (2.5m) ( <i>Ulex europaeus</i> )
<i>aithrí tóirníghe</i>	thunder, repentance
<i>amadán</i>	fool (male)
<i>asachán</i>	insult
<i>bacán</i>	wooden wedge on side of old-style spade for pressing on with foot
<i>bacach</i>	lame person, beggar
<i>bacla</i>	an armful
<i>bainne cích na n-Éan</i>	Irish spurge ( <i>Euphorbia hyberna</i> ). Juice used in curing warts
<i>balbhán</i>	a dummy, person with whom it is difficult to converse
<i>balcais</i>	rag
<i>bán</i>	lea, or untilled ground
<i>banbh</i>	piglet, Ace of Hearts
<i>barrfhód</i>	top sod in bog

<i>basachán</i>	sickly, delicate person
<i>bastún</i>	ignorant, stupid person
<i>beart</i>	bundle, usually carried on back or shoulders
<i>béiceachán</i>	a bawler (someone who cries a lot)
<i>béillic</i>	cave under stone
<i>bioránach</i>	youth, a lad, rogue
<i>biríneach</i>	Bent-grass, like thin rush ( <i>Agrostis spp.</i> )
<i>bithiúnach</i>	rogue, ruffian
<i>bodaire</i>	a churlish person
<i>bodhaire Uí Laoghaire</i>	O'Leary's deafness, pretending not to hear
<i>bogán</i>	egg without shell formed
<i>bolgadóan</i>	parasite found on animals
<i>bothán</i>	hut, cabin
<i>botún</i>	blunder
<i>braonín</i>	a little drop
<i>breall</i>	foolish, stupid person
<i>bréan</i>	putrid, rotten, fed up with
<i>breill</i>	sulky "puss" face
<i>(go) brónach</i>	sad
<i>broсна</i>	light sticks used as firewood
<i>brus</i>	tiny fragments, pieces of broken turf
<i>buailleam sciath</i>	braggard, show-off
<i>buanna</i>	domineering person
<i>cabaire</i>	chatterbox – usually children or teenagers
<i>cabhlach</i>	ruins of an old building
<i>cabóg</i>	rustic; uncouth country man
<i>caç-iarainn</i>	type of iron ore often seen in wet ground, brown slime seen in shallow drains
<i>cadhrán (caorán)</i>	little piece of dried turf
<i>cáibín</i>	old hat
<i>caillichín</i>	ash stick used by cattle drovers, used as a weapon in faction fights
<i>caipéis</i>	written item, usually nonsense
<i>caise</i>	race of water, quick-flowing
<i>caisearbhán</i>	dandelion
<i>caistín</i>	old wrinkled potato
<i>calaois</i>	foul play, cheating – particularly in card games
<i>canúint</i>	complaint or unwanted conversation
<i>caoirseach</i>	funeral-goer

<i>cealais</i>	sloppy, ungainly, excessively heavy person
<i>ceithearnach</i>	a big, bustling, boorish person
<i>ciotóg</i>	left-handed person
<i>clab</i>	big mouth (a <i>clab</i> of laughter) or an opening
<i>cladhaire</i>	villain, rogue, trickster
<i>clamhsán</i>	complaining, fault-finding
<i>cleas na péiste</i>	worm stick, used with piece of string to kill worms in cattle
<i>cliamhain-isteach</i>	man who marries into farm or business
<i>cloigeann</i>	skull
<i>clúmh-liath</i>	downy mildew seen on very stale bread or cast away shoes
<i>cnamhóg</i>	the ballon wrasse, a species of rock fish frequently caught off Eagle Point and Suck (Ardnagashel)
<i>cnapán</i>	heap, lump
<i>cníopaire</i>	mean, miserly person
<i>codladh grifín</i>	a "dead" leg, pins and needles
<i>coinleach</i>	stubble
<i>colpa</i>	calf of the leg; also handle of flail
<i>corraghiob</i>	rump, haunches – "down on the corraghiob" – down on the hunkers
<i>corramhiol</i>	midge
<i>cosa-fuara</i>	stilts
<i>cráite</i>	bad-humoured, annoyed
<i>caos-ghalar</i>	thrush (disease of mouth/throat)
<i>creachail</i>	tree found embedded in bog
<i>criochnúil</i>	neat, tidy, tasty
<i>crot</i>	appearance
<i>crúibín</i>	pig's trotter
<i>cúnsóg</i>	bees' nest, usually found in meadows
<i>cupóg</i>	dock plant
<i>cúram</i>	care
<i>dalladh</i>	blinding, confusing, dazzling, bad bout of illness, anything that affects a person severely
<i>dalladh mullóg</i>	to confuse, delude, fool somebody
<i>deistean</i>	disgust
<i>deoch an dorais</i>	"one for the road"
<i>diabhal</i>	devil
<i>doicheallach</i>	boorish, begrudging



<i>driodar</i>	dregs, waste residue
<i>droimeann</i>	cow with white back (old Irish breed)
<i>dromheas</i>	disdain
<i>dronn</i>	a stoop
<i>dublalaí</i>	double dealer, twister
<i>dúchas</i>	heredity
<i>dúidin</i>	short-stemmed clay pipe
<i>dúil</i>	desire, fondness, craving, strong emotion
<i>dúirín</i>	handle on scythe
<i>dúthrachtach</i>	earnest, devoted, diligent
<i>eascú luachra</i>	lizard (dictionary: <i>earc luachra</i> )
<i>eiri in áirde</i>	vanity, big-feeling
<i>éirleach</i>	havoc, great destruction
<i>faill</i>	cliff
<i>faip</i>	a blow
<i>fáilte</i>	welcome
<i>faire</i>	alas! for shame!
<i>fánach</i>	sparse, irregular (usually of a crop)
<i>fathach</i>	giant
<i>fionnán</i>	long, coarse grass usually found in damp areas of mountainside
<i>flaithiúil</i>	generous
<i>flúirseach</i>	an abundance
<i>fothrach</i>	ruin (of building)
<i>fraochán</i>	whortleberry, bilberry
<i>fuarthéidh (fuairthé)</i>	careless, negligent person
<i>fústar</i>	fuss
<i>futa fata</i>	nonsense
<i>gab</i>	mouth
<i>gabhal</i>	quantity of some substance taken in the arms
<i>gabhairín reódha (reó)</i>	jack snipe
<i>gabhlóg</i>	a forked stick used with reaping hook in the cutting of furze, briars etc.
<i>gaisce</i>	great achievement, feat of heroism
<i>gaiscíoch</i>	one who performs a <i>gaisce</i>
<i>gallán</i>	standing stone, any type of large stone
<i>gamall</i>	simpleton (male)
<i>gamallóg</i>	simpleton (female)
<i>geab</i>	talk or chatter

<i>geannc</i>	snub nose
<i>gearrcach</i>	nestling
<i>geimhisleach/gaillseach</i>	earwig
<i>giobal</i>	rag, old tattered clothing
<i>gilleóg</i>	any small fish
<i>gíog</i>	no sound or murmur
<i>glaise</i>	stream, rivulet
<i>glam</i>	grab, snatch ( <i>glam</i> -ing of women was practised extensively in this locality in the past and often led to a happy and stable marriage)
<i>glib</i>	unkempt, excess head of hair
<i>gligín</i>	silly person, featherhead
<i>gliogar</i>	an infertile egg, usually from a previous hatch (it rattles)
<i>gluiníneach</i>	redshank ( <i>Polygonum persicaria</i> ); knee disease in cattle
<i>gráin</i>	hatred
<i>gra-mo-chroí</i>	love of my heart, usually sweet, but insincere talk
<i>grafán</i>	grubber, tool used for breaking down sods when ridges are being prepared
<i>greadadh chugat</i>	“bad cess to you”; trouncing, thrashing to you
<i>gríosach</i>	hot ashes, embers
<i>laetheanta na bó riabhaiche</i>	last three days of March and 2nd-3rd April
<i>lapa</i>	paw
<i>lárthán</i>	row of hay raked in from both sides before cocks are made
<i>leadhb(og)</i>	untidy, slovenly woman
<i>leadránach</i>	lingering, tedious, drawn-out
<i>leanúnach</i>	following, faithful, constant, loyal
<i>leath-scéal</i>	an excuse, probably a lame one
<i>leipreachán</i>	small fairy-man
<i>leóinte</i>	sprained, afflicted, damaged, “shook”-looking
<i>liab</i>	lout
<i>liobar</i>	tattered, untidy person
<i>liúdar</i>	a blow, a wallop
<i>lochán</i>	a little pool or puddle
<i>loch léin</i>	swelling in groin or armpit
<i>luachair</i>	rushes
<i>lúbaire</i>	twister, devious person, trickster



<i>lúbán</i>	loop, bow, bend
<i>lúb-ar-lár</i>	dropped stitch, discrepancy, something missing
<i>lúchrachán</i>	dwarf, pygmy, leprechaun; a very small potato
<i>mácaíl</i>	a physical defect
<i>maitín beag</i>	trip stick on cradle board
<i>mallacht</i>	curse
<i>manntach</i>	gap in front teeth, toothless
<i>masmas</i>	feeling of nausea. When one grabbed more than his fair share, the rebuke was often “ <i>Go gcuire se masmas ort</i> ”
<i>meas</i>	respect
<i>meascán mearrai</i>	disorder, mixed up mind, disorientation
<i>meidrisc</i>	discord, confusion
<i>meidhreach/meidhreir</i>	merry, tipsy
<i>meigeall</i>	whisker, goat's beard
<i>méiscre</i>	crack in the skin, usually on the fingers
<i>meitheal</i>	group of people voluntarily assisting a neighbour in hay-making, turf-cutting, potato-digging, etc.
<i>miabhán</i>	dulse (an edible seaweed)
<i>mí-ádh</i>	ill luck, misfortune
<i>mí chothrom</i>	unevenness, “ <i>mí chothrom ort</i> ” – may things not go smoothly for you!
<i>milleán</i>	blame
<i>millteán (millthean)</i>	a sickly, miserable-looking person or animal
<i>mínseach</i>	female goat
<i>mointeán</i>	field of boggy, peaty nature
<i>mothall</i>	a bush of hair, hirsute, fleece
<i>múnlach</i>	mixture of cow dung, urine, mud, etc., usually near dung heap or cattle sheds
<i>ocáid</i>	“yoke”, thing (could apply to anything)
<i>olagón</i>	a loud wailing cry, a lament
<i>óinseach</i>	a fool (female)
<i>palltóg</i>	a blow, wallop
<i>patallóg</i>	a fat, plump child
<i>pilibín míog</i>	lapwing
<i>piéseóg</i>	superstitious belief or practice
<i>plamás</i>	flattery
<i>plasóg (plasóigin)</i>	small level grassy patch
<i>pleidhce</i>	simpleton, person inclined to act the fool
<i>pleist</i>	large flabby person

<i>plubaire</i>	flabby person
<i>pluc</i>	cheek
<i>plucamas</i>	mumps
<i>plúiricín</i>	pignut
<i>proimpín</i>	bird's tail end
<i>púca padhail</i>	toadstool
<i>phúicín</i>	type of muzzle to prevent calf suckling
<i>raidhse</i>	plentiful supply
<i>ráiméis</i>	nonsense, blather
<i>rí-rá</i>	confusion, mix-up, untidy, fuss
<i>rochán</i>	simple song, ditty
<i>ropaire</i>	robber, ruffian
<i>rothcúl</i>	( <i>rothchul</i> in Borlin) fetters, usually tying the front legs
<i>saothar</i>	intense, rushing (with reference to work)
<i>scamall</i>	cloud; person whose behaviour is strange is said to have a <i>scamall</i> on his/her brain
<i>scannradh</i>	fear; a person who is constantly rushing is often described as having “a fierce <i>scannradh</i> on him/her
<i>scailp</i>	piece of skin, result of accident, scraw(?)
<i>scata</i>	group, crowd, pack
<i>sceach</i>	bush
<i>sceach gheal</i>	whitethorn, hawthorn
<i>scealabhóg</i>	same as <i>scailp</i>
<i>sceartán</i>	tick
<i>scairbhín na gCuach</i>	harsh, severe weather coinciding with arrival of cuckoo; has also been interpreted as “rough weather of the squalls”, <i>coch</i> meaning squall
<i>sceilmis</i>	fearful commotion
<i>sceóin</i>	fright, fear
<i>scioltán</i>	portion of seed potato with shoot
<i>scraith</i>	sod, mat of grass
<i>screatall</i>	least bit, particle
<i>scrios</i>	damage
<i>scrogall</i>	long thin neck
<i>seacht geal</i>	to pass quickly and completely out of sight
<i>seachrán</i>	wandering, straying
<i>searbhas</i>	bitterness, sarcasm
<i>searbhásach</i>	bitter, sarcastic
<i>sioch</i>	frost



<i>siocan (sacan)</i>	fieldfare, whose arrival here coincides with very cold weather
<i>síofra</i>	elf, fairy, weakling
<i>slacht</i>	neatness, a <i>slachtmhar</i> person
<i>sléán</i>	L-shaped spade made specially for turf-cutting
<i>slíaire</i>	tall youth, slice of meat
<i>smacht</i>	control
<i>smidirín</i>	fragment, little bit
<i>sneamhaire</i>	insignificant person
<i>spairt</i>	sodden, inferior peat
<i>splannc</i>	flash, spark – “he hasn’t a <i>splannc</i> ” (spark of sense)
<i>splinnc</i>	as above, also a ray
<i>stail</i>	stallion
<i>stailc</i>	sulk, strike
<i>starrthaí (bh)</i>	bad mood, fit of anger, drunkenness
<i>steille-bheathaidh</i>	exact image of
<i>strácaíl</i>	striving, struggling
<i>stracaire</i>	strong, strapping person
<i>stráille</i>	tall, overgrown, unenergetic person
<i>súgach</i>	merry, slightly inebriated
<i>sugán</i>	hay or straw rope, as used in making chairs, for example
<i>súlach</i>	juice, gravy, broth
<i>súmaire</i>	slow, listless person; one with whom it is difficult to converse; a sponger; tadpole, leech
<i>Tadhg A’ dá Thaobh</i>	one who agrees with everybody, takes all sides
<i>taispeáint</i>	showing off, exhibition
<i>taoibhín</i>	leather patch on the side of a shoe
<i>taoscán</i>	quantity of liquid poured into a vessel
<i>táthaire</i>	cheeky person, scrounger
<i>teaspach (teaspach dearg)</i>	high spiritedness, exuberance; “taspy”
<i>tionlac (an) na n-Oinseach</i>	fools’ escorting; escorting and re-escorting of friends due to reluctance to part
<i>tocht</i>	desire to sleep
<i>tóir</i>	act of pursuing, chase; somebody who is seen to be in a great hurry is often said to have “some great <i>tóir</i> on him”
<i>traithnín</i>	strong blade of grass; “not worth a <i>traithnín</i> ”, worthless

<i>tranglam</i>	mixed up, confusion, difficulty
<i>trí na chéile</i>	confused
<i>tromluí</i>	nightmare
<i>truamhéileach</i>	pitiable, pathetic
<i>truslóg</i>	long loping stride or hop
<i>tuaiplis</i>	blunder
<i>tuathalach</i>	left-handed, awkward



## APPENDIX 2

### Interview with "Tadhg Meirseach"

*This was recorded in Irish and translated by Justin McCarthy, Ballingearry.*

I. = Interviewer; T.M. = Tadhg Meirseach

- I. You were talking about the Fianna and Fionn MacCumhail and the gold ring. What's that story again?
- T.M. Fionn went hunting one day with his dogs. The dogs followed something until they lost it, and then they came to the bank of a lake, where they heard a woman crying. Fionn asked her why she was crying. She said she had lost her gold ring which went west with the stream. Fionn was able to check his thumb to find where the ring was. He checked he thumb from skin to meat, to bone, to marrow, to *smusach*.  
He went into the lake where he found the gold ring, and when he came to the bank, she struck him with her magic stick and turned him into a *gallán* (standing stone) on the bank of the lake. He was there for a period and all the Fianna were searching for him. Then Fionn appeared in his own shape and the woman returned and struck Fionn three times until he stood up as good as he ever was, except that he was grey.
- I. Were people around here taking the soup at the time of the Famine?
- T.M. They were, and they are still in Bantry. My father-in-law used to boast about 'Muintir Bhaire'. He used to say 'Clainn Labhrás' (Adrigole) who left his family to go astray, and 'Muintir Bhaire' who supported all of Ireland.
- I. What was the food at the time?
- T.M. I never saw tea when I was young. If you got enough potatoes...
- I. What would you have for breakfast?
- T.M. Potatoes.
- I. Dinner?
- T.M. Potatoes or yellow meal if you could get it, and 'twas hard.
- I. Was *feoil* (meat?) eaten frequently?

- T.M. Not at all.
- T.M. I was at home for half a year, then Dan Lynch. Con Cronin was there before me. Dan Lynch was made master.
- I. Where did that master live?
- T.M. In "Carraig na Scoilai".
- I. Were there stations there? (Did the Priest go around to the houses?)
- T.M. Yes, I used to speak Irish to the Priest. You wouldn't hear a word of English from any priest. They all had Irish. They'd call everyone by their Irish name.
- I. Father Horgan had Irish.
- T.M. He hadn't a word of Irish, and he would not speak it.
- I. When did they (priests) change to English?
- T.M. I don't know.
- I. The Priest's sermons were in English always.
- T.M. Yes, yes. In the chapel always. Fr Michael Kearney's sermon in Gougane was given in English twice.
- I. When did you go to Gougane?
- T.M. Often, and on St. Finbarr's Day, the last Sunday in September.
- I. Used they to have big crowds there?
- T.M. Yes, and rounds, and dancing that night. There used to be many people from Kerry there. 'Tis a long trip across the hill by the nearway '*Poll choimin gadhra*'
- I. I never heard of it.
- T.M. It's a narrow scote and it was a stream on a wet day.  
What Irish would you put on "white trout"?
- I. "*Breac ban*".
- T.M. No, but "*breac geal*".
- I. Did you ever fish?
- T.M. No, but I often went out at night for salmon. We used to go far away from home you know. We had nets. Thady Brien's father was with me one night at *Poll an ee*. He said to me, "Pull the net and take the ropes with you when you swim in". I swam in under the ash in *Poll an ee* and I pulled the net to me.
- I. Is there any mass rock around here, in this parish?
- T.M. It's above in Derrynakilla. I saw it less than fifteen years ago. There's a hole there like a cup for the holy water.
- I. There's a townland there, "*Lahern siar mia*" it's called. Do you know what it means?
- T.M. That the place west from Lahern was very smooth I suppose.
- I. Seaskin – What does it mean?
- T.M. *Seisk (Plasog idir Failleanna)*. A level green patch between cliffs. *An fear breagach* (The False Man) was the name of a cliff in *Cum na leime*. When he (the false man) left Cooryleary, he took his money with him. He used to rob the rich to pay the poor. He used to give a widow money for rent.
- (T.M. was asked about several songs which he was able to recall including *An Stoicin*



*Eórna*, *An Goirtín Eórna* and *An Scur*, the latter being composed by Diarmuid na Bolgai (Diarmuid O'Shea). He also mentioned Sean Seabhrach, composer of the first song, who "wrote one for me a week later".

- I. Used ye drink a lot when ye were young.  
T.M. No, *muise*.  
I. Used much *poitín* be made around here?  
T.M. There was never a drop here until lately. 'Twas in other places alright.  
I. Where was the nearest pub to here then?  
T.M. *Droichead na Siorai* (Pearson's Bridge), or *Carraig na Siorai*, as it was called. The Ouvane was not there until lately. That was built by the Jack Bills. The caretaker of the mill/water wheel got killed when the wind blew an iron door on to him.  
I. What's the story about *Léim a t'sagairt* (Priest's Leap)?  
T.M. There's a sign on a stone there. I suppose it's still there. The Priest jumped when he was being chased.  
I. The Batts up in Borlin – they were Learys. There were a lot of them there.  
T.M. There were, and the Desmonds. I heard Con Desmond's father and brother, and a few of the Batts and a lot of young men died in Borlin with the measles one year. Fine men all of them.  
I. Say that in Irish.  
T.M. *Fuaireadar bas leis an bhruitineach. (Do mharaigh an bhruitineach iad.)* (i.e. the measles killed them)  
I. Do you remember the McCarthy family from Derrydubh?  
T.M. I do well, *muise*, they were very strong and funny.  
I. Coopers.  
T.M. Yes, they'd spent the night out on the mountain on top of Cnoc Bui, the highest mountain in County Cork, making ... That's why they were called the *Seagalrai* (rye people), because they had rye bread.  
I. What's the Irish for "stepping stones"?  
T.M. *Clocha go siulotar trasna an abhain.* What's the Irish for "water-diviner"?  
I. I don't know, I don't know.  
T.M. *Fear an t-slaitín ladhraich draiochta a aimsíonn na tabaracha fiar uisce fé thalamh* (The man with the magic hand rod who locates the underground freshwater wells.)  
I. What age used people marry then?  
T.M. When a man was thirty they used to say he was too old. Ger and Muirti were Larry's sons. Murty was a carpenter.  
I. Do you remember Fr. Shinquin?  
T.M. Yes, he made big changes to the chapel here. He did a lot of work on the church and he only charged people a ha'penny.  
I. Did he have Irish?  
T.M. Oh, he did, he did.  
I. When did the priest without Irish come?

- T.M. With a while now.  
I. Did anyone have English in the houses when you were young?  
T.M. No one at all. My mother never spoke English.  
I. Was there an account of the bad times when you were young?  
T.M. Yes, from my mother who lived through the bad times. She lived in Derrynakilla and they were put out of there. She knew a lot about the bad times. She said crowds used to be every day hungry, and there was some old woman who had a child along with her and . . . They had a roast blackbird and the child [children] ate the roast stuff and it killed them immediately. Did you know Donal Barry?  
I. I did.  
T.M. The captain took everything. All he had to do was take it.  
I. Captain White?  
T.M. Yes.  
I. When did they come?  
T.M. I don't know. Before Cromwell. The important people then were *honairi* and the landlords.  
I. Where did you go to school? Above, is it?  
T.M. No, below here, but I was not there very long. When I went first the teacher was Pdraig Harrington from Bantry who had to walk out to Coomhola. He was very fond of me when I had my lessons.  
I. Did that teacher have Irish?  
T.M. They spoke no Irish, and there was no Catechism or religion either.  
I. Is there anyone else around here who has Irish as good as yours?  
T.M. No, *muise*.  
I. What about the children – do they learn it in school?  
T.M. No, *muise*. They'd have Irish if they spoke it at home.  
I. Do you ever converse with your grandson?  
T.M. Sometimes.  
I. He has good Irish.  
T.M. Nell in America had better Irish than myself.  
I. Do you remember any of the old songs?  
T.M. I've forgotten most of them. There were hundreds.  
I. There were many of them?  
T.M. Oh, yes, yes.  
I. Were there many beggars at the time?  
T.M. There were long ago. I remember three coming in at the one time one day, west from Beara. Now there's not a word of Irish in Beara. I was there five or six years ago. Not a word.  
I. Was he one of the Whiteboys? (*buachailli bana*)  
T.M. Yes, *Diarmuid na sceal*, that was his name. He was killed above at the top of the glen, west. He was killed by the . . . (sounds like "our" in Irish) family. They



gave his head to Lord Bantry the following day, and all they got for it was a ha'pence instead of £5. He was leaving a Bealick(?) in Cooryleary and he took his money with him and he said he'd change it to another place. He left the money above at *Croisi na Gairni* – old Donal Costello lived in a house there. His son worked with Old Bob Levis and they found the money. Levis was a Protestant from the other side of Bantry.

- I. Did the old people have any prayers of their own after the Rosary?  
T.M. I heard many of them, but I don't remember. Crowley the beggar from Dunmanway had plenty of prayers. I was very young then.  
I. Used they always say the rosary in all the houses then, and the five decades?  
T.M. Oh, yes, always.  
I. Were there any stories about *Cuchulainn* by the old people?  
T.M. Micheal O Luaint from the Blaskets was writing stories.  
I. How much drink would you get for a shilling?  
T.M. Half a gallon of whiskey.  
I. What was the measure for drink?  
T.M. A big pint. 'Twas as heavy as anything. You might not get a shilling in three months.  
I. Do ye have any songs about the area?  
T.M. They're all gone. *Muirti Learai* was the last poet here, of the Manning family(?). He was in Bonane in Kerry. His father, old *Learai* composed a song.  
I. Have you the song?  
T.M. I have a few verses. (Note: difficult to make out). There are lots of other verses also.  
I. Do you remember the Irish sermons by the priests in church?  
T.M. I do, by Michael Kearney. He'd say "I hope that — will be put — on the horse of disaster".  
I. How long ago is that?  
T.M. As far back as I can remember. He was in Bantry. He'd come around here collecting money for a church that was being built. He collected a lot of money here.  
I. Where did he build the church?  
T.M. In *Carraig buí*, that's in Durrus.  
T.M. There was a man there who could match an *gaisce* (feat) that anyone could do. There was a big leaca from the road up. There was a straight cliff of eight or nine feet or more, and a level part on top the width of the kitchen. When he'd run from the level part downward, he could clear the road that's above the church. 'Twould surprise you, he beat one of the O'Sullivans below in *Dunlear* – he almost killed him except that one of his family had come along. He said he'd get satisfaction and he brought a gun with him the next time and shot him. Nothing happened about it.  
I. *Faill fe no — Ceithearnach.*

- T.M. Yes, that was the old saying.  
I. Where was the church before the present one was built?  
T.M. *Mullach an afreann* (open place where mass was said, but also a church here)  
I. What were the names of the river pools around here?  
T.M. *An t'umar* was a great place to keep salmon. It's surrounded by two big rocks. I think it was very difficult for salmon to go up the *caise* one time  
(T.M. mentions several pools by name, including *Pollín na corran*, *Poll na maidi*, *Poll na carraige*, *Poll a uistis*. He says that the poachers/fishermen usually stopped at *Poll a mhaoraigh*.)  
T.M. Starting below at Snave Bridge: *Poll gorm*; the *cumoga*; *Poll an ee* at the turn of the road. It's often I pulled it when I was only ten years old. Probably the best salmon pool in Bantry Parish.  
I. You obviously had a licence?  
T.M. I did not, *muise* [big laugh].  
I. How many would you catch per night?  
T.M. Eight was the best I did, but usually three or four.  
I. What are the other holes from there up?  
T.M. *An poll cam* below the bridge, *Poll Nora* above the bridge, *Poll a mhuillin* where the mill was long ago.  
I. What sort of a mill? A flour mill?  
T.M. No, no, but a mill.  
I. Was the mill ever working in your time?  
T.M. Oh God, no.  
I. Was there an iron mine?  
T.M. 'Twas some class of iron.  
I. Maybe the mill was for crushing/smelting iron ore.  
T.M. You can see where it ran from *Poillín a carran* above *Umar*. The water was turned off, Murty said. The fence came down in a line to Levis's. It can still be seen. The mill was there. There were two water supplies for the mill.  
I. Used the old people have hounds for the hares?  
T.M. Yes, I had one myself for a long time. I got it from Ger Larry's son, west.  
I. There were a lot of hares there?  
T.M. There were.  
I. Were there Harringtons here long ago?  
T.M. They were all Harringtons, most of them up there in Derrynakilla.  
I. When did the Keohanes come?  
T.M. They were there ever. They were the strongest crowd in Bantry and Coomhola for forty years at the time of the faction fighting. The first time they were beaten was by the Flynns of Borlin who brought a crowd from Kerry with them.