

WM0832 Thomas Jack Murphy

SPEAKERS

Thomas Jack Murphy, Una Walls

Una Walls 00:00

Tell me about you joining Home Guard what age were you?

Thomas Jack Murphy 00:07

That's interesting. My brother was in the Home Guard, he was much older than I was.

Thomas Jack Murphy 00:13

I was six years younger than my sister who was, my brother must have been seven or eight years older than me.

Thomas Jack Murphy 00:25

He was already in it and there was another farmer up the road who came in his car and picked him up.

Thomas Jack Murphy 00:33

And they went on to where we met.

Una Walls 00:38

And where did you meet?

Thomas Jack Murphy 00:40

Ballyhosset, on a farm belonging to Mrs. Anderson.

Thomas Jack Murphy 00:47

I used to be out bouncing a ball up against the gable of the wall while he was waiting for this man to come.

Thomas Jack Murphy 00:58

And this night he come down and he says to me "Hey boy, jump in and come here with us".

Thomas Jack Murphy 01:04

So I run in and told my mother I was away up to the Home Guard to watch them.

Thomas Jack Murphy 01:12

Well, they were all lined up and they were told to, but I sat on the farm, and after a while the Army come, they were training the Home Guard and they seen me sitting in my civilian clothes.

Thomas Jack Murphy 01:32

I must have been fifteen and they went out into their truck and they brought in two uniforms and threw them at me and they said "Try them on- see which one fits you" (laughs).

Thomas Jack Murphy 01:45

That was me into the Home Guard (laughs).

Thomas Jack Murphy 01:48

The training in the Home Guard, involved route marches, sham fights... oh you could have marched from Ardglass to Seaforde. I remember staying the night in... Tullymurry, there was a camp there, an army camp, tin huts.

Thomas Jack Murphy 02:14

Well we were to stay there overnight in the tin huts and then you'd have marched back again.

Thomas Jack Murphy 02:22

It was just an ordinary army hut.

Thomas Jack Murphy 02:25

Beds dotted down both sides and there would have been, uh, a canteen where you would've got your breakfast.

Thomas Jack Murphy 02:36

We went to Ballykinlar for the shooting practice.

Una Walls 02:41

Tell me about that.

Thomas Jack Murphy 02:47

The shooting in Ballykilner was a 303 rifle and you, you had to shoot from maybe a hundred yards, maybe two hundred yards and the uh, (laughs)...

Thomas Jack Murphy 03:07

The targets were in a concrete area with the people manning them, they were down at below ground level and they put the targets up and down depending on whether you were shooting.

Thomas Jack Murphy 03:25

If you weren't shooting the targets would go up and stay there for a few seconds and back down again.

Thomas Jack Murphy 03:32

And then when you did shoot the person below in the bunkers they would have put a stick up to show where you hit.

Thomas Jack Murphy 03:43

You actually aim for the bullseye but where the (laughs), and uh, a lot of snap shooting and there was just the normal shooting.

Thomas Jack Murphy 03:56

Snap shooting would be where the target would pop up and give you five seconds to fire and down again.

Thomas Jack Murphy 04:07

But often you missed it. But I did eventually get my marksman stripes, the crossed rifles which you were proud of (laughs).