Ex-Guard, correct.

I am sixty five years of age.

I am from Dingle in County Kerry and served in West Cork,

I was sent to the border. Single men were sent. And you were left there.

Well I suppose it was [pause] our first border, it was from here was... Leitrim, which was... on the, on the... Donegal border near Bundoran.

So there was actually no crossing there, there was no border crossing, they were all... blown up... by the British Army. So it wasn’t a border station as such, when we were there anyway.

Patrolling.

The border, there was two borders...

Well, there was people crossing, but... you know yourself... and ‘twas Kiltyclogher was the next station then.

And Manorhamilton, so that was our first... and... wasn’t... there was, at the time there wasn’t even electricity in the full of Kinlough.

That was the station, yeah. There was electricity, and I remember a funny story... there the travellers up there, and they were going around posing as ESB [Electricity Supply Board] technicians, and they’re looking for deposits, for the ESB from... poor people living, who gave them money first, but then the scam was found out, and... it wasn’t... one day they collected three of these people to take them over to Manorhamilton, for an identification parade, and we went over, you know they were short, in the first parade, at that time like, kind of my hair wasn’t the same colour as... ‘twas the same colour as the

And I was put in the identification parade anyway, who did the three people pick out? Me!
I was, I was after driving them over, so you know, stupid, but anyway...

Oh the border was a line, yeah there was a line, usually a bridge, or... but then they were blown up,

Therefore, there was a, there was two... there was two... crossings in, in that area, one of them was totally blown up, there was a big crater... and the other then, the other was open all right, but... ‘twas going into Kiltyclogher, it wasn’t going directly into the border, you know?

We stayed in digs.

We... some of us got a house then at one stage... and... ah sure ‘twas primitive really.

‘Twas primitive... you know for Christmas and that, it was a quare place to be, but anyway we were there and...

Well we had cars, we had at that time, we were coming into cars, mind you some, some of the cars mightn’t be in a position to... travel that far, but... I remember there was a fella from... place called A D R I G O L E, he was up the road from me, and he, he was a, he was an old timer, and he used to come down, he was actually friendly with the lady in the post office, and after, so I used come down with him, I’d park above in Cork, and... my car wasn’t good enough to go up...

Not from there, no, not from there... because a lot of the people, they were coming down.

Coming down, we were at the far... kind of Western side of it, and that was it then, you know other stations are into Cavan... Dundalk and places like that, you go up probably to the markets and all like, and... it was the time of... the radios and the... the tape items were a big thing at the time, and we knew, we used to be, we used to be getting the latest models for... but anyway.

No, no, we had no contact with the RUC. You see they used only respond as far as I know... you know, the, they’d never come down out of the... except I presume if they came they’d come in... huge... I presume, I never saw them, never saw them, because as I say I don’t think they’d come to crater there anyway, but then there
was, there was a situation then where people came up to fill the craters, from the south, Well they came up on a different Sunday, buses and that.

Oh yeah, oh yeah, oh yeah. I don’t how, I don’t know how effective they were, in fact I don’t think they were. I wasn’t there, no, they weren’t, we weren’t there like, I wasn’t up, but... the, they visited a few times, and it was blown up again, that was it.

I was in Cavan Town in, I was there at ’74 when the Monaghan bombings went off.

’Twas yeah, ’twas yeah. Cavan, I was in Donegal. I was in Ballyshannon.

I was in Hackballscross.

And... where else was I then? Cavan, Monaghan, I was in... Monaghan, so I was in all the counties,

You see, the thing is, you didn’t have to deal with anything really, other than... stopping cars... and the people that, you know... basically stop, stop and searching cars, was was our game. But I suppose the people we were looking for were never there, we didn’t think they were there, anyway. But that was, well it was mundane... same thing every day now, you wouldn’t, you know?

I mean you come across the locals, I mean I suppose they weren’t bad people after it, you know what I mean? They weren’t bad people, this was their way of thinking and that was it. They didn’t like the Guards, and blah blah blah, then you had... you were up there then for the foot and mouth, that was another one, and that was a different thing we were looking for, cattle, nothing else but cattle.

Well... the purpose is fairly obvious, you know I’d say, I got the impression a long time that ‘twas... obligatory to have so many up there, because... do you know what I mean? And we were only augmenting the... have so many...Bodies, that was it... nobody gave a fiddler whether you turned up and that kind of thing you know, ‘twasn’t... and I suppose as an ordinary Joe Soap.

Oh yeah, a lot of young fellas, I mean Bundoran was... big that time,

Oh yeah, if you were there in the winter, then ‘twas like... being in a graveyard.
Was... that was in, that was in Kinlough, and then Cavan... six months in Cavan, I was only in... I, when we joined I think... ’67, the first foot and mouth,

We were sent up there to, to Ballyshannon, that’s how I got in Ballyshannon, you were standing right beside, But... that’s when we went up there, and we were there a week or something, probably two...Well ’twas only... temporary thing... they had to have bodies up there, But... ’twas freezing up there, you know?

We were relieved before Christmas, and Christmas on the border was not... oh ’twas terrible, but there was nothing they could do about it, ’twas all single men,

Oh ’twas, but you know I suppose we didn’t do the family situation, if you were with family ’twas a bit different, but... yeah ’twas...

Part of the job...that’s what we did, do you know, I suppose if we were to say we contributing anything... nothing.

But you know we didn’t have... we were just there and you were in Cavan Town, and you were on checkpoints and that was it, and you were there all day, and ’twas a pain in the... but you were there, and... same thing, you were...

Oh ’twas very monotonous, yeah, oh it was, yeah but... ’twas all, we were there just for that purpose, and the local lads did whatever had to be done, and we did...

We didn’t have anything to do with it, traffic accidents, or house break-ins or anything like that, nothing.

That was the foot and mouth, there was another then as well, there was I don’t what, ’twas, there was another... Jesus I forget now, while we... we were up there as well, there was another outbreak, I forget now... sure we were in Dublin then as well and... Kilcock, I remember going to, there was a grave in trouble up there...

Oh it was, well that was a grave thing, ’twas something to do with some German or someone, I forget that...’twas something to do with some... grave and Germans and they were up there for a long time, that time...

A German had property up there or something.
Oh for God’s sake, you’d even people coming up from Cork, smuggling... cars and...

You’ll always know the smuggler, he... he’d be mad about you, that’s why he was He’d be shining up to you, know where you were from, you know? This is his way of doing things!

’Twas just a... day-to-day thing that... they did and there’s huge money involved, I presume.

Oh you would, there was, there was... called subsistence and all, but in reality it’d cost you to go up there.

’Tis your job. The alternative was to... not... refuse to go or something like that, if you were to refuse to go you wouldn’t be going anywhere, you know, I think, so... but so... West Cork kind of... went into Sligo/Leitrim that was their... that was where they...