

Marg Murphy Damien Murphy
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This week Sonia Kelly and photographer Liam Lyons travel to south Mayo to meet the Murphy family who have been 'blessed' with four sets of twins to make up a family of 11 children. Joe and Mary have the mammoth task of feeding this brood on.....

HUNGRY ACRES

* **B**etween Killadoon and Killary Bay in south Mayo there is much evidence that this was once a many-peopled land. Ancient cottages crumble into dust, once-tilled fields make criss-cross patterns on the hillside, a roofless church stares out across the sea.*

The population was decimated by the famine, then later generations adopted the catch phrase, "There's nothing here for us", and regarded with scorn the parcels of land they became heirs to.

Most of them took off in search of whatever was lacking in the admittedly poor-quality land, but as they mostly ended up in cities, it was obviously more than land that they sought.

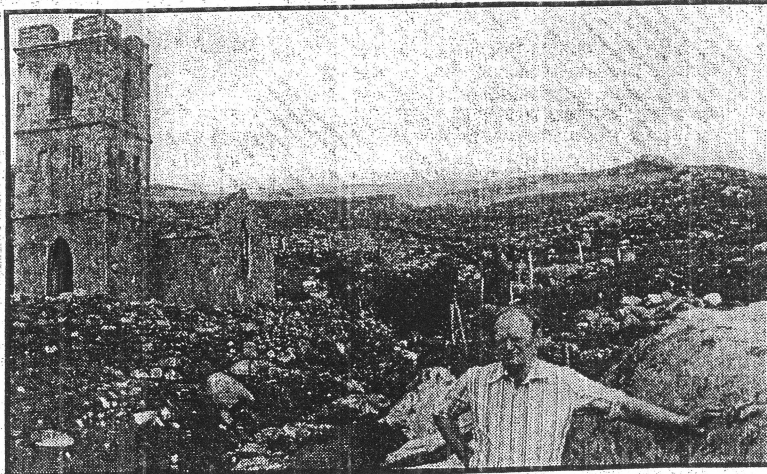
What was it?

A life of action, of interest, of companionship, of good food?



Twins Nora and Isabel and older sister Margaret reading some of the 400 books in their library.

A man who found all of these things and more right where he was born is Joe Murphy, who inherited a patch of those hungry acres from his father and lives on them very happily with his wife



Joe Murphy and the 'Hungry Acres of Gowland'.