

No. 196—JIMMY HUMPHREYS

of Murroe

(By SEAMUS O'CEALLAIGH)

THE 1956 Christmas holiday period was saddened for many in Gaeldom by the passing of one of the great hurlers of Limerick—a player, who for his size and weight had no peer on the hurling field.

Jimmy Humphreys came of great hurling stock. His father, Tim, was instrumental in forming the first hurling team in Murroe, shortly after the formation of the G.A.A.—a team which later won the first Limerick county senior hurling title.

That first Shannonside decider was a memorable one. Played at the Grocers Field, Limerick (now Lansdowne Park), on July 17th, 1887, the contestants were Murroe and South Liberties.

A DOUR STRUGGLE.

It proved a dour struggle with disputes frequent, and lasted from 2.45 to 5.30 p.m. At half-time, South Liberties led, 0-2 to nil. Nearing the end, Murroe went ahead with a goal, which was hotly disputed by the opposition, and the referee—Paddy O'Brien ("Twenty"), who was also chairman of the County Board, reserved his decision until later in the evening, when he awarded the goal and the match to Murroe, on the score: Murroe, 1-2; South Liberties, 0-3.

SPLIT IN COUNTY BOARD.

Murroe were entitled to the Limerick representation in the first All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship, but when the time arrived for sending forward a team to contest same a split had occurred in the County Board—a breach between the physical force group who were instrumental in bringing the G.A.A. into being, and the Constitutionalists, who were striving hard at this stage to gain control of the organisation.

Murroe supported the break-away party, under the leadership of Rev. Father Sheehy, as opposed to the properly constituted Board, of which Paddy O'Brien ("Twenty") retained the chairmanship.

Limerick were fixed to meet Kilkenny in the first county hurling engagement ever in an All-Ireland series, and the County Board, in view of Murroe's withdrawal, nominated Castleconnell to represent the county.

EFFORTS AT RE-UNION

FAILED.

Efforts made to heal the split before the date of the match failed, and the result was that both Castleconnell and Murroe travelled to play Tullaroan—the former as nominees of the County Board, the latter as County champions.

Pat Godfrey, the Murroe captain, and Tim Humphreys as vice-captain were responsible for insisting on Murroe getting the representation, as was their due by virtue of winning the County title.

The team expenses—£70, a big sum in the economy of seventy years ago, was advanced by John Martin, N.T., Murroe—and later refunded by the club, who raised the money in less than a week.

TEAMS LINE OUT BUT NO MATCH.

Two Limerick teams lined out for that first All-Ireland title, but no game was played, and Tullaroan passed on to the next round. The pros and cons of that occasion have been debated in Murroe and Castleconnell ever since, providing plenty of ammunition for lively discussion, and opportunity for much friendly banter.

Thoughts on the early greatness of Murroe kept rapping through my mind, as I stood in the wind and rain swept grounds of the old Abbey at Abington on Christmas morning.

Thousands of mourners had followed the Tricolour-covered coffin of Jimmy Humphreys from its over-night rest in the church at Murroe, braving flood and tempest in order to be present at the last sad rites.

As benighted an old soldier of Irish freedom, his comrades of fighting days were there to pay their tribute—the volleys over the grave and sounding of the Last Post being a poignant reminder of the thinning ranks of the great men who in days of danger risked everything in the cause of Ireland.

FITTING ORATION.

In a fitting oration Mr. Michael Hayes, (brother of Very Rev. Canon Hayes, founder of Muintir na Tire), traced the ancestry of the dead Gael and recalled his connection with the great priest of Land League days, Very Rev. David Humphreys, P.P., whose family were victims of the battering ram and were the last to be reinstated on their seventy-five acre farm on the Cloncurr, Estate. Born beside the historic castle of St. John Burke of Brittas, one of Ireland's Catholic martyrs, the Humphreys played a leading part in the historic fight on the Erasmus Smith School Endowments Scheme.

The ancient churchyard told its own silent story in stone of the Humphrey clan, and one could go back well into the seventeen-hundreds to find members of the family buried there. One remarkable tombstone told of the huge span of 115 years which marked the lifetime of Jimmy's grand-uncle, John Humphreys. His grandfather and namesake, who died at 94, passed away at a young age, in comparison.

It was not of these things, however, we spoke as we turned away after the last prayers had been recited. A different story was on every lip concerning some event or incident in the very full life of the great Gael whose untimely passing had left such a void

in the ranks of the many who were proud to call him friend.

TRIBUTES FROM MEN OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

It would be impossible in the scope of an appreciation of this nature to give expression to the countless tributes that came from men of the old school, like Mick Feely of Croom, and others of his day, who were in the evening of great careers when Jimmy was just opening his brilliant association with a magnificent spell in Limerick hurling history.

No better spokesman for his own generation could I find than his great mid-field partner—Bill Gleeson of Fedamore, who could speak of Jimmy both as a colleague and opponent—for no pair had it tougher when they met in opposite camps in a club tussle than the heroes of such epic Limerick mid-field mastery in games that will forever remain enshrined in the memory of those who thrilled to the clash of the ash in the decade embracing days of glory in the fight for independence, as they marked an era when Limerick hurling reached its zenith.

It was a great but sad Christmas re-union of all that was best in Limerick Gaeldom gathered to bid a last long farewell to one who has found immortality in the annals of hurling.

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TIN. SOLD EVERYWHERE

No. 196—JIMMY HUMPHREYS of Murroe (Continued)

(By SEAMUS O'CEALLAIGH)

THE All-Ireland Championship series was thirty years old when Limerick put their name for the second time on the All-Ireland Hurling Cup.

The first victory had come in 1897, when Kilfinane piloted Limerick to a magnificent success, and further asserted their mastery by winning, in addition, the Dr. Croke Cup competition—a double achievement rare in the early Gaelic days.

The famous Castleconnell pick of 1910 had wrested the second Munster title for the boys from Garryowen, only to go down in a much-debated All-Ireland final, by a solitary point, to a Wexford team winning its first All-Ireland hurling title—a lone one, which remained unaccompanied until Nick Rackard and his merry men qualified at the expense of another Limerick pick, in 1955, and went on to a glorious success, supplemented in 1956 with the great victory over Cork.

LIMERICK MUNSTER TITLE HOLDERS IN 1911.

Limerick were again Munster title holders in 1911, but after the first effort to decide the All-Ireland issue had been foiled at Cork, because of ground conditions following heavy rains, the Limerick cry of "Cork or nowhere" for the fixture was transmitted to action, and the refusal to play in Thurles allowed Kilkenny a bloodless victory.

The 1918 All-Ireland final was played at Croke Park, Dublin, on January 26, 1919. I have been asked time and again for a pen picture of that resounding Limerick success, so I cannot do better than give some extracts from a special report in the "Limerick Leader" following the game, contributed by the great hurling judge and well-known G.A.A. writer, Paddy Mehigan, in the course of which he said:

"In 1897, Kilfinane won the All-Ireland hurling title for Limerick. 'Tis a long waiting for a recovery of the laurels—these twenty-one years. Many brave struggles have been made to secure them in vain, but they have come home at last—maybe to roost. Perseverance and organisation have had their reward and the fifteen men who smothered Leinster's champions in last Sunday's final were, perhaps, the fittest and best organised team that ever donned jerseys at Croke Park.

THE GAME.

"The game was largely a disappointment. The Garryowen men dominated the situation from the start and, never easing off until the final whistle, were simply toying with the opposition near the end.

"When Wexford, who were first appeared on the field some eleven thousand spectators were present. The royal-blue clad men were a sturdy looking bunch, but there was a want of clearness in their striking when they punched the ball about that didn't appeal to the Munster eye. They Garryowen men, jumping like young bucks in the cold Dublin air, had a fine reception when they appeared in their green, white-sashed jerseys. Ten minutes after the hour, Willie Walsh of Waterford had them on the line and the game was on.

"Wexford attacked, per young Fogarty. Willie Hough sent them back. Kavanagh drove up again but Paddy McInerney swung clean on a fast travelling ball and the game was strenuously fought at mid-field, where Jimmy Humphreys and Billy Gleeson operated to telling effect. The ball was placed some sixty yards out for a Limerick penalty. Dick Ryan of Pallas was entrusted with it. The East Limerick man got the ball cleanly off the turf and pulling sweetly drove a perfect ball well above the bar for Limerick's opening score.

A STERN DUEL.

"Limerick retained territorial possession though Fortune, Leary and Roche were fighting hard. Jimmy Humphreys emerged triumphant from a stern duel, short tapped to Gleeson, who slipped his man and drove to McConkey, waiting on the mark, and the youthful Young Ireland man gave an early taste of his talent, doubling the leather above the bar for the second point.

"Mick Cummins, the hero of a hundred Wexford victories, now gave some trouble to the Limerick defenders, but Lanigan—bustling, dashing Dinny Lanigan—brought relief. Then Dan Troy secured seventy yards out. "Good old Claughan" a man near me shouted as the stripling sent a fine long ball sailing above the bar, and Limerick were three points ahead when ten minutes had gone.

"O'Leary, Fogarty and Fortune were struggling hard for Wexford and Kavanagh got possession on the forty yards mark to open their scoring with a neat point. Paddy Barry, nicely deceiving the opposition, almost scored a minute later, but Neville and Martin Murphy were doing well for Wexford. The latter was the hero of the Enniscorthy game, when the Slaneysiders defeated Dublin. But Mick Rochford—he of the bold style and sandy hair—now gave the crack winger neither opening nor quarter. Jack Keane sent a ball to Gleeson. The Fedamore man, nippy as usual, made no mistake, and drove a well judged ball over the heads of the backs and out of Stafford's reach into the net. A great cheer greeted the first green flag of the game.

SOON ALL OVER THEIR OPPONENTS.

"Limerick soon were all over their opponents. Lanigan was smashing in and sweeping his opponents to the ground. Keane and Hough and Kennedy were sending long balls down. Humphreys and Gleeson were irresistible in the middle. A fine understanding was evident amongst the Limerick forwards, and getting on the area, they stormed the Wexford goal, pushing the leather through in unstoppable fashion.

"Keeping up the pressure, Willie Ryan and Jimmy Humphreys were prominent. McConkey and McGrath crowded in, and once more the leather was in the net for Limerick's third goal. The Munster men were, now complete masters of the situation and McGrath and Gleeson, bursting clean away, and through for further goals, the big Garryowen following in the metropolis cheering to the echo.

"Keane, McInerney, Hough and Kennedy had little difficulty in stalling off any attacks, and Murphy in goal had little to do. A pretty bit of play followed a relief by "white jerseyed" McInerney. Lanigan smashed a grounder up to Barry, who crossed beautifully to McGrath. The speedy Claughan man was on it in a flash, and swept the leather above the bar. Cummins got a point for Wexford shortly afterwards, but the Leinster champions were a long way in arrears when the respite came.

THE CHANGE OVER

"Nor did Wexford followers lose heart at the change over. Their champions always came up at the end of a game and now were playing with wind and weather at their backs. Any hopes were soon disillusioned. Fagan sent them to attack but Willie Hough was coolly commanding. The Limerick captain had been playing a real captain's game. He was quietly standing at centre-half in perfect control of a well trained, faithful fifteen. Whenever danger came his way he fought it resolutely with a smile on his face and fed his

wings and forwards with far-seeing eyes. And they were worth feeding.

"Billy Gleeson secured, drove up to the square, McGrath and McConkey were on the leather in an instant and rushed keeper and ball into the net. Jimmy Humphreys was on the delivery and Willie Ryan drove a long range ball in. Paddy Barry spun around and shot. The leather hit the post and rebounded. Bill Gleeson was lying handy, and meeting the ball in mid-air coolly crashed it into the net.

"Martin Murphy now drove a ball wide for Wexford, but Keane and Lanigan wrung cheers from the crowd by their beautifully hit, lengthy strokes goalwards. Hough took a free in capable style and Stafford brought down a ball from McConkey. O'Leary and Fortune were struggling hard, but it was a hopeless struggle. Barry broke away, and well guarded by McGrath and McConkey, dribbled the leather once more past Stafford. A free to Wexford was placed for Leary. He drove a well hit ball right through, over the heads of the backs for Wexford's first goal in fifty minutes play.

HOPELESS STRIVING.

"There is little more to record. Wexford, to their credit, strove resolutely but it was hopeless striving. They were up against a fifteen vastly their superiors in every phase of the game, and they knew it. Martin Murphy gave a clever dribbling display, and drove the leather over for a point. But in any of the ground attacks, which came in the usual course of a game, Kennedy, Murphy and Rochford, now having little to do, easily broke up any raids on their citadel by Wexford—young Kennedy was a stone wall.

"Nearing the end Limerick were simply toying with the leather; their sharp shooter, passed it from man to man. McConkey got one more goal and Ryan a point just before the final whistle, which found Limerick All-Ireland champions, and easy victors on the score:—Limerick, 9-5; Wexford, 1-3."

THE LIMERICK PLAYERS.

The Limerick players were—Willie Hough (Newcastle West), captain; Mick Murphy, goal; Denny Lanigan, Paddy McInerney, Billy Gleeson, Bob McConkey (Young Irelands), Tom McGrath, Dan Troy, Mick Rochford (Claghau), Paddy Kennedy, Dick Ryan (Pallas), Jimmy Humphreys, Willie Ryan (Cappamore), Jack Keane (Castleconnell), Paddy Barry (Boher).

In the next instalment I will deal with some stirring incidents during the War of Independence, leading up to the 1921 All-Ireland success, in which Jimmy Humphreys and the bulk of the 1918 men participated.

No. 196—JIMMY HUMPHREYS of Murroe (Continued)

(By SEAMUS O'CEALLAIGH)

A FORTNIGHT following their great All-Ireland win over Wexford Limerick, the new champions, were again at Croke Park to play Dublin in the final of the National All-Ireland Tournament, organised to help the dependents of the victims of British aggression. Limerick, who lined out a full team, suffered an unexpected reverse, losing to Dublin after a terrific struggle, 5-2 to 2-1. Willie Walsh of Waterford was again referee, and eight thousand people saw the game.

Gaelic activities in the county were disrupted for a fortnight in mid-April because of a general strike in the city, directed against attempts of the British military authorities to impose their will on the citizens. At the All-Ireland G.A.A. congress held in the Mansion House, Dublin, on Easter Sunday, a sum of £100 was voted towards the strike fund.

The deferred final of the Murphy Hurling Cup was played at the Markets Field on May 18th, and was noted for a stirring duel between the inter-county midfield partners, Jimmy Humphreys in the jersey of the Cappamore fifteen; Billy Gleeson in the blue and gold of Young Ireland.

"TERRIFIC GAME."

It was a terrific game, fought hard and tough all the hour, and won by Young Ireland, 3-5 to 1-0. The city men had a big double success on that occasion, as their junior hurlers beat St. John's, 7-2 to 2-1.

Early in the senior game, Billy Gleeson, hitting the high spots for Young Ireland, received a nasty wound in the head which necessitated his removal to the County Infirmary. It was the following Thursday, before it was possible to remove his blue and gold blood-soaked jersey, so serious was the injury; yet, on June 8th we find the Fedamore man again in hurling action, this time in Limerick colours, ample evidence of his hurling grit and determination.

PLAYED AT CORK.

This latter game was played at Cork Athletic Grounds, where Limerick beat Cork, 3-2 to 1-1, in the Father Matthew Hall Tournament final. The Shannonsiders players were:—M. Murphy, W. Gleeson, R. McConkey, D. Lanigan, J. Keane, J. O'Shea, P. McInerney (Young Ireland), J. Humphreys, P. Kennedy, R. Ryan, C. Ryan, (Pallas), M. Rochford, F. Shanny, T. McGrath (Claughaun), W. Hough (Monagea).

A fortnight later the Munster Championships opened, and Limerick had an unexpectedly hard tussle with Clare at the Show Grounds, Ennis, before winning, 6-6 to 4-1.

On July 27th, Limerick satisfied their supporters when they beat a strong Tipperary team at the Markets Field, 3-3 to 1-3, and left the general impression that they would be hard to beat in the 1919 All-Ireland series.

BIG SURPRISE.

A big surprise, however, was in store. Cork and Limerick qualified for the Munster final and the Leesiders agreed to play at the Markets Field. The British military authorities refused to permit the running of special trains but despite this a crowd of twenty thousand packed the Markets Field, paying £800 to see the game.

After a thrilling match the boys from Rebel Cork dethroned the champions on the score 3-5 to 1-6. A press report of the game said the crowd was the biggest ever seen at a Munster final. It continued: "It was a terrible, thrilling sixty minutes. It was neck and neck all the way; the pace was fast and sustained to the end."

THE TEAMS.

The teams were—
Cork—J. Kennedy (Captain), E. Gray, J. O'Keefe, Sean Og Murphy, P. Aberne, C. Lucy, J. J. Hasset, Tim Nagle, L. O'Halloran, M.

Murphy, F. Kelleher, D. Ring, C. Sheehan, R. Gorman, D. E. Murphy.

Limerick—T. McGrath (Capt.), Mick Murphy (goal), M. Rochford, P. Kennedy, P. McInerney, J. Keane, W. Hough, D. Lanigan, D. Murphy, J. Humphreys, W. Ryan, W. Gleeson, P. Barry, J. Griffin, R. McConkey.

Limerick re-found the winning way on October 5th when in the semi-final of an inter-county tournament organised to help the Co. Infirmary, they beat Clare, 7-3 to 3-3. Munster champions, Cork, beat Tipperary on the same occasion, 1-3 to 1-2.

The final attracted ten thousand spectators to the Markets Field on November 2nd and after a game brimful of interest Limerick reversed the championship verdict, beating Cork, 6-3 to 3-1. Frank McGrath of Nenagh was the referee.

LIMERICK'S THREE SUCCESSSES IN ONE MONTH.

Limerick had another success over the title holders at Cork Athletic Grounds on May 16th, 1920, when in a game in aid of the South Infirmary they won, 3-1 to 1-3. Cork returned the visit the following Sunday and again suffered defeat. They were in the Markets Field once more on May 30th for a Thomond Feis game and Limerick gained their third successive victory in the one month, beating the Leesiders this time, 7-5 to 1-4.

Limerick encountered Waterford in the first round of the 1920 Munster Senior Hurling Championship, played at Dungarvan on June 17th and won 10-3 to nil.

The Shannonsiders were fixed to meet Tipperary in the Munster semi-final at the Cork Athletic Grounds on August 8th. It was a week-end of terrific political excitement and the British authorities declared that the match would not be permitted.

CORK UNDER MARTIAL LAW.

Cork City was under Martial Law at the period but the Munster Council decided the match would be played and got over the Martial Law difficulties by going outside the city area to Riverstown. This plan was kept secret enough to prevent action against it by the occupying forces.

Limerick travelled the previous evening and were forced to make the journey by char-a-banc, as rail services were suspended due to the patriotic refusal of railway employees to carry members of the British armed forces.

Tension was increased by the fact that the great Archbishop of Melbourne, Most Rev. Dr. Mannix, was expected to arrive at Cobh that Saturday night, despite a declaration by the British Government that he would not be permitted to land. The Limerick team and supporters wore the colours of the Archbishop but these were torn off when they were held up and searched by the Black and Tans and military at Rathluirc.

ARCHBISHOP CAPTURED BY BRITISH.

The Archbishop was taken off the liner by forces of the British Navy on the high seas and they brought him under escort to England. Any hopes the Limerick lads had of getting into Cork unobserved were dashed when the char-a-banc in which they made the journey skidded on the greasy street as they pulled into their headquarters in Patrick Street—the Victoria Hotel.

At that time the hotel was fronted by a large glass canopy, which extended right out to the edge of the footpath. The char-a-banc struck one of the supporting pillars of this and a loud crash of the glass and ironwork announced that the boys from Garryowen had arrived.

There was a large attendance at the match, which was, however, a disappointing one, as the heavy ground militated against fast play.

Limerick were deserving winners, on the score, 5-7 to 3-3, as they were superior to their opponents in practically every department. Willie Walsh of Waterford refereed, and the Limerick players were:—

J. McDonnell (goal), P. Keane, D. Murnane, P. McInerney, J. Keane, W. Hough, D. Lanigan, J. Humphreys, W. Ryan, G. Howard, W. Gleeson, P. Barry, Ter. Mangan, Tom Mangan, Bob McConkey.

THE POSITION IN LIMERICK.

Police and military rowdiness, evident in Limerick for a long time, reached its zenith on August 15th, 1920, when several houses were burned and considerable damage caused. Following this, curfew was enforced, and the match fixed for the Markets Field on August 22nd, in which Jimmy Humphreys was engaged with Cappamore against Fedamore, in the Senior Hurling Championship, had to be played at Caherconlish, where Fedamore were successful.

The Munster final between Cork and Limerick, fixed for Thurles on August 29th, was postponed owing to the precarious condition of the Lord Mayor of Cork—Ald. T. J. McSwiney, who was on hunger strike in Brixton Jail. As a token of sympathy no G.A.A. games were played during the period of the fast, which ended with the death of the heroic patriot on October 25th, after seventy-three days' protest. October 31st was observed as a closed date all over Ireland as a mark of respect to his memory and as a protest against the inhuman treatment of him by the British Government.

TOOK HIS PLACE IN THE FLYING COLUMNS.

Limerick being under Martial Law for the remainder of the period, until fighting ceased on the signing of the Truce which came into operation on July 11th, 1921, no G.A.A. activity was possible. Members of the Association, however, were by no means inactive, and Jimmy Humphreys took his place with many fellow-Gaels in the Flying Columns, where he rendered sterling service to the Motherland.

The Munster Finals of 1920 and 1921, played within consecutive months in the early part of 1922, along with the Limerick All-Ireland success of 1921, will be amongst the items dealt with in next week's issue.

GREAT LIMERICK SPORTSMEN

No. 196—JIMMY HUMPHREYS of Murroe (Continued)

(By SEAMUS O'CEALLAIGH)

THE first big inter-county game following the Truce took place at Thurles on September 20, 1921, where Tipperary gained a narrow win over Limerick, 3-4 to 2-0, after a splendid game. The Premier County lads paid a return visit to Limerick a fortnight later, and a great crowd were treated to a brilliant exhibition of the national pastime. A drawn game—Limerick, 5-1; Tipperary, 4-4, was a fitting result for one of the best contests witnessed at the Markets Field for many a day.

That occasion marked, I think, the first blossoming of a rivalry that was to prove a kingpin of Munster hurling for many a day. Mick D'Arcy, then a mere strippling but showing all the promise that was to mark him later as one of the great midfielders of his time, was pitted against Jimmy Humphreys, and the pair thrilled the crowd with some unforgettable parleys. After that when Limerick and Tipperary clashed one of the first reactions was to refer to the possibilities of another hectic encounter between this colourful pair. And when the account was eventually closed it was the general verdict that the credit balance was in favour of the small statured Limerick man, who rarely conceded anything but inches to an opponent.

THE RE-PLAY.

The re-play took place at the Markets Field on November 27th, and resulted in a win for Limerick, 4-3 to 3-2.

Limerick's next engagement was in the 1920 Munster senior hurling final, and this took place at Cork Athletic Grounds on April 2nd. The opposition was provided by Cork.

There were fourteen thousand spectators present and the gate receipts totalled 1500. The match proved a disappointment for the big Limerick contingent present, the home side winning 2-4 to 0-5. The Shannonside representatives were: M. Murphy (goal), P. McInerney, D. Lanigan, R. McConkey (Young Ireland), P. Kennedy (Pallas), D. Murnane, P. Barry (Fedamore), J. Keane (Castleconnell), J. Mullane, G. Howard (Croom), W. Hough, J. Griffin (Newcastle West), W. Ryan, J. Humphreys (Cappamore), T. McGrath (Cloughaun).

OBJECTIONS.

Limerick objected to the constitution of the Cork team, and the latter replied with a counter-objection. A special meeting of the Munster Council was held at Tipperary on April 23rd to consider the objections, which were not proceeded with in view of a settlement arrived at by the Council, to the effect that the finalists of the 1920 championships in hurling and football would be nominated to contest the finals of the 1921 Munster championships, the winners to represent Munster in the inter-provincial play-offs for that year.

In preparation for the second meeting with Cork, Limerick played and defeated Kilkenny, 3-2 to 2-2, in a friendly game at the Markets Field. In an otherwise dull match, the exchanges between Jimmy Humphreys and P. "Dexter" Alyward were a satisfying feature.

BECAME MUNSTER SENIOR HURLING CHAMPIONS.

Limerick became Munster senior hurling champions for 1921 when they beat Cork, at Thurles, 5-2 to 1-2, on May 28th. The Limerick men were in great form on that occasion and their complete mastery of a powerful Cork side that included such stars as J. ("Major") Kennedy, E. ("Sailor") Gray, J. ("Rooker") O'Keefe, Sean Oge Murphy, Eddie Coughlan, Mick Murphy, Conny Sheehan, Danis Ring, Con Lucy, and P. ("Ealy") Aherne, was a big surprise.

A fortnight later, at the Markets Field, six thousand specta-

tors saw Limerick beat Clare 8-3 to 3-3, in a Thomond Feis tie.

Limerick qualified for the 1921 All-Ireland senior hurling final when they defeated Galway, 6-0 to 2-2. This match was played at the Markets Field on June 25th.

Civil strife upset the G.A.A. programme from early July until mid October, and it was November 12th before we again meet Jimmy Humphreys in hurling action, this occasion helping Cappamore-Murroe, who lost to Cloughaun at the Markets Field, 3-1 to 2-0, in a friendly game.

THE 1921 ALL-IRELAND FINAL.
The final of the 1921 All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship was decided, on March, 1923, when at Croke Park, Dublin, twenty thousand spectators paid £1,080 to see Limerick and Dublin battle for the coveted title of All-Ireland champions.

Mr. Joseph O'Mara, of the O'Mara Opera Company, a native of Limerick, threw in the ball.

It was one of the most disappointing finals ever played. Limerick, showing great strength, dash and staying power, had matters much their own way. The Dublin men, who were holders of the title, were simply snowed under; they made a bad beginning and, as events proved, were beaten from the start. Limerick gave an all-round good display, and were substantial winners on the score, 8-5 to 3-2.

VIGOUR, FIRE AND YOUTH.

Writing in "Sport" on the game, that great journalist, the late Paddy Devlin, said:

"The Limerick team are champion material in the rough. In hurling ability and physique of a natural order they lack nothing. They have speed in moving and in striking can strike hard. They lack, or disdains, combination, but nothing else. Vigour is the keynote of their play. We would wish them to maintain that vigour; but add to it that deftness which they must often have seen on southern fields. Then, with their vigour and fire and youth; they will command a place with the finest exponents of the past.

"Springing off at a fast pace Limerick invaded and with the exception of a few brief incursions by Dublin, held their ground in the home territory, sending out four or five overs from favourable positions. They had a disallowed goal, which came off a free by Gleeson; though illegal, it was deserved.

Ten minutes had gone, and Tom Hayes sent Dublin moving with a good shot, which just went wide. This he repeated soon after. Limerick then resumed the offensive, thanks to some determined work by Jimmy Humphreys; a couple of frees came their way, and from one of these by Gleeson, McGrath put in a goal—the first score—from a surging attack around the posts, after some fifteen minutes play.

OPENING SCORE FOR THE CHAMPIONS.

In a minute the champions had a penalty down field, and Tom Hayes opened their score with a well judged point. The Limerick goal pucks reached the three-quarter mark and the Shannonside forwards were busy on the Dublin lines. Getting possession off one of them Gleeson sent over a flying point. The Dublin defence was showing weakness on the wings. Though Clune and D'Arcy worked hard to stem the Munster offensives they swept up resistlessly, and a further free to Gleeson was driven softly towards the crack forward, McConkey, who proved his worth by smashing in a goal after Daly had stopped his first drive.

"Dublin got away occasionally, but no effective penetration was possible against Hough, Murnane and their wings. Limerick were very aggressive; Dublin nevertheless got down to Dublin—the best efforts of Moore, Neville and

Mockler being crushed by the vigorous Limerick defence. Hon. Mockler eventually snatched a minor deftly from far out. A sharp and vigorous midfield sally by Humphreys put Limerick again away. McGrath beat the right defence, and centred, McConkey got into action and finished with a major score.

The Dublin backs were now sorely pressed. Callanan endeavoured to bring relief and sent down; but Murnane was ready, and W. Ryan, getting possession, sent to McConkey, who again responded with a goal. The visitors were pressing to the whistle when the scores stood: Limerick, 4-1; Dublin, 0-2.

SECOND HALF.

Facing big odds, Dublin resumed in heartening fashion, and attacked for Neville to drive home to the net. But at length Limerick broke away, and, after a lively investment, play closed in and they had a goal from a ruck which gave Daly no chance.

Dublin again got into Munster ground, and sent wide. Clune, Callanan and Cleary were working hard, but the effort was loose and soon Daly was called upon in the Dublin posts. He saved characteristically, but could not clear, and from a sharp siege Humphreys knocked in another goal for Limerick. Penalties followed to both sides, and concerted movements were few. Limerick threw their strength into onward drives, and Dublin struggled gamely against a tireless attack. Hough had a "seventy" and McGrath made a point of it.

ANOTHER STINGING SHOT FROM MCCONKEY.

"A free to Dublin was finely delivered by Clune and yielded a meritorious goal from a sturdy attack. But the scene quickly changed, and another of McConkey's stinging shots sprang from Daly's unerring stick inside the goal-line. A long range point by Humphreys succeeded, then a goal per Gleeson, and the last shadow of Dublin's hopes vanished against such stamina and speed. But there was still a brief glimpse of their true form to come. Working down, Mockler got on the ball, and with familiar skill shook the net. In the next moment Lanigan tried Daly, who responded with a fine save. Then Limerick backs were again pressed and in vain, and just on time the unrelenting Humphreys had a flying Limerick point, and the game was won."

Mr. Willie Walsh of Waterford refereed.

After the match several of the winning team were carted shoulder high from the field. A scene of great enthusiasm was witnessed when Mr. Dan McCarthy, T.D., President of the G.A.A. in the unavoidable absence of the donor, Mr. Liam McCarthy of London, presented the Limerick captain, Rob McConkey with the Perpetual Challenge Cup. This was the first year this cup was offered for competition. Of rare and costly design, the trophy was an object of much admiration.

THE LIMERICK PLAYERS.

The players who brought to Limerick its third All-Ireland Senior Hurling title were: Bob McConkey (captain), Mick Murphy (goal), Willie Gleeson, Jimmy Humphreys, Denny Lanigan, Dave Murnane, Willie Hough, Jack Keane, Willie Ryan, Garrett Howard, Paddy McInerney, Tom Mangan, Mick Mullane, Chris Ryan and Tom McGrath.

The Munster Finals of 1922 and 1923, and the revival of the Tailteann Games, will be dealt with next week.

HOW TO MAKE ENDS MEET

No. 196—JIMMY HUMPHREYS of Murroe (Continued)

(By SEAMUS O'CEALLAIGH)

LIMERICK were again visitors to Croke Park on March 25th, 1923, when before ten thousand spectators they played Kilkenny for the Alderman Jim Nowlan Testimonial. In sharp contrast to the All-Ireland Final, this was one of the greatest games ever hurled. The "Freemans Journal" said of this match:

"If the hurling final proved disappointing, yesterday's game between Limerick and Kilkenny made ample and noble amends. Neither proved victor but the national pastime won back in unmistakable fashion its place as a game par excellence for athletic manhood in which all the finest qualities of superlative fitness can find unbounded outlet.

"The glamour of hurling was never so apparent as when minute by minute the dazzling features of yesterday's superb display unfolded themselves.

FASCINATING GAME.

"Under ideal conditions from every standpoint the scene was admirably set for a fascinating exhibition, and a splendid attendance proved their confidence in an admirable contest. The realisation far exceeded their highest estimates and carried the oldest devotee back over many years to those thrilling games which have wrought such a spell over the true Gaelic heart when touched by a typical contest in the real distinctive game of the race.

"Description might run on in superlative phrase and yet scarce do justice to this meeting. Those who witnessed the play will realise how halting is the attempt at a word picture of the rapid fluctuations of an unflagging contest, from which faults were almost, if not entirely, absent. Nor could even the most critical fairly differentiate between the merits of the teams—certainly none but the wilfully captious could fasten upon even individual delinquencies for comment.

"Kilkenny's marvellous defence became at once the outstanding feature of the struggle, assailed as it was by that line which vanquished Cork in Thurles and smothered Dublin at home three weeks ago. Steve Holohan was the outstanding figure—cool, accurate, relentless, and his wings never failed to rise to his own magnificent lead. The centre struggles, in which Gleeson and Humphreys shone for Limerick, were always thrilling and seldom has finer caman play been seen—so swift, sure and clean in its hit, parry and thrust.

BREATHLESS BATTLES.

"Yet, despite the fact that Kilkenny flashed over a point in the first minute, they were some time in finding their true objective. But, with McInerney and his aides to beat, it is little wonder that Murphy's well guarded citadel remained secure for a long time. Hough, Keane, and Callaghan played like Trojans, sending away storm-like Limerick assaults time and again, which resulted in breathless battles across Kilkenny's penultimate line of defence.

"Minute by minute the pace never slackened, but the game grew tenser. Kilkenny led by a small margin in a contest in which a scarcity of major scores was prophesied, and while one thought that only ten minutes' play had passed, the interval came—a welcome relief to players and onlookers alike—so engrossing had the contest proved.

FURTHER AND GREATER THRILLS.

"The second period, when Limerick had both wind and sun in their favour, opened ominously for Kilkenny, who for a few minutes seemed to lose their cohesion and fieldcraft. Limerick scored and then led and the Munster hopes were exultant as Gleeson and McConkey came into light in the firing line with major scores. Kilkenny broke away but were repulsed, Hough and Lanigan tearing through the opposition with irresistible power. But, sparkling as the contest continued, greater thrills were in store, when Kilkenny, not to be beaten, bore through and penetrated a grand defence. Still no flagging of pace, no deterioration of speed, or skill or stamina. It was pulse-stirring and splendid hurling.

"Kilkenny, with every fibre of every man in tense action, swung the game, right and left, against the Limerick lines. Stubborn but brilliant routs followed keen and tigerish attacks. The minutes were flying quicker than the flashing camans, and with the fast-running of Kilkenny's chance seemed being before a great barrier of Munster manhood and caman mastery. But the Nore flowed up relentlessly and irresistibly to theannon, and at last the south had to yield a free. It was Kilkenny's last chance, and their veteran on the team. Dick

ace, took it. He drove the ball only a hurler of fitness and experience could, and equalised with wonderful goal.

CLASSIC HURLING ENDS IN A DRAW.

"Puck-out followed, while yet the tremor caused by that marvel of penalties mastered the thousands around, and after a few pucks in Limerick ground the whistle sounded, and a game to be ranked with the classics of hurling ended in a draw, with which result no man on either team or anywhere on the ground could find a particle of fault, so meritorious, balanced and manfully matched were the teams who have played hurling again and foremost as the Irish national pastime."

Limerick figured in another pulse tingling drawn struggle at Thurles on July 1st, 1923. It was the Munster final for the 1922 senior hurling championship. Twenty thousand spectators were present, the hurling was typical of Munster and reminiscent of some of the great games played for the southern crown. It was a game of thrills that will live in memory as well as the splendid display of Willie Hough in the Limerick defence. A draw, 2-2 all, was a fitting result.

THE LIMERICK PLAYERS.

The Limerick players on that occasion were: J. McDonnell (goal), D. Murnane, W. Hough, D. Lanigan, W. Gleeson, J. J. Kinnane, T. McGrath, G. Howard, R. McConkey, C. Ryan, T. Mangan, P. McInerney, M. Mullane, J. Humphreys, W. Ryan.

The re-play, which took place at the Markets Field, Limerick, on August 12th, aroused remarkable interest and the "Irish Independent" offered a special set of gold medals and the extra keenness to secure the double set fired the imagination of Munster hurling "fans."

The walls of the Markets Field certainly bulged that day, for thirty thousand spectators attended that game, the gate receipts of £1,370 being a then Munster record. It was the greatest "gate" ever taken at the Markets Field for any event. The "History of the G.A.A." says of that match— "The contest will rank as the most Homeric encounter recorded in the annals of the game. Its pace was terrific and the casualty list abnormal. The result was—Tipperary, 4-2; Limerick, 1-4."

THE 1923 MUNSTER FINAL.

With victories over Kerry, 8-5 to 2-2; and Cork, 4-0 to 2-1, Limerick qualified to meet Tipperary once again, this time in the 1923

Munster Final. This game was fixed for Cork on March 16th, 1924.

It was a splendid contest, remarkable for the tremendous enthusiasm which it evoked, and Limerick emerged worthy winners by 2-3 to 1-0. The Shannonside representatives were: Jack Hanley (goal), J. J. Kinnane, D. Murnane, P. McInerney, J. Keane, W. Hough, W. Ryan, M. Cross, J. Humphreys, J. Callaghan, W. Gleeson, R. McConkey, J. O'Grady, T. McGrath, M. Neville.

TAILTEANN GAMES.

The Tailteann Games were revived in 1924, and Jimmy Humphreys had the great honour of captaining Ireland in the international hurling contests, and Munster in the inter-provincial tests. He was also skipper of the Irish team that played Scotland in a shinty game on the opening day of the Games.

Writing in the "Irish Independent" on the opening of the games, Frank J. Geary, now editor of that paper, said:

"The opening ceremony at Croke Park was one of the finest things ever witnessed in Dublin. Nothing of the kind had ever been attempted before, not even on a small scale, and few believed that Saturday's ceremonial or anything approaching it, from the spectacular point of view, was possible.

"The entrance to the national stadium was a striking conception. It brought with it impressions of ancient grandeur and glory, with its castellated gateways, and the half-ruined round tower.

A BLAZE OF COLOUR.

"Everywhere you turned inside you were greeted with a blaze of colour. Stands were bedecked with the colours of Tailt—blue and gold—interspersed with thousands of variegated flowers. All around the arena poles had been erected on which the flags of the nations were grouped. From pole to pole, with never ending variety, gaily coloured bunting fluttered in the breeze and the summer sun shone down on an altogether entrancing scene.

"Croke Park was transformed. Even to those of us most familiar with it, it was scarcely recognisable with its flash of colour and atmosphere of carnival. There were thousands there on Saturday,

I am sure, who never saw Croke Park, who were hardly aware of its existence. I am sure they took away with them an impression of favourable surprise.

FOUR AEROPLANES CIRCLE OVERHEAD.

"At 2.45 p.m. four aeroplanes came circling over the Park, and many of us recalled that cold November day four years ago when we saw an aeroplane circling over our heads in that same ground. Happily the sequels were very different. Ten minutes later came the boom of artillery from nearby Clonliffe College. The bands of the D.M.P. and the Garda at opposite ends of the Park burst into music simultaneously, and the head of the column of athletes swung into Croke Park.

"For a moment the vast audience held its breath. Then there swelled into the skies a roar of applause. Into the grounds stepped Tom Kiely, holding the Irish tricolour aloft. By his side walked Tom Byrne, Marshal of the Parade. They swung at a quick march into the playing pitch, and dipped the flag as they passed the saluting base.

"As each section of athletes swung past, the crowd burst into round after round of cheering. It was a wonderful and inspiring spectacle. Behind the flag bearer marched the champions of other days, on and on, bandsmen and athletes, each party with its flag, filing past to take up position in the field facing the grand stand.

MOVED WITH PRIDE AND JOY.

As they marched to the stirring strains of "O'Donnell Abu" not an Irishman who beheld the scene but was moved with pride and joy. Never had Dublin witnessed such a picturesque display, such a gorgeous blaze of colour. As the last of the procession filed past, the thousands of spectators rose and cheered in a frenzy of enthusiasm as they beheld with admiration that wonderful assembly of two thousand chosen sons and daughters of Ireland gathered from the four corners of the earth.

"Mr. J. J. Walsh, Director of Aonach Tailteann, declared the great festival open. We heard his voice—the 'J. J.' voice that had roared his club to victory on the playing fields of Cork, that had dominated Gaelic Athletic Councils. This was the voice of the man now facing the finest manhood of two continents. This Aonach Tailteann had been the dream of his young life. Here it was being realised.

"Even the marshalled forces must have felt the impact of the vocal salute and the applause of the multitude when the massive choir of six hundred voices, under the direction of Mr. Vincent O'Brien, burst into the ode of welcome. The strength and ardour of the Failte. You felt swept by it, excited by it, gladdened by it. It was heartening; it was tumultuous.

"What else was there to note? Many things. But we must not forget the Artane Boys, those little lads in jerseyed white and slippered white, who went through a musical drill that amazed and delighted us.

THE GAME OF SHINTY.

"And there was the game of shinty between Scotland and Ireland—that game which but few of us saw before; that game which many of us would like to see again. They were on the field, the Scots in blue with their sticks—I don't know what they call them, but they are like a cross between a hurley and a hockey stick—and the Irish lads with the caman, that we all know well.

"The Scotsmen, led by D. Mac Lachlan of Argyll, were headed by the St. John Ambulance Pipers' Band, and the Irishmen, under the command of Jimmy Humphreys, of Limerick, marched behind the St. Laurence O'Toole Pipers' Band. An exciting contest ended in a victory for the men from the Highlands by the narrow margin of one goal in three.

"The first change noticeable in the game when compared with our national pastime of hurling was the difference in goal posts and methods of scoring. The net is much narrower than the hurling goal, but higher, and points, as in hurling, are not counted. The Irish caman is broader and more useful in the overhead play; the shinty stick is capable of greater accuracy on the ground. Handling the ball is not permitted in shinty.

DIFFERENCE IN STYLE.

"The difference in style was at once apparent. The Irishmen, used to clean, vigorous open hurling, were somewhat nonplussed at the beginning by the brilliant ground work of their opponents. The handicap was particularly evident in the forward line, where, with the possible exception of Garrett How-

ard and Willie Gleeson, both Limerickmen, the Irish representatives were outplayed.

"In defence, and at midfield where Jimmy Humphreys and Mick D'Arcy operated, the hurlers were supreme, and many a time when the Highlanders swarmed around our goal our hearts were in our mouths until Dave Murnane, "Builder" Walsh or Jack D'Arcy—a magnificent trio—rushed in to drive the ball back to their forward line.

"Play was in progress twenty minutes when Weir intercepted a flying shot from Nicholson and with wonderful dexterity curled it past Mahony into the Irish net. It was the only score in the first half.

CHAPTER OF MISSED CHANCES.

A chapter of missed chances by our forwards followed, and when the ball went within the reach of the Scottish custodian he returned it with some of the wizardry which we are accustomed to associate with Tommy Daly, the wee keeper from Clare, so prominent in University College and Dublin hurling. Garrett Howard and Willie Gleeson tested McFayden with shots from every angle, but he was unbeatable. His methods of pucking out, too, evoked considerable amusement, but proved quite as effective as the high drive from the Irish end. Placing the ball carefully, and measuring his stroke as in golf, he invariably sent it well over the half way mark.

"A slight re-arrangement in the Irish forward line brought a change of fortune soon after the resumption. Mick D'Arcy sent a long pass to Willie Gleeson. With a rapid glance towards the Scottish goal, the Limerick man sent the ball past McFayden for the equaliser amidst tremendous cheering. "Builder" Walsh and Hugh Nicholson were then seen in an exciting duel for possession, which ended in the advantage of the Faughs and All-Ireland player.

"The Highlanders were again active round the Irish goal, and a brilliant piece of combined play by the whole forward line was finished by Greenshields beating O'Mahony and giving Scotland the lead once more. Fast, high class play characterised the closing stages, and the long whistle found Scotland winners of a memorable game by two goals to one.

"The referee was Mr. J. Kard MacLean, picturesquely attired in the Highland tartan."

THE IRISH PLAYERS.

The Irish players were: Jimmy Humphreys (Limerick), Captain; J. O'Mahony (Galway), goal; D. Murnane, W. Gleeson, G. Howard (Limerick), J. J. Hayes, J. D'Arcy, M. D'Arcy (Tipperary), W. Derivan, B. Gibbs (Galway), J. Walsh (Kilkenny), D. Ring (Cork).

The international hurling game with America and the inter-provincial with Leinster will be amongst the games dealt with next week.

Part 5

No. 196—JIMMY HUMPHREYS of Murroe (Continued) (By SEAMUS O'CEALLAIGH)

It was a proud day for Ireland and for Limerick when Jimmy Humphreys marched around Croke Park on that first Sunday in August of the year 1924, at the head of an Ireland team about to participate in the first international hurling match ever played. Limerick had much reason for satisfaction on the occasion, for, in addition to the honour of having a Murroe man as skipper of the Irish side the boys from Garrymen had four other men from the Shannon on the team—Garrett Howard, Willie Gleeson, Willie Ryan and Dave Murnane.

The strength of Limerick hurling at the period can be gauged from that fact alone, for no other county had more than three of their players on the selection. To emphasise the superiority of the more, the Americans included two Limerickmen in their team—Mick Murphy, formerly of the city, and R. O'Sullivan, a player from the West. Very unfavourable weather conditions spoiled the colourful parade of the teams, headed by the flags of the participating countries, but despite the torrential rains a fine crowd turned out to see what would be a rattling good contest.

SPLENDID PLAY
Splendid play was the order of the day. Ireland established a good lead early in the second quarter but America gave evidence of sound preparation and training. At a strong finish, the closing stages being productive of vigorous hurling which aroused great enthusiasm. At the conclusion the spectators showed their appreciation of the magnificent display of hurling, who were loudly cheered as they left the field.

The first quarter of this game was a real thriller. Lively play and a high order marked the opening passages and when Gibbs of Limerick had an Ireland goal America responded with a strong offensive, which yielded well, taken by Galvin and Finn.

TERRIFIC PACE
With the pace terrific and the marking by both sides clean and accurate, the spectators were on their toes. Ireland fought resolutely, but the lads from the land of the stars and stripes were not easily overcome, and Aylward, in a full back berth, put in some neat work for them.

Entering the second quarter, Gibbs improved the Ireland position with a point, but further efforts to penetrate the American defences were beaten off, some of the exchanges at this stage evoking rounds of applause. The Limerick man, Murnane, in the hand rare line, gave an outstanding display and repulsed several hot raids, and no further progress came before the interval, when the position was: Ireland, 1; America, 0-2.

A re-disposition of the Ireland defences was apparent on the resumption, and the home side launched a vigorous offensive. The opposing backs responded to the Irish in capital fashion and we had some thrilling duels in American ground before Humphreys kicked through a crowded goal path for a goal that temporarily smashed the American resistance.

TELLING DRIVES
Maintaining the pressure, the Irish forwards forged through with telling drives, and scores by Garrett Howard, Willie Ryan, and J. Hayes, put Ireland in a strong position.

Entering the final quarter, the Irish broke away and launched several full scale assaults on the Irish lines, testing the home defence at every point. When Ireland eventually broke the offensive they found the visiting defence impregnable, with Kelly doing some wizard work between the American posts. When Ring had to retire from the Irish side, he was replaced

by the Clareman, Bob Doherty. New life came into the game when Mick Murphy had an exiles' point, quickly followed by a goal from Deegan. It was evident that America were weathering the unpleasant conditions better and excitement ran high as they launched several hot assaults on the home citadel, which had a few narrow escapes. Play finished in a welter of excitement and although Ireland won, America proved their worth in no uncertain fashion.

THE TEAMS
The teams were:—
Ireland—J. Humphreys (capt.); W. Ryan, W. Gleeson, D. Murnane, G. Howard (Limerick), J. Mahony (goal), B. Gibbs, M. Derivan (Galway), J. Kennedy, D. Ring (Cork), J. J. Hayes, M. D'Arcy, J. D'Arcy (Tipperary), J. Walsh (Kilkenny), T. Kelly (Laos).

America—W. Finn (captain), D. Kelly (goal), P. Aylward, M. Kenny, P. Kelly, M. Kavanagh, C. McCarthy, M. Flanagan, R. Stokes, J. Deegan, M. Murphy, P. Cox, J. Galvin, P. J. Grimes, R. O'Sullivan.

The second international hurling match of the 1924 Tailteann Games was contested between Ireland and England, and although it resulted in a good win for the home side, 9-3 to 4-7, the game aroused plenty of interest and pleased a fine attendance. Ireland made one change on the team that beat America—Rody Nealon (Tipperary) coming on for D. Ring (Cork) who was on the injured list.

LIMERICK MEN IN SCORING FOR IRELAND
Jimmy Humphreys, Willie Ryan and Willie Gleeson all figured in the scoring for Ireland, but Gleeson was injured towards the end and had to retire, his place being taken by Ignatius Hurney of Galway.

Most exciting game of the series came from the meeting of America and England, which produced a rousing struggle, with many flashes of brilliant play. America won in a thrill packed finish, 4-2 to 3-2. Another match that aroused much interest was that between Scotland and Wales, which the former won, 7-3 to 5-1.

Ireland got it harder than they expected from Wales, whom they only succeeded in beating, 5-4 to 2-6. The exiles led the home lads a merry dance for much of the hour, and had they enjoyed any of the luck of the game the margin between them would have been even smaller.

Ireland's easiest victory came in the match against Scotland, which the homelander won, 10-1 to 4-5. The visitors started off with fine dash and got into an early lead. Some vigorous and exciting passages characterised the first quarter, but after that Ireland were in command, to win readily in the end.

TAILTEANN HURLING FINAL
Ireland and America qualified for the Tailteann International Hurling Final, which proved a lively affair that kept a great crowd interested to the end. The Americans showed splendid form and made the Irish selection travel all the way. There were frequent periods of brilliant hurling, and some fine individual efforts on the part of a number of the visitors drew general admiration and applause. Ireland just deserved their victory, but it was by no means easily achieved.

All the Limerickmen showed fine form and contributed materially to the enjoyment of a tip top struggle. Ireland led at the interval, 2-4 to 1-0, and the score at the end in their favour was 4-6 to 3-2.

VETERAN FENIAN PRESENTS CUP
It was a proud moment for Jimmy Humphreys when he stepped up to receive the International Cup from the hands of the veteran Fenian, John Devoy, who had travelled from America to attend

the games. In introducing Mr. Devoy, Mr. J. J. Walsh, Director of Aonach Tailteann, said that the great Fenian leader had come specially from New York to witness the revival of the ancient games of Ireland. During Aonach Tailteann they had seen in Croke Park what the Gaels never saw before. Five teams had competed in international hurling and two in international football. It had often been thrown in their faces that Gaelic games were only parochial and that they did not extend beyond the confines of this country, but they had demonstrated for the first time that the Gael had not lost one iota of his Gaelic spirit. No one could now say that the games of the Gael were not international.

MR. DEVOY'S REMARKS
Mr. Devoy said it was the greatest honour of his life to be accorded the privilege of presenting the prizes won at Aonach Tailteann. He was pleased to see the revival of the ancient games. Certain sections of the Irish race were deteriorating in physique, and there was no use closing their eyes to that fact. He hoped the G.A.A. would turn its attention to reviving the old spirit that produced the best fighting race in the world. He hoped the old brawn and muscle would be restored as well as the old prestige of vitality and vigour. He was glad the Tailteann games were revived, and he hoped before many years they would rival the Olympic Games and that Ireland would become an attraction for all the nations of the world.

Jimmy Humphreys was the recipient of a great ovation on accepting the International Hurling Cup on behalf of Ireland.

SURPRISE RESULT
The interprovincial hurling final in connection with the Tailteann Games produced a surprise result when Leinster beat Munster, 7-2 to 5-1 after the Southerners had led 3-0 to 2-1 at the interval. Rain fell heavily during the game, which was to a great extent marred by the heavy and slippery condition of the sod. Despite the adverse conditions, however, the play reached a high standard and with the scores running level almost to the end, the spectators were kept at the pitch of expectancy all through. There was little to choose between the teams, who vigorously contested every inch of the ground.

MUNSTER TEAM
Jimmy Humphreys captained the Munster team, the other members of which were:—
J. Shinney (goal), D. Murnane, P. Flanagan, W. Gleeson, W. Ryan (Limerick); J. Garraty, P. McInerney, J. Spellisey (Clare), D. Ring, E. Tobin, J. Kennedy (Cork), P. Sullivan (Kerry), M. D'Arcy, J. D'Arcy, R. Nealon (Tipperary).
The story will conclude next week with a reference to the 1923 All-Ireland Final between Limerick and Galway and to the 1926 Limerick County final, in which Jimmy helped Claughaun.

No. 196—JIMMY HUMPHREYS of Murroe (Concluded)

By SEAMUS O'CEALLAIGH

FIFTEEN thousand spectators were at Croke Park, Dublin, on September 14th, 1924, to see Limerick and Galway contest the final of the 1923 All-Ireland senior hurling championship.

The game was tremendously fast and full of interest from start to finish. At half-time the sides were level, Galway 3-0, Limerick 2-3, but the superior speed and staying powers of the Connachtmen told their tale on the restart and they retired deserving winners, 7-3 to 4-5.

The "Freeman's Journal" report of the match said:

"The opening exchanges were even but after five minutes Gleeson registered a Limerick point to the accompaniment of wild cheers from the Munster section of the spectators.

THRILL AFTER THRILL.

"Fast skilful play followed. Thrill after thrill aroused enthusiasm and a fierce Connacht attack saw Kenny putting through a goal. Returning to the attack the Westerners again scored a major, and at the end of the first quarter led 2-0 to 0-2. The Galway defence was strong and dour. One attack after another was repelled; but keeping up the pressure, Limerick made up the arrears with scores by Humphreys, Gleeson and Lanigan, and half time found the sides level.

"Excitement was red hot when the teams resumed. Galway were quickly on the offensive and in a flash a magnificent goal by Gibbs gave them the lead. Spurred on by this easy success, they stormed the Munster citadel and another goal fell to them. Play now waxed fast and furious. The encouraging shouts of the spectators rose above the staccato sound of hurley wetting ball.

ENTHUSIASM OF THE SPEAKERS.

"The sweep of the caman through the air, the fast flying ball travelling backwards and forwards, the pitting of brawn against brawn, skill against skill, kept the spectators in a state of unbroken enthusiasm.

"The Connachtmen were the faster lot. In speed, skill and accuracy they lacked little, but yet the finer points of the game were not clearly demonstrated by either side.

"When a third goal fell to Galway the Limerick team set out in spirited fashion to make up the leeway. With the spectre of defeat staring them in the face they delivered a vigorous onslaught on the Galway posts. 'Come on, Limerick! Stand up to them!' was the cry from their supporters, and standing up to them, the Munster team notched two goals in quick succession per Neville and McGrath.

"But Galway were not to be outdone. A renewed attack by them led to another goal and they were still swarming the Munster lines when the final whistle blew, leaving them victors, 7-3 to 4-5. It was a memorable game, and Connacht's first victory will be welcomed by Gaels all over the land."

LIMERICK PLAYERS.

Mr. Patrick Kennefick of Dublin refereed, and the Limerick players were: Paddy McInerney, captain; Denny Lanigan, Jack Keane, Bob McConkey, Micky Fitzgibbon (Young Ireland); Jack Hanley, goal (Bruff); Dave Murnane, Willie Gleeson (Fedamore); Willie Hough (Newcastle West), Mick Neville (Kilfinny), Jimmy Humphreys (Cappamore), John Joe Kinane, Tom McGrath, Micky Cross, Joe O'Grady (Claughaun).

P. Shanny (Claughaun) and J. O'Shea (Young Ireland) replaced J. J. Kinnane and R. McConkey, respectively, both of whom retired injured.

Nine special trains ran to Dungarvan on October 5th when Limerick and Tipperary lined out to decide the destiny of the 1924 Munster Senior Hurling Championship. It was a close, dour and determined struggle, stubbornly contested all through. The teams were level (1-1 each) at half-time. After the resumption Limerick led by a point, but a Tipperary goal settled the issue, although Limerick fought pluckily and were more than unlucky to be beaten on the score, 2-1 to 2-2.

A GREAT GAME.

Writing in the "Limerick Leader" on the game, "Sliaibh Ruadh" said: "That the final of the Munster Hurling Championship will always draw a large and appreciative crowd was unmistakably proved at Dungarvan, when Tipperary and

Limerick crossed camans for the premier honour of the province. Munster is the home of hurling, and virile hurling at that, and when we witnessed the game between Tipperary and Limerick we were treated to an exhibition that gave us thrill after thrill, when we saw man to man, and ash to ash in a manner that made us realise what King Louis said of his Irish Brigade: 'No wonder those Irish can fight; their very game is a battle.'

"It was a strenuous game from whistle to whistle. Never have I witnessed such a dour struggle for the Munster championship, and I have seen them for twenty years. The last half-hour of the game baffles description. 'Reckless of life and limb,' Limerick threw themselves against the onslaught of 'Gallant Tipperary, who came up again, time after time, in that reckless 'dare-devil-may-care' fashion that has made us realise that the boys from the Premier County are never beaten until the final whistle blows. It is hard for a Pressman to pen his notes when some of your next-door neighbours are throwing their hats and caps in the air. It is hard to write when even yourself is infected with the enthusiasm. Thus it was in the second half when Limerick, playing a 'classy game,' were ahead by the minimum margin. Tipperary, 'unconquerable Tipperary,' as an English General said one time, came on again and hurled and hacked their way up to Limerick's citadel and got their third goal, which gave them the lead by two points. What pen can describe that scene? We have seen the rodeo. It must pale its fires before what followed. Sensible and sober men developed acrobatic tendencies that put that function in the shade. Writing my notes as an impartial observer, I will never forget it. Hefty supporters of Limerick shouted: 'Come on the City of the Violated Treaty,' and Limerick responded to the cry and came on. They hurled as never Limerick's representatives hurled before. Haugh and Gleeson, Humphreys, McConkey, Fitzgibbon, and McInerney put more 'gizz' into their work, and when the final whistle blew it found Limerick vanquished but with their colours flying gaily to the mast. Limerick in the first half showed superior hurling, field craft and judgment, and when the half-time whistle blew, leaving the scores even, we felt that the boys from Sarsfield's county would easily vanquish the Boherlahan selection.

HARD LUCK ON LIMERICK.

"It was hard luck on Limerick. Even Tipperary men admitted that the Limerick team was superior in every department of the game. Such are the fortunes of war. I write as a Cork man. I know Cork hurlers are 'classy,' but they fall before Tipperary. Kilkenny men have admitted the same to myself. Well, then, no disgrace to Limerick! They did not go down before a superior team but they went down before a spirit that knows no beating. Hats off to victors and vanquished, and to the Gaelic field that is the common platform for us all to unite and be friends.

"It was the dourlest struggle I have ever witnessed for the Munster championship. Limerick were the superior team in every department of the game but had to submit to what is commonly known as 'hard luck.' No shame to them. I have often seen Tipperary win when even the prospects were darker. They seem to have an inexhaustible source of energy, these men from Kilkenny's County.

"For Limerick, McConkey, Willie Gleeson, Keane, Humphreys, McInerney and Fitzgibbon fought a hard battle and made most of every opportunity. For Tipperary, the Leahys, Duffy, Keane, Kennedy, Dwyer and Fitzpatrick; whilst 'Skinny' O'Meara, in goal, was practically unbeatable.

"Honours to victors and vanquished. It was a great exhibition of a great game. As my Yankee friend said as we were returning home: 'Wah! I guess, friend, you couldn't duplicate it! No! you could not!'"

TWO MORE GLAMOUR GAMES.

Two more glamour games marked the final stages of a grand hurling career.

Jimmy Humphreys, who had captained Ireland and won every inter-county hurling honour of his day, had one big gap in an other-

wise remarkable record. He had never secured a Limerick championship medal.

When Cappamore team went out of existence in the mid 'twenties his hope of figuring on a winning Limerick club side seemed to have faded. Then came the invitation from Claughaun to help them in their quest for 1926 County honours. The invitation also went out to another Cappamore All-Ireland hurler, Willie Ryan, and to two members of the former Shamrocks' team—Mick King and Johnny Murphy.

The greatest crowd ever to see the famous pair in action gathered at the Markets Field on August 18th, 1926, for the East Limerick Senior Hurling Championship Final, in which Claughaun beat Young Ireland, 2-6 to 1-6. It was as vigorous, determined and brilliant as any match contested for years and provided a thrilling finish.

Jimmy got his County medal at Croom on October 17th, where a record crowd saw Claughaun beat Newcastle West (holders), 5-3 to 1-4, in the County Final. It was a good game, but Claughaun played with better balance, and better training was the big factor in their favour during the closing quarter. The teams were gaining neck and neck when a Newcastle West forward missed a glorious chance in front of goals and this proved the turning point of the match.

THE TEAMS.

The teams were:—
Claughaun—J. Byrnes P. Shanny, J. Hannan, J. Humphreys, M. King, J. Murphy, W. Ryan, M. Mulcahy, T. McGrath, A. Mackey, M. Cross, P. J. Daly, J. O'Grady, D. Troy, E. Daly.

Newcastle West—M. Monahan, J. Dermody, W. Hough, J. Ambrose, D. O'Connor, P. Donovan, J. McMahon, J. Twomey, W. Raleigh, M. McCarthy, J. Griffin, J. O'Shea, E. Bourke, J. Hough, J. Mahony.

TRIBUTE FROM ANOTHER GREAT GAEL.

I cannot do better than conclude this sketch of a great hurling career with a tribute I received a few days ago from the captain of Limerick's 1923 All-Ireland final team, Paddy McInerney, now in America, who wrote: "I was saddened when I heard of the death of Jimmy Humphreys, one of the old guard.

"I am proud to say I had the pleasure and honour of being one of his team mates when we brought home the 1918 All-Ireland to Limerick under the captaincy of that famous and peerless centre back, Willie Hough.

"It is sad to see one of our beloved ones of those great hurling years pass along, and I know all the Gaels of the county and country were grieved to hear of his death.

"We shall all miss him. Jimmy was one of the great star centre-field men, who was always well able to control that area and never came out second best, and he met the best that Ireland had.

"Off the field Jimmy was one whom anyone would be proud to know and have as a friend. I had the good luck of enjoying many happy days in his company, which I will always remember and cherish.

"I will now join in saying so long to our old friend, Jimmy, as he takes his place with all the other great Gaels of yesteryear who have gone ahead. May the grass grow green over him ever."

Part 7