

## GREAT LIMERICK SPORTSMEN

# Paddy O'Shaughnessy Of Shamrocks

By SEAMUS O'CEALLAIGH

WHEN Paddy O'Shaughnessy retired from the position of Treasurer of the City Board at last Sunday's Convention, he could claim an official connection of 20 years with city Gaeldom — golden years during which he played no mean part in building the Board to the fine organisation of to-day.

Paddy O'Shaughnessy's connection with G.A.A. affairs extends back long beyond the 20 years he has been office holder in the City Board.

Two score years ago, when still a youth, his interests were divided — as were those of many another lad who afterwards rose to high place in G.A.A. affairs — between the playing and propagating of native games and fighting the ancient enemy of our country in that glorious period of high hope and unforgettable heroism that reached its zenith in 1920 '21.

## ATTACHED TO MID-LIMERICK BRIGADE.

Paddy was attached to the mid-Limerick Brigade, I.R.A., in which he served under Sean Carroll and Dick O'Connell, participating in many lively engagements.

He quickly became a marked man and was forced with several of his comrades to go "on the run," which he did very successfully. He succeeded in eluding his pursuers and escaped capture to the period of the Truce, when he was able to return home.

On the establishment of the new State he helped in the formation of the National Army, in which he served for a period before returning to civilian life.

Again, during the Emergency, he answered his country's call and was a Staff Officer in the L.D.F. "for the duration."

Now a leading member of the I.R.A. Old Comrades' Association, in which organisation he has on a few occasions been honoured with high office, his talents as an organiser are widely recognised and he has acted as Chief Marshal of many big parades in the city over several years now.

## SERVICE TO G.A.A.

Paddy opened his account with the G.A.A. in 1920 to which he has rendered signal service in many capacities all through the intervening years.

It was as a member of the then famous Shamrocks Club that he got his first introduction to the Gaelic public.

Shamrocks had earlier demonstrated their patriotic motives by participating with three other city teams in an act of open defiance of the British Occupation authorities.

All G.A.A. games were prohibited except under permit from the R.I.C., under an order issued by the British Government. The Central Council instructed that same be not applied for, and proclaimed August 4th, 1918, a Gaelic Sunday, ordering that fixtures without permits be arranged all over Ireland for that day.

Fifteen hundred such contests were announced, Limerick having fourteen, at all of which large crowds were present.

The City games took place at the Markets Field, Young Ireland and Shamrocks gaining the verdict over Cloughaun and Treaty respectively. There was no interference from the authorities at any venue and it was very evident that this particular ban had failed.

In 1919 Shamrocks contested two City Finals, but were narrowly beaten in both, going down to Young Ireland in the League and before Cloughaun in the championship.

## POWERFUL COMBINATION.

The following year they recruited some valuable new talent, including the subject of this sketch, and for the next few years they proved a powerful combination, and figured prominently in Limerick hurling ranks.

The times were difficult, however, championships were erratic and long drawn out affairs, with the result that Shamrocks in their glorious heyday had not the opportunities usually available, and which undoubtedly would have found them proud County title-holders.

They actually reached the final of the 1922 Junior hurling Championship but it was August 3rd, 1924, when the Semi-final took place.

Played at the Markets Field, Shamrocks had a great win over a strongly fancied Kilfinane side, 6-5 to 2-0.

The final did not take place for another twelve months — September 13th, 1925, to be exact. Meanwhile, the championships of 1921 and 1923 had been abandoned by the County Board, and in the 1924 Junior Hurling Championship Shamrocks again worked their way to the city final, in which they met their great rivals of the period — Treaty.

## "A TERRIFIC GAME."

The pair had a terrific game at the Markets Field on April 19th, 1925 — a rip-roaring tussle that had an unfortunate ending for Shamrocks, for, as well as suffering defeat, they were suspended by the County Board for six months for dangerous play on the occasion.

They were, consequently, in poor trim for their county final when it came off the following September and a surprisingly strong and well-equipped Croom side beat them, 4-3 to 2-1.

The following Sunday they were beaten by Fedamore senior team in the Croom Tournament, but had revenge over Treaty a short time later when they beat the Thomondgate lads, 4-0 to 0-1, in the city hurling final.

The break came soon after, when two members of that grand Shamrocks side — Mick King and Johnny Murphy — transferred to Cloughaun, with whom they were to figure very prominently and assist materially in winning the 1926 county senior hurling title. Three weeks later poor Johnny Murphy was dead, result of a tragic accident that deprived hurling of one of its grandest exponents.

## JOINED YOUNG IRELAND CLUB.

A little later Paddy O'Shaughnessy, Tommy Ford and Timmy Murphy re-opened a notable chapter in Gaelic history by joining Young Ireland Club. It was from the Shamrocks of old that the first Young Ireland Club sprang, and history repeated itself when the advent of this trio of great Shamrock hurlers put Young Ireland back as a powerful force in Limerick hurling ranks.

The blue and gold lads lined out a great team against the county champions, Cloughaun, and they won a magnificent game, 3-7 to 1-4.

That team will be recalled by many of the old Young Ireland followers with particular relish. Bobby McConkey was the captain, poor Mick Murphy held the goals and another dear departed friend, Paddy Hartigan, was a towering figure at midfield.

The other three great county men — the peerless Denny Lanigan, Mick Fitgibbon, that resolute defender who had no equal in his day in the corner-back berth, and Tommy O'Brien, fresh from winning with Cork the first ever National Hurling League title — were in magnificent form and inspired the remainder of the team to great endeavour, with the result that we saw from lads like Paddy O'Shaughnessy, Tommy Ford, Tom Mullane, Sean Kelly, Martin O'Shea, Clem Garvey, Gerry Markham, Paddy Fahy and the dynamic Timmy Murphy, hurling of unforgettable grandeur.

Young Ireland reached their peak on that occasion, and in following the career of Paddy O'Shaughnessy in the next article, and his winning in the blue and gold colours three county crowns, we will encounter some memorable days in the hurling history of Shannonside.

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**C**HAMPIONSHIP victory over their old rivals, Cloughaun, was always the cause of much jubilation in the Young Ireland camp, but when it was achieved over a Cloughaun at the zenith of their power, who had swept all before them in Munster hurling the preceding year, it was only natural that it should be received with great gratification and be the subject of much rejoicing.

An easy win (8-3 to 0-2) over Treaty in the next round advanced the Young Ireland lads to the East Limerick Final, and opened the road for three of the most remarkable games in the long history of the Limerick Championships.

## UNFORGETTABLE SERIES.

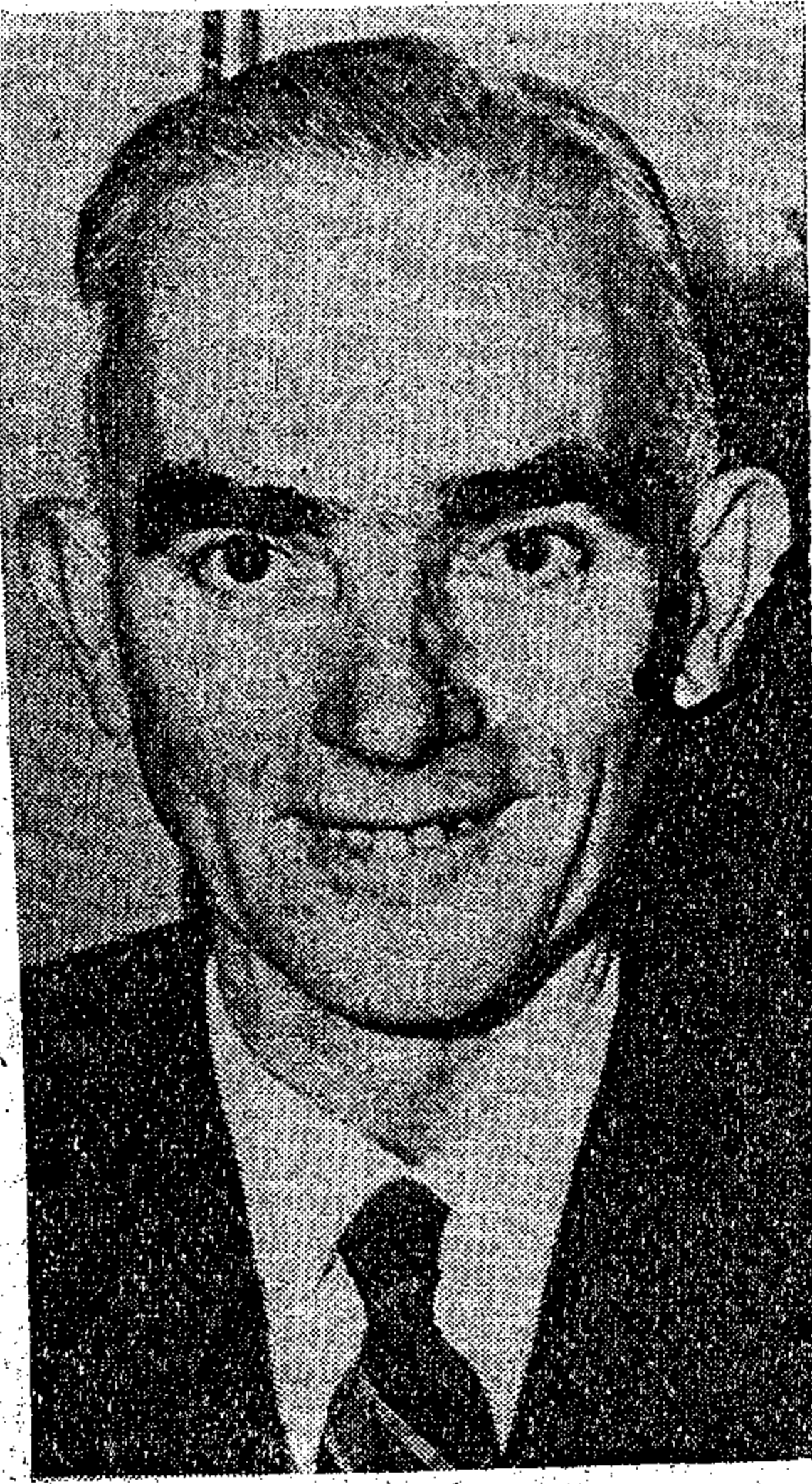
Fedamore provided the opposition in this unforgettable series that left an indelible mark in the story of hurling by Shannonside.

The first game, played at Croom on October 16th, 1927, was a magnificent struggle that drew out the best in the contestants with every inch of ground stubbornly fought.

It was terrific in its intentness, resolute in the vigour of its shoulder to shoulder charges, and awe inspiring in its grandeur, as clashing ash resounded through the crowded sidelines to evoke a response from the excited spectators that was fully in unison with the super charged atmosphere of a thrill-packed hurling day.

The epic hour flew as if on magic wings, and nobody quarrelled with the result—a draw of 3 goals and 1 point each, when Mick Neville's whistle, that was to control the one hundred and eighty minutes of hurling high lights, put an inconclusive ending to the first episode.

Hurling lovers awaited the replay in the same frame of mind as picture fans at the time looked to the next instalment of one of the noted "follow up" pictures of the time, that finished off at its



Paddy O'Shaughnessy.

most exciting point and was so certain to produce the unexpected the following week.

## THE RE-PLAY.

In such expectancy the crowd trooped back to Croom for the replay on November 13th—yet not prepared for the exciting and thrill-packed incidents of a game that pulled out of hurling all the hard hitting and strenuous body swerves of a thrill-thronged hour, which kept the huge throng bubbling over with excitement.

It was a glorious struggle, fast and vigorous, in which no quarter was given or sought, yet played in an admirable sporting spirit. The players had a healthy respect for each other and if they hit hard they also hit fairly, and nobody nursed a grievance.

The hurling fur flew and so did the clock. The teams were level at

the interval — 1-1 all, and thirty minutes later they were still together—3-2 all.

Extra time was out of the question in the fast fading light of that murky November evening.

So we carried exciting hurling discussions of the epics into the winter recess, with nobody but the foolhardy anxious to separate the pair, so evenly matched did they appear.

It was March 11th, 1928, before we again journeyed to Croom — a bitterly cold day with snow and sleet bellowing down from the surrounding hills—as unhospitable a setting as ever greeted hurling heroes—for this every one of that gallant thirty were rated by the fans—worked up more than ever now concerning the outcome.

## A STRUGGLE APART.

The weather, however, was put completely in the shade right from the first puck of the ball. With the biting breeze tempered by the heat of battle the keenness of the exchanges robbed the game of some of the spectacular features of the other meetings, but for sheer abandon, determination and relentless pursuit of even hopeless situations it was a struggle apart, which kept every spectator who knew his hurling in a ferment of excitement, that soon became a fever.

Young Ireland, playing into the teeth of a gale force wind, had a first half-hour of remarkable power and understanding and led almost to the interval whistle, when a last second effort by that doyen of midfielders, Willie Gleeson, let Fedamore share the half-time honours — the sides once more level—1-2 apiece.

This time it looked as if Young Ireland had to take the laurels, but Fedamore returned to the fray like men inspired and the second half was a masterpiece of hurling defiance of the elements and badly broken sod, both conspiring so desperately but so unavailingly to deprive us of a finish that was so fully in keeping with the uncompromising standard set by hurlers who triumphed over everything to provide a fitting conclusion to the most exciting and extended hurling encounter that Limerick has known

## LAST GALLANT EFFORT.

And how near it was to a still longer session Paddy O'Shaughnessy best can tell, for I can still picture him close to that far Croom touchline, with a swish of water as ash touched the sleet topped sod, collecting the leather and breaking loose from the careful guardianship of the late Dick Gleeson to shoot goalwards, just as Mick Neville put the whistle to his lips for the final blast, which came a split second before Paddy's great drive fell down between the uprights to land on top of the netting.

It was a last gallant effort to save the day, defeated by sulky time, and Fedamore gained that hardest earned of all verdicts by the narrowest of margins—3-2 to 2-4.

A fortnight later that grand Fedamore side, powered by such great hurling figures as the famed Clohessy quartette, Andy, Paddy, Jack and Dave; the renowned Gleeson trio — Willie, Stephen and Dick; Tom Shinney, Tom Conway, Bill Flavin, Mickey Condon, Johnny Markham and "Pa." Fitzgerald — were crowned county champions—an honour they ever so richly deserved.

## END OF THE ROAD.

It was, however, the end of the road for them, for although they had many more great meetings with Young Ireland, Ahane, and other grand sides of the time, championship honours were not to come their way again.

For Young Ireland the story was different. The cloud had its silver lining and in the half-dozen years that followed the Club was to win almost every honour the arena had to offer.

The highlights of that spell and the big part Paddy O'Shaughnessy played therein will resurrect memories of great days in City hurling over a quarter of a century ago.

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(CONTINUED)

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A POPULAR outing in the old days was to the annual Easter Sunday Senior Hurling Tournament organised by Nenagh Gaeldom, and in which it was the custom for a leading Limerick team to figure against the best Tipperary had to offer.

Young Ireland were honoured by the invitation to represent Limerick in 1928, and their opponents were far famed Toomevara, then enjoying one of their best hurling spells, and boasting many noted players, including the renowned County and Railway Cup scoring men—Martin Kennedy and Mick Cronin.

Young Ireland travelled by special train to the venue, and although a big crowd made the trip the City lads found themselves short of players, due to the holiday week-end, availed of by some players who were not natives of Limerick to pay a visit home.

**FAMOUS GOALIE.**

They eventually mustered fourteen, and the situation was saved when the famed Limerick goalie of after years joined the train at Castleconnell. A member of Young Ireland some time earlier, Paddy Scanlan figured in the blue and gold, both as goalkeeper and wing-forward, as did another well-known Young Ireland figure of the time, Jimmy Fitzgerald.

Paddy had not hurled for some time, but when pressed into service he agreed to guard the net. Boots and togs were borrowed and the Castleconnell man took his place, to play one of the great games of his career, and one that I think, encouraged him back to the arena, to make net minding look easy.

Paddy played a material part in the Young Ireland success, for the Limerick lads won the coveted medals, 3-2 to 3-0, after a heart warming game. Paddy O'Shaughnessy's opponent on the occasion was the late Jack Gleeson, one of Clare's best hurlers, who had helped the famed Garda selection win All-Ireland hurling honours for Dublin the previous September.

**TOM HAYES.**

A feature of this game was the fact that it was refereed by the great Young Ireland hurler of earlier days, Tom Hayes, who was to come out of retirement later that year and help Young Ireland win the 1928 County Senior Hurling crown.

Young Ireland were in action again the following Sunday—this time at the Markets Field, and in a match that had a very unsatisfactory ending.

The game had to be played early in the afternoon as the Markets Field was booked for a Munster Junior Rugby Cup game later that evening, and for a reception to the Young Munsters team, who had won the Bateman Cup in Dublin the previous day.

The hurling was for a splendid new trophy—the Ozanam Cup, and was in aid of the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

The City lads had as their opponents the great Fedamore team, Limerick County champions, whom they had met three times in the effort to decide the previous year's East Limerick final.

**DISAPPOINTING GAME.**

The hurling proved very disappointing as Young Ireland were all over their opponents in a game that never produced any of the thrills of the memorable championship clashes.

After twenty-five minutes play, with the City men leading 3-4 to nil, a clash occurred at midfield as a result of which a Young Ireland player was ordered to the line. He refused to go, and the referee, Paddy Flaherty, of Rathkeale, gave Fedamore the match—a decision the County Board subsequently upheld.

Fedamore afterwards won the Cup, by defeating Claughaun, and it rests there ever since, as it was never again competed for.

Young Ireland had one of the toughest games of their career in the opening round of the 1928 Senior Hurling Championship. They caught a real tartar at Croom in a magnificent Kilfinane fifteen who led them a merry dance for most of the hour and were ahead, 2-7 to 3-2, a minute from time and hurling confidently.

**UP AGAINST IT.**

The City lads were up against it—Micky Fitzgibbon broke a particularly dangerous Southern raid, and was again with the ball when it landed at midfield. He clashed with Mick Lucey, playing a star game, and as the latter reeled from the impact of the charge, the Young Ireland man literally stepped over him to shoot a screw ball that Paddy O'Shaughnessy clipped in from the wing to intercept and bury in the net for a golden goal and Young Ireland victory.

Young Ireland won their next game, against a strong Army side in decisive fashion, 9-5 to 2-5, and then met their old rivals, Fedamore, who held them to level terms for forty minutes but were beaten 5-1 to 1-3 eventually.

**PREPARATION FOR COUNTY FINAL.**

In preparation for their County Final appearance, Young Ireland played a number of games with the crack teams of the other Munster Counties.

They travelled to Waterford to play Erin's Own, then in their glorious heyday, and were beaten, 5-4 to 3-5, in a sparkling game.

At Emly they scored a sensational success when they beat a strongly fancied Thurles Blues selection in the local Silver Cup Tournament Final after a game packed full of thrills and good hurling.

The following Sunday they captured a beautiful set of hand cut gold medals, when they defeated Claughaun at the Markets Field, 5-3 to 3-1.

A fortnight later they were at Shanballymore to play Cork St. Finbarr's, who beat them, 4-5 to 3-4. A return game between the pair was arranged for Kilmallock, and this was abandoned three minutes from full time with Young Ireland leading 4-1 to 3-2, as St. Finbarr's refused to finish and left the field following a disputed score. The referee awarded Young Ireland the match.

Young Ireland—St. Finbarr rivalry was carried a step further on Easter Sunday, 1929, when the pair played a great game at the U.C.C. Grounds, Cork, before a huge crowd.

A special train ran from Limerick for the occasion, and the Lord Mayor of Cork—Ald. Sean French, T.D.—threw in the ball. Young Ireland were in terrific form that day and won 4-4 to 2-5.

**THE COUNTY SENIOR FINAL.**

They figured in the 1928 County Senior Hurling Final the following day, Sunday. Their opponents were Rathkeale, and the game was played at Croom, with Bill Gleeson of Fedamore in charge of the whistle.

It was a very closely contested and exciting game for forty-five minutes, and the splendid goal-keeping of P. Reidy for Rathkeale was an outstanding feature. Then Young Ireland pulled away and won comfortably in the end: Young Ireland, 5-7; Rathkeale, 2-1.

**THE TEAMS.**

The teams that evening were: Young Ireland—Bob McConkey, captain; Tom Hayes, goal; D. Lanigan, M. Delaney, M. Fitzgibbon, J. Markham, W. Hogan, M. O'Shea, W. O'Donoghue, P. O'Shaughnessy, D. Kelly, T. Mullane, T. O'Brien, J. O'Shea, J. Fitzgerald.

Rathkeale—M. Casey, captain; P. Reidy, goal; P. Roche, P. Brennan, E. Quinn, J. Glenny, J. Roche, J. Quinn, M. Quinn, W. Quinn, J. O'Shaughnessy, J. Young, H. Doupe, J. Guinane, T. Magner, P. Quaid.

**BANQUET IN HONOUR OF VICTORY.**

Young Ireland Club subsequently gave a banquet in honour of the victory, at the Desmond Hall, Cruise's Hotel. In addition to the team members, leading Gaels in attendance included Commdt. Tommy Ryan, O.C., Sarsfield Barracks; Tim Humphries, Charlie Holland, John Kelly, senior; and James Gleeson.

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(CONTINUED)

By SEAMUS O'CEALLAIGH

THE Young Ireland players had a busy time preparing for the 1928 County senior hurling final, but they had a still busier time after it, fulfilling all the engagements offered them in a period that might be regarded as the heyday of club hurling.

The Railway Cup competitions and the National League were only in their infancy at the time, and club games held a sway that was reflected in a fine array of first-class combinations — the pride of many counties.

The Sunday following their County success, the blue and gold clad lads made the trip to Buttevant, where they met the famed Blackrock lads, then at the zenith of their power and great hurling influence, in the final of the local Gold Medals Tournament.

## A HECTIC HOUR.

It was a terrific struggle of swaying fortunes and the crowd were wild with excitement in the closing stages as both sides fought desperately for the vital score in a game that must rank as one of the toughest waged between these great teams. The Cork lads got the verdict by the narrowest of margins, 4-1 to 3-3, but all were agreed that the boys from Garryowen put up a magnificent showing and were the most unlucky of losers, missing an open goal in the last minute of a hectic hour.

That Young Ireland were a double force at the time was demonstrated when their football team lost narrowly to Duhallow United in another great game.

Three weeks later, Young Ireland had another dual engagement. Six thousand people saw the hurlers beat the famed Army Metro side of Dublin, 3-5 to 2-1, in the St. Patrick's senior hurling tournament final, played at the Markets Field. They were presented with their medals by Very Rev. Canon O'Leary, P.P., St. Patrick's. At the same time the club footballers were in action at Glin, where the home side, County champions at the period, beat them, 2-1 to 1-3, after a most interesting game.

## ANOTHER THRILLER.

Young Ireland had another game with Blackrock at Buttevant on June 2, 1929, and another thriller resulted. How well matched the pair were was illustrated when they drew: Blackrock, 2-3; Young Ireland, 3-0.

The blue and gold lads made a rather inglorious exit from the 1929 senior hurling championship. They played Pallasgreen, at Hospital, in the first round and only won in a tearaway finish, by the minimum margin, 2-4 to 2-3.

The Parish Rule had been re-introduced on a limited scale at the previous County convention and Pallas availed of this to object to a prominent member of the Young Ireland Club who was ruled not resident in the city, and so the champions went out in the council chamber after their field victory. Pallas also had an illegal player that day but Young Ireland could not prove it. Cappamore did so later on, however, and that put Pallas out.

Young Ireland played one of their stormiest games ever at Hospital when they met Fedamore in the final of the local church tournament.

## OLD CUP THAT HAD SEEN BETTER DAYS.

The trophy was an old cup that had seen better days, presented to the church committee by its original owner. But I think in all honesty it can be said that never was an All-Ireland final fought with greater intensity, with every man on the field, player and spectator, roused to the highest pitch of fervour and feeling.

The late Joe Murphy, of Mitchelstown, was the referee and that veteran Gael told me afterwards that never in his long experience of hurling had he witnessed a game in which every man drained the last ounce of spirit and stamina in the pursuit of victory, as they did in that epic that highlighted the terrific rivalry the contestants generated when they faced each other on the hurling field.

The most remarkable feature of the occasion was that Young Ireland were missing a few of their leading players and they actually had to call to Caherconlish on their way to the venue for a couple of players to complete the fifteen. In consequence, few gave them a chance against the powerful Fedamore combination, but the spec-

tators surely got their money's worth that evening as both fought with rare abandon and contested every ball as if their very lives depended on the outcome.

## WONDERFUL LEADERSHIP.

It is hard to forget the wonderful leadership of the veteran All-Ireland star, Denny Lanigan, from the full forward berth that evening as he roused the side to the all out endeavour that brought Young Ireland one of its sweetest ever successes, a 2-6 to 1-7 win that was probably the hardest earned in the long history of blue and gold hurling.

Paddy O'Shaughnessy had a terrific game that unforgettable evening, and couples that game with the memorable Sweet Afton Cup win over Newmarket-on-Fergus as the two outstanding memories of his long hurling career.

A month later, Young Ireland were at Emly to defend the cup won in rather sensational style the previous season from Thurles Sarsfields. This time their opponents were Boherlahan, and four thousand spectators packed the venue for the thrill packed game which the Tipperymen won, 3-5 to 2-6.

The following Sunday, Young Ireland figured in another tournament final, organised as a testimonial to an old Caherline hurler, and met with a surprise defeat at the hands of South Liberties, who won an exciting game, 1-5 to 2-1.

## FINISHED THE SEASON IN SUCCESSFUL FASHION.

Young Ireland, however, finished the season in successful fashion, defeating Thurles in the final of the Caher tournament, 5-2 to 3-3, and their old Cork rivals, St. Finbarr's, 4-6 to 3-4, in a tournament game at Limerick Gaelic Grounds.

They re-opened 1930 with another engagement against Fedamore, played at Limerick Gaelic Grounds

in aid of the Handball County Board. This game never reached the standard of previous encounters and Young Ireland won readily.

Thurles won the Plassy tournament, in aid of the relatives of the victims of the Plassy drowning, defeating Croom in the semi-final, and Claughton in the final.

They had an easy passage to the East Limerick championship decider that season, knocking out Cappamore, County finalists of the previous year, 5-6 to 1-1, and a fancied Hospital side, 7-3 to 0-3.

They had a great game in the Divisional final with an up and coming Ahane team that were to make hurling history in after years. Young Ireland were leading well at the interval but Ahane put in a storming finish, and the city men were lucky to survive, 5-4 to 5-2. That game was played at Croom, and the same evening the Young Ireland footballers played the East Limerick senior football championship final at Hospital, and drew with Knockane, 4-3 all.

In preparation for their County senior hurling final, Young Ireland played University College, Galway, whom they beat, 4-1 to 3-1, and Newmarket-on-Fergus, who beat them, 5-4 to 3-3.

## BEST SENIOR FINAL OF A DECADE.

The best senior hurling final of a decade was played at Croom on March 27, 1931, when Newcastle West and Young Ireland met to decide the 1930 championship. Despite bad weather there was a fine attendance of spectators and they were rewarded with as thrilling an exhibition of the national game as was witnessed in the championship for years. The result — a drawn game of two goals and two points all — was a fitting result.

The strength of Young Ireland hurling was demonstrated in striking fashion the following week. It was Easter Sunday and matches were arranged all over Ireland in aid of Padraig Pearse's College, St. Enda's.

Young Ireland fielded two teams, one at Cork, which lost to St. Finbarr's, 3-7 to 2-2, and the other at Cappamore, where the local fifteen had a narrow win.

## RETURN MATCH.

St. Finbarr's gave Young Ireland a return match the next Sunday, and this time the Limerick lads were successful, 3-2 to 2-1.

All records for attendance at a County championship fixture were broken at Croom in April 19th to see Young Ireland beat Newcastle West, 4-2 to 1-4, in the re-play of

the 1930 senior hurling championship final. The ultimate score by no means represents the run of the play, as it was only in the concluding minutes that the city lads forged ahead, after their backs had withstood successfully fifteen minutes of sustained attack. It was a game of thrills, in which two great teams kept the huge crowd at fever pitch for fifty five minutes, and will live in memory as one of the most exciting tussles for championship supremacy ever witnessed in Limerick.

## THE TEAMS.

Bill Gleeson, of Fedamore, captain; Jim Fitzgerald, goal; Sean Kelly, Jim Mullane, Tom Mullane, Tommy O'Brien, Bill O'Donoghue, Paddy O'Shaughnessy, Johnny O'Shea, Martin O'Shea, Jerry Markham, Denny Kelly, Paddy Kenneally, Jim Houlihan, Jack Cusack.

Newcastle West — Ned Cregan, captain; Denis O'Connor, Jack Dermody, Pat Monahan, Mick Murphy, Willie Raleigh, Joe Ambrose, Jack Toomey, Paddy Cregan, Eddie Burke, Carol Cregan, John McMahon, Mick Geary, Michael Cregan, Mick O'Keeffe.

A week later Young Ireland scored their crowning achievement when they beat the Rest of Limerick, 6-6 to 4-7, in a County trial, played at Newcastle West.

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(CONTINUED)

By SEAMUS O'CEALLAIGH

**Y**OUNG IRELANDS were invited to Killarney for the annual Whit Sunday games there in 1931, and they fielded teams in both senior hurling and football. It was a memorable week-end for the Limerick lads, who got a royal reception in "Beauty's Home," and the visit was a thoroughly enjoyable one. The hospitality was in the best Kerry style and the games splendid exhibitions. The blue and gold footballers were narrowly beaten by Killarney Crokes, and the hurlers lost in an exciting finish to an up and coming Cork team of the period—Glen Rovers—who were to make hurling history in after years.

The following Sunday Young Irelands met another team that were just opening a great hurling era, but this defeat was a more serious one, for it robbed them of their championship crown, and sent Ahane on the road to the winning of their first senior hurling County title.

Some will say the blue and gold lads were unwise to have accepted the Killarney engagement for the weekend preceding this vital tie, but it was a tradition in the Young Ireland Club of the period never to refuse an engagement if it was possible to fit it in, and there are several instances of club teams playing tough tournament games against some of the great clubs of Munster even on the eve of County finals.

## BACK IN WINNING LISTS

A fortnight later Young Ireland were back in winning lists when they captured the Plassy Tournament trophies, at the expense of their old City rival, Cloughaun, whom they beat 2-4 to 1-2.

Ahane and Young Ireland Clubs took a leading part in the organisation of the great Aonach Kincora—a joint Gaelic League and G.A.A. venture held at Limerick Gaelic Grounds from August 23rd to 30th, 1931.

In the senior hurling tournament organised in connection with the Aonach, Ahane and Newmarket-on-Fergus were respective winners over Fedamore and Newcastle West; and in the final, played on August 30th, Newmarket-on-Fergus created a big surprise when defeating Ahane, 7-3 to 2-7.

Another big tournament was held at the Gaelic Grounds a few weeks later, in connection with a monster shopping carnival in the city, which also embraced an exhibition and a series of athletic events and amusements.

This was the first contest for the storied Sweet Afton Cup, with which went the Limerick Development Association Gold Medals, and the semifinals resulted in Young Irelands defeating Newport 5-4 to 1-3; and Newmarket-on-Fergus overcoming Fedamore, 10-5 to 3-6.

The pairing of Newmarket-on-Fergus (Clare County Champions) and Aonach Kincora Tournament winners over Ahane and Young Ireland (Limerick County Champions, 1930) was a most attractive one and their meeting drew a huge crowd to the Gaelic Grounds.

## GAME OF UNENDING THRILLS

And right good value they got, for it was a game of unending thrills with the issue in doubt in a low scoring contest right to the final whistle.

The game was fought with vigour and determination from start to stop and the intensity of the exchanges were something of marvel at. The teams gave everything they had in an unforgettable hour and Paddy O'Shaughnessy feels it was the toughest game of his long career, and the sweetest victory in the lengthy line of Young Ireland successes.

After a very fast, spectacular hour of first-class hurling, Young Ireland came out on top, 2-3 to 1-2, the winning scores coming in a last quarter tornado in which Gerry Markham, Paddy O'Shaughnessy, Micky Fitzgibbon and Bob McConkey were the outstanding figures. It was a great blue and gold fifteen, one of the best in the long history of the club, the players being: Martin O'Shea, captain, J. Fitzgerald, goal; J. Kelly, J. O'Dowd, J. Mullane, P. Kennedy, T. Mullane, T. O'Brien, J. O'Shea, W. O'Donoghue, G. Markham, R. McConkey, P. O'Shaughnessy, M. Kennedy, M. Fitzgibbon.

## ANOTHER TROPHY

A fortnight later, Young Ireland collected another trophy, when winning the Hospital Church Tournament final. In contrast to the great game they had when winning this tournament two years earlier, they won readily this time, beating Kilfinane 8-5 to 1-0.

They were on the losing side the following Sunday at Mitchelstown Feis, where St. Finbarr's (Cork) beat them, 6-10 to 3-5.

After a 9-5 to 2 goals win over Cloughaun, Young Ireland were strongly fancied to capture the Donnellan Cup, presented for a competition in aid of St. Munchin's Church, Newport, however, pro-

vided something of a surprise packet, and beat them in a great game by the odd point, 2-3 to 2-2.

Young Ireland opened 1932 with a great win at the Markets Field over a strong Army Metro (Dublin) fifteen, 3-3 to 2-3.

A few weeks later they met Ahane (County champions) in the first round of the 1932 championship. A magnificent game it proved, hard, vigorous and spectacular — fought at a terrific pace.

## THE GAME

Ahane led at half-time, 2-3 to 1-0, but the city lads forged ahead in the closing moiety and took the lead with one of the greatest goals ever scored on a hurling field. Far out on the wing, Paddy O'Shaughnessy clashed with Mick Hickey and the leather was within a foot of the corner flag, running harmlessly wide, when Bob McConkey, one of the greatest forwards of his day, raced out and trapped it. Like a flash, he cut the leather off the ground, almost level with the posts, and with a screw drive, curled the shot to the corner of the net for the well nigh impossible goal that gave star goalkeeper Paddy Scanlan no chance. In the few remaining minutes, Young Ireland took control to win 6-1 to 2-5.

## THE TEAMS

The teams that day are worth recalling:—

Young Ireland — M. Fitzgibbon, captain; J. Fitzgerald, goal; P. O'Shaughnessy, M. O'Shea, J. Kelly, G. Markham, M. Kennedy, P. Kennedy, J. Mullane, J. O'Dowd, T. O'Brien, R. McConkey, W. O'Donoghue, J. O'Shea, T. Mullane.

Ahane—T. Ryan, captain, P. Scanlan, goal; J. Ryan, M. Ryan, M. Mackey, J. Mackey, D. O'Malley, J. Moloney, D. Givens, P. Joyce, E. McDonagh, M. McDonagh, M. Hickey, E. O'Brien, M. Quinlivan, M. Aherne.

In their journey to the County final, Young Ireland beat Doon, 11-4 to 5-0, and Fedamore, 6-2 to 3-3 in a re-play, after being held, 5-2 all, at the first meeting.

The blue and gold lads figured in another thrill packed drawn tussle at Limerick Gaelic Grounds on October 2nd, this time with Dicksboro' (Kilkenny) in the semi-final of the Sweet Afton Cup and Development Association Medal Tournament.

## THEIR LAST SENIOR HURLING FINAL

On October 23rd, Young Ireland won their last County senior hurling final, beating Newcastle West, at Rathkeale, 2-6 to 1-3. This game, a well contested and exciting one, might be written the swan song of two great clubs—for it was the last occasion either figured in a senior County final. It closed an era in Limerick hurling—one that will be recalled by many an old timer with nostalgic memories.

Paddy O'Shaughnessy wore the Young Ireland jersey on many further occasions, but the golden days were over, never to return, despite several efforts to rebuild the forces and revive golden glories.

He was to win honours in other spheres, however, and we must not forget his outings with the county team and the great service he rendered for many seasons as a referee of outstanding worth. He was in charge of many great games during this period.

## FINE RECORD OF ACTIVITY

A member of the County Board for a lengthy spell, he has a fine record of activity of many Committees and has represented the City Division for a considerable time and with great success on the county senior hurling Selection Committee.

The City Board he has served with much distinction, holding at various times the posts of chairman, vice-chairman and treasurer, in all of which he did work of great value to the G.A.A.—work that is by no means ended, for he is still very active in the cause of the Gael. Long may he flourish!