

Recent G.A.A. Publications 2020

By Seamus J. King

Grangemockler-Ballyneale Club History

The story of Gaelic Games in the Parish of Grangemockler/Ballyneale 1885-2020 is a welcome addition to the library of county histories in the county. The first club in the parish was formed in 1885. Early on the predominant game was football but today hurling plays an equally important part.

The history of both games is recorded in detail on this extensive publication.

While the book is primarily a history of Gaelic games in the area, it also seeks to present the context in which these games were played. Gaelic games impinged on most families in the parish, either as participants or supporters, and it's important that the context is included in a book of this nature. Many of the memory pieces included describe the way of life of the people involved and the social and economic background to their lives.

One of the great athletes and players in the parish was Tom Kiely. His mantra was, 'For Tipperary and Ireland', and he was born in Ballyneale. For fifteen years this towering figure dominated not only Irish athletics but also the world stage, winning the World All-Round championships in 1904 and 1906, collecting the gold medal at the Olympic Games at St. Louis and a World Championship in Boston at 36 years of age. His versatility was unsurpassed and his greatness as Ireland's premier athlete was recognised when he was selected to lead the opening parade at the Tailteann Games in Croke Park in 1924, proudly carrying the national flag. At a local level he played football with Ballyneale before joining Grangemockler and winning their first county final in 1890. Later he played for Tipperary, won a long puck competition in hurling, acted as referee and became a Vice-President of the G.A.A. in 1896. What a hero to have in the parish! What achievements!

If Tom Kiely put Ballyneale on the map, Michael Hogan did the same for Grangemockler. His name will ever be associated with Bloody Sunday and Croke Park and, of course, he has a permanent monument in the Hogan Stand. Two other members of the family were also famous. His brother, Dan, the close friend of Eoin O'Duffy and Michael Collins, became Chief of Staff of the defence Forces in 1927 and resigned in 1929. The last that was heard of him was in the U.S. in 1941. The third brother, Tom, became Brother Thomas Wilfred Hogan and served as a teacher and promoter of Gaelic Games until his early death at the age of 43 years. In recognition of his contribution the trophy for the All-Ireland Colleges football championship was named after him.

A major family in the history of the parish were the Browns. The father, Maurice, came to teach in Grangemockler N.S. in 1869. He married Kate Fitzgerald and the couple had six children, five of whom survived to adulthood. David joined the Dominicans, eventually became the Superior-General of the Order, and a Cardinal as well. Patrick, better known as Monsignor de Brún, became a brilliant mathematician and linguist and later President of University College, Galway. Maurice became a priest, was later parish priest of Ballymore-Eustace and wrote the widely acclaimed book, *The Big Sycamore*, a fiction based account of the family growing up in Grangemockler. Margaret became a university lecturer and married Sean MacEntee, who was later Tanaiste and Minister for Finance in a Fianna Fáil Government. John, the youngest, died at the age of 25 years as a result of complications following an injury at football training.

The book records the lives of much lesser known natives of the parish also and it includes a large number of outstanding illustrations making the publication a delight to browse through.

This year is the centenary of an extremely important event in the history of the parish of Grangemockler and Ballyneale. One hundred years ago it was in the forefront of a major happening in the War of Independence, Bloody Sunday. On that day footballers from the parish were part of the Tipperary team attacked in Croke

Park by the forces of the British Crown. Fourteen people were killed, including one of the players, Michael Hogan, and it is appropriate that this book, which records that event, as well as the wider contribution of the G.A.A. to the parish, should make its appearance.

The book, of almost 500 pages in A4 size, is available for €30 from Michael Murphy 051-647069.

Photographic History Book: After a few years of dedicated work by the club's photographic committee, a Photographic History Book has been produced by the Loughmore-Castleiney G.A.A. club. The brain child of club chairman Eugene Stapleton, this 444 page volume is now on sale with about 1400 photographs.

A huge collection of team and historic photographs is contained in this historic publication, covering the period from 1914 to 2020. Designed by Brendan O'Connor it was down for launching to coincide with the centenary of Bloody Sunday 1920, in which two club stalwarts, Bill and Jim Ryan, played on that now infamous occasion in Croke Park where Dublin were playing Tipperary, when British forces opened fire on the attendance, killing thirteen people including right corner back Mick Hogan of Grangemockler, but had to be deferred.

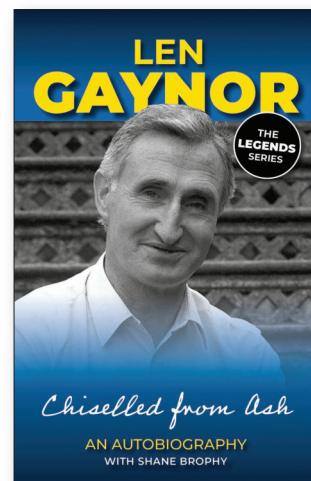
The club would like to thank all who supplied photographs etc. and the committee owe a debt of gratitude to Martin Bourke, Clonmore who kindly gave permission to use many of his published photographs from 2007 History of Mid Tipperary G.A.A. The committee members involved were Diarmuid Meagher, Diarmuid Brennan, Bernie McGrath, Mary McGrath, Pat Healy, John Treacy and Taffy McGrath. The publication was printed by Naas Printing and is on sale for €50 at Centenary Co-Op at the Post Office in Templemore and Bookworn, Thurles. When Covid restrictions are relaxed it is hoped to have it available at the Cottage, Loughmore and in Castleiney.

Len Gaynor: Chiselled from Ash

This is a good title for Len Gaynor's autobiography written by the Sports editor of the *Nenagh Guardian*, Shane Brophy. It is a very fine read covering the life of the Kilruane MacDonagh's man as a player, club and county, as a manager, also at club and county, and as a media commentator on the game of hurling. Published by Hero Books from Liam Hayes Publishing, it is part of the company's Legends Series, which is devoted to local heroes, who have never had their stor told.

And this is a great story of a man whose major interest from an early age was hurling, winning his first medal with his club in 1959, progressing to minor at county level but losing to Kilkenny in the 1962 All-Ireland, going one better in 1964, when he won an under-21 championship and eventually winning three All-Ireland senior titles with Tipperary in 1964, 1965 and 1971. He recalls how he was dropped from the county panel in 1974 without even a phonecall! As well Len won three Railway Cup medals. The highlight of his achievements with Kilruane was winning an All-Ireland club championship in 1986.

One of the features of the story are the comments by contemporary hurlers, who played with or against Len at different stages of his career. These range from Babs Keating who first played against Len in the 1959 juvenile final to Eddie Kehir against whom



Len came across in some great contests after Len had established himself as an outstanding wing-back for the county.

Len became a perfectionist as a trainer and coach, attending coaching courses at Gormanstown initially, also learning from others and he relates how he travelled to Dublin to observe Kevin Heffernan training the Dubs, and to Kerry to see Mick O'Dwyer training Kerry. He admits there is a big difference in the way the game has gone since he started coaching, with actions like overhead striking, hooking and blocking, etc little emphasised in today's possession game.

He continues to train teams and still spends a lot of time with juveniles. What annoys him greatly about some coaches is the amount of shouting and issuing instructions on what to do and not do from the sidelines instead of allowing young lads to express themselves on the field.

The story covers his time as a selector with Tipperary between the years 1983 and 1986 towards the end of the famine period, and again in the late seventies. It also covers his years in charge of Clare just before their breakthrough in the early nineties.

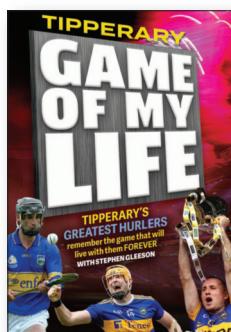
This is a gripping story with a big lot of it devoted to the part family has played in his life – his wife, Eileen, gave birth to their daughter on the morning after winning the 1971 All-Ireland - and the interest is kept alive right through. It is told extremely well by Shane Brophy and the book is available to bookshops for €20.

Coming Up!

Templederry Kenyons G.A.A. Club are in the process of writing their G.A.A. story and the man who has taken on the task is Paddy Ryan (Coole), who did such a fine job on the Sean Treacy G.A.A. history. G.A.A. has featured in the Parish of Templederry, Kilkennaive and Curreeny since the late 1800s. There are reports of both hurling and football teams from Templederry, Killeen, Curreeny, Latteragh and Glastrigan. Templederry Kenyons, as the club is known today, was formed in 1976 and named in honour of Fr. John Kenyon, who was Parish Priest of Templederry and a prominent member of the Young Ireland movement in the middle of the 19th century.

Martin Bourke has commenced work on a biography of Jimmy Finn, who will be ninety years old next year. Jimmy had many other interests in life besides hurling, particularly dogs and horses, and John Costigan is going to cover these areas. Timmy Delaney is also involved so that nothing is missed from the Borrisileigh angle. It should be a fine book.

The Game of My Life by Stephen Gleeson will not be in the bookshops for the Christmas but can be accessed on Amazon until the New Year. An interesting way of looking at players, it interviews them about the game of their lives, but has quite a bit about the rest of their lives also. In all 35 Tipperary players are interviewed commencing with Jimmy Finn right up to the present time. It is one of a series of similar county books by Liam Hayes Publishing and it will retail for €20.



Thurles Sarsfields GAA Story Volume 2, 1960-2019. In 2017, former Tipperary and Sarsfields hurler, Tony Wall, launched volume 1 of Thurles Sarsfields story. That publication detailed the progress of this famous club from the foundation of the GAA in the town up until 1959. That book was very successful, winning a MacNamee GAA national publication award. Liam Ó Donnchú, the club's vice president who compiled the history, has reported that volume 2 is now completed and were it not for Covid 19 would be on the shelves this Christmas. Once again it is a large production, illustrated with a multitude of fascinating photographs. This history project has been a mammoth task but a labour of love for Liam, over many years. Hopefully, we can get our hands on a copy soon.

The Story of Semple Stadium: The field of legends. An iconic

place situated in hurling's heartland. What memories it recalls for GAA supporters everywhere! Tom Semple's field has been the 'Mecca' for followers of Gaelic games, particularly hurling and considered by generations of hurlers as the country's premier hurling venue, where the game can be seen in all its glory. Stadium PRO, Liam Ó Donnchú, has started researching the story of the stadium going back to its original purchase in 1910. Liam would welcome your help with his research. If you have a special memory associated with the stadium, a photo, a yarn etc. you can email Liam at liamodonoghue@hotmail.com or by post or by hand to Liam Ó Donnchú, Lár na Páirce Museum, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

A Year in the Red has been coming out in Roscrea since about 2004 and this year's edition will be available before Christmas. As usual it will cover the activities of the club during 2020 in text and pictures. P.S. I'm still waiting for the club to produce their club history. One of my longest G.A.A. memories was in St. Cronan's Park on a sunny Sunday in May 1948, when Lorrha defeated Borrisokane in the first round of the North championship, which Lorrha eventually won.

Clonakenny G.A.A. 1905-1993. I like to give publicity to club publications within the county but I missed this little booklet of 84 pages completely. Compiled by Peter Byrne in 1993, it states on the cover: 'Memories of what was achieved, what might have been . . . And above all the enjoyment of Gaelic Games for the players and supporters from the small rural parish of Bournea.' It was intended to produce the book in 1984, but the task got sidelined because of the purchase and development of a new pitch. It was eventually produced some years later. The club dates from about 1905, when Paddy Costigan succeeded in getting the use of a field at Gurteen from Jimmy Lloyd, following which Fr. Crowe, P.P. and a number of others got together and formed the first club in Clonakenny.

Jimmy 'Mighty Mac' McNamara 1893-1929

In connection with the commemoration of Bloody Sunday, a committee under the chairmanship of Colm O'Flaherty was formed in Cahir to remember Jimmy McNamara, the local member of the historic Tipperary football team at Croke Park on the fateful day, and they produced a very interesting booklet on his life and achievements. Jimmy started off his sporting life as an accomplished soccer player, that led to a contract offer from Celtic, which Jimmy declined. Instead, he turned to Gaelic football and became an outstanding player on the Tipperary team that was one of the top teams in the country around 1920. He played at Croke Park on Bloody Sunday and died at the early age of 36 years. As well as giving the facts of his sporting life the booklet includes some outstanding photographs from the period. It is available from Eddie Lonergan, Cahir, who was greatly involved in its production.



This picture of John Kenyon, John Mitchel and John Martin, was taken in Paris in 1866. All three were associated with the Templederry Kenyons G.A.A. club.

(Pic. Courtesy of Paddy Ryan (Coole))