

KÍLTUBRÍD





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 (1889)

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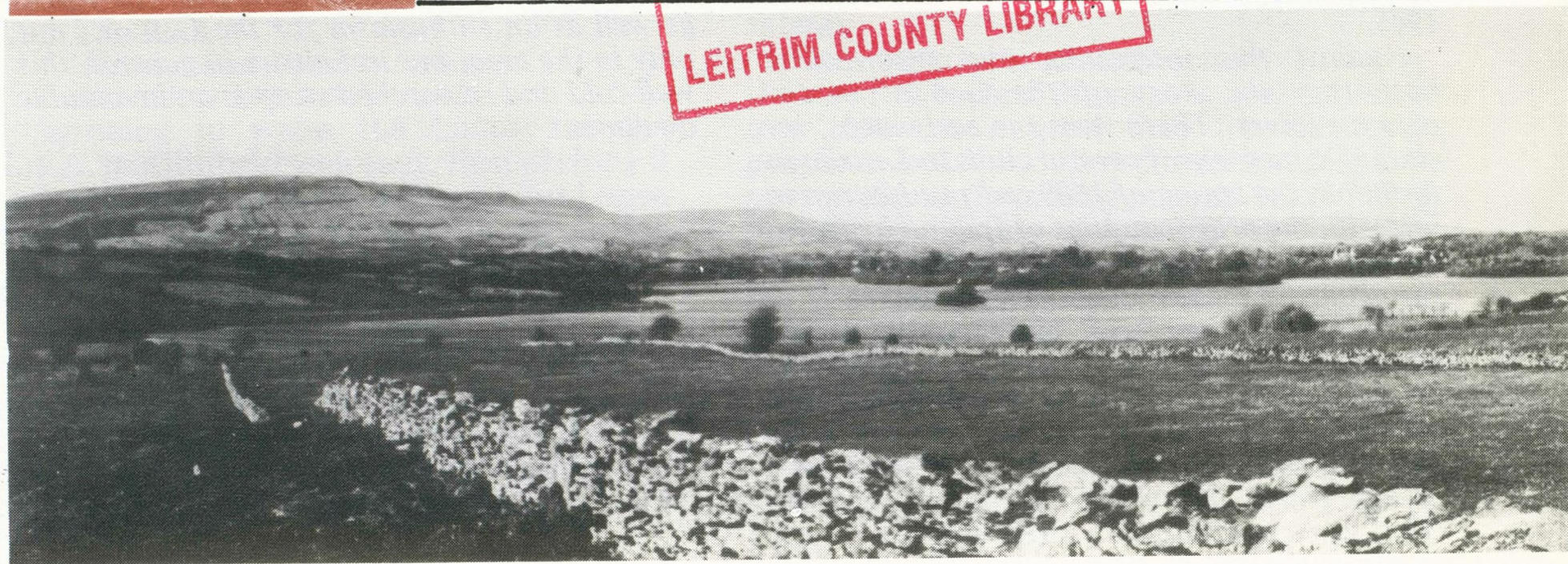


KILTUBRID

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FOREWORD

This history succeeds admirably in realising the early stated aim of recording the story of the G.A.A. in the parish of Kiltubrid against a background of an area drained of its youth through emigration, which began on a large scale in the Famine years, and continued at a slower pace, but without a break until the early 'Seventies.

The major events in the life and times of the parish are touched on as the ups-and-downs of the G.A.A. are brought into focus. We learn of many different aspects, ranging from an ambitious undertaking to build a canal linking the Shannon and the Erne, started in 1846, of the threat of starvation, the difficulties during the "Troubles" of the 'Twenties, the significance of the opening of the first Vocational School in Leitrim, and of the rush to the ports to emigrate at the end of World War II in 1945.

Against this interesting and informative backdrop, the story of the G.A.A. in the parish evolves. There were the early steps, including a meeting of several clubs in Leitrim in Mohill in the spring of 1889 to "put Leitrim in line with the other counties of Ireland by forming a County Council for the management of the affairs of all branches of the county".

The terms "branches", and County Council seem outdated in the currency of our times of clubs, County Boards and Provincial Councils, but at least Leitrim folk were certainly aware of the needs of their times on the Gaelic Games front, and of their preparedness to do what they could to attain those needs.

The Association went through many troubled times in the area — as elsewhere. There was little or no activity in Leitrim between the years 1892 and 1904, the local club ceased activities in the early 'Twenties, and then, in 1946, for the first time since 1923, there was no G.A.A. club in the parish of Kiltubrid.

But such was the resilience displayed by the people of the parish over the years that it was only a matter of time before the reins were picked up again. So, it came to pass inevitably in 1978 with the revival of the G.A.A. club.

It has not all been plain sailing for the G.A.A. in the parish in the meantime. But the organisation has weathered the storms, and today continues to play a vital role in the affairs of the area.

For anyone with an interest in the parish, and in its traditions and peoples over the years, as well as an enthusiasm for the G.A.A., not only in the area, but in Leitrim in general, this well-told and researched story is an invaluable document.

Pádraig Ó Bogaigh

Pádraig Ó Bogaigh, Uachtarán, C.L.C.G.



Introduction

This book has been pieced together because the Kiltubrid branch of the Gaelic Athletic Association wanted to fittingly celebrate the centenary of that Association and the opening of their new pitch. It is an attempt to tell the story of the G.A.A. in the parish, a story that began on a high note on Sunday 21 April, 1889, and a story that is continuing on a high (if somewhat different) note in 1984. Between those years a new chapter in the G.A.A. story was written in every decade, though there were many yawning gaps when there was no club in existence. It is a story of great endeavour and few rewards. It is a story of people Canute-like trying to stem the tide of emigration and trying to make life happier, healthier and more colourful for those who remained at home. This book is an attempt to record and praise these efforts and to give hope and encouragement to future efforts. Or as T.S. Eliot wrote in 'Choruses from The Rock':

*"And we will take heart for the future
Remembering the past"*

Agreeing to write the history of the G.A.A. in Kiltubrid was easy. Researching it and writing it was more difficult! But I have no regrets and it is one way of my saying thanks for the pleasure of playing Gaelic football between the years 1962 and 1982.

I have included, too, mainly in the first chapter, some snippets of local history — just enough to whet the appetite, to give a background and suggest areas for further research. Kiltubrid has a long and varied history waiting to be researched and recorded.

By broadening the scope of this book it will appeal, hopefully, not just to G.A.A. enthusiasts, but to all Kiltubrid people, wherever they may be.

But this book tells its story not just with words but with pictures too. The picture is, in many senses, a more powerful medium than the word, and we are very fortunate to have available to us an invaluable private collection of photographs entitled 'Views at and near Annadale', taken in August 1889 by Leland L. Duncan, an Englishman, who was then visiting his cousins, the Slacke's of Annadale. All Kiltubrid people are indebted to him for his expert and painstaking work ninety-five years ago, and they are indebted too to Elizabeth Mans for making these photographs and other valuable historical documents available to us. Des Braiden, in designing this book, has kept a fine balance between word, picture and space, and his sketches are further proof of his many talents.

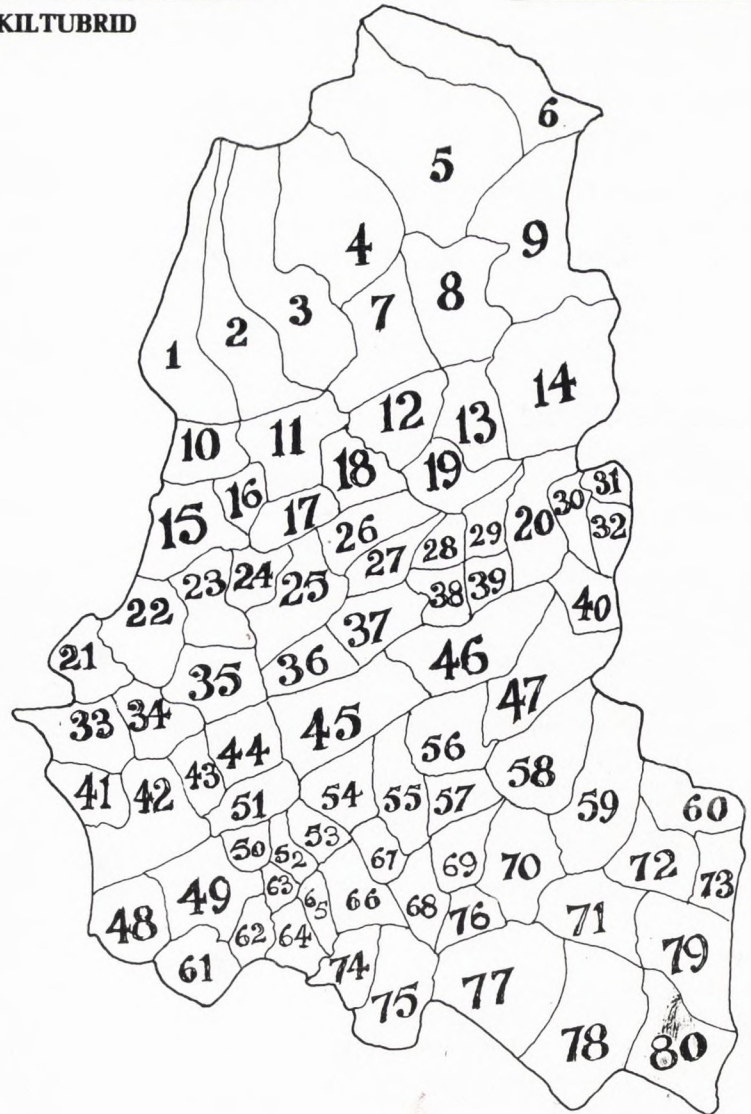
Since the oral tradition seems to be dying the need to record the past is greater than ever. Now is a good time for Kiltubrid people to look back: they can learn from the past without becoming slaves to it. The present generation of Kiltubrid people are forward looking and hopeful. They have, in the past ten years, built a new Church, a new pitch and a new school, in the knowledge that people will always pray and play and try to understand what they experience.

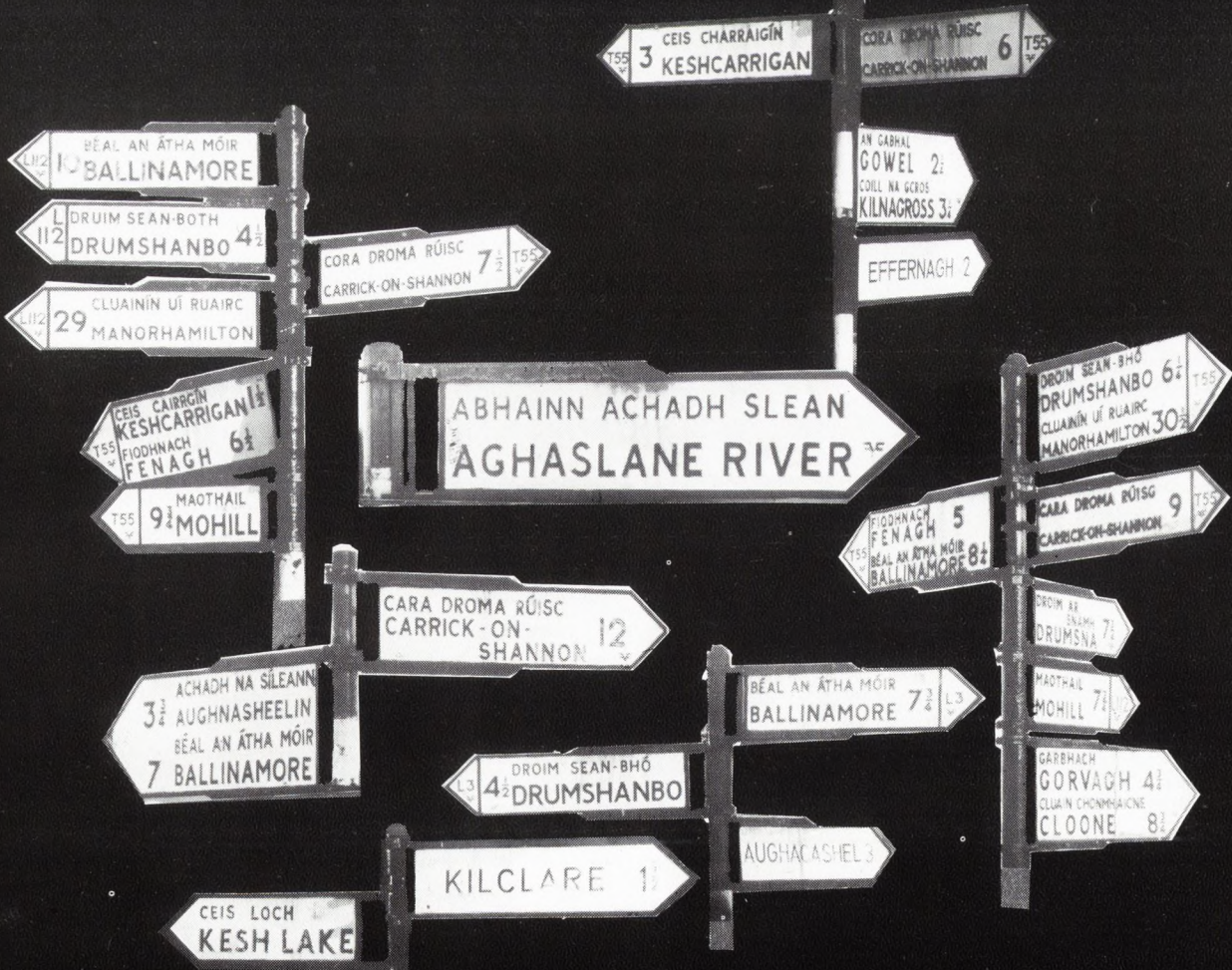
Kiltubrid should remain a good place to live in.

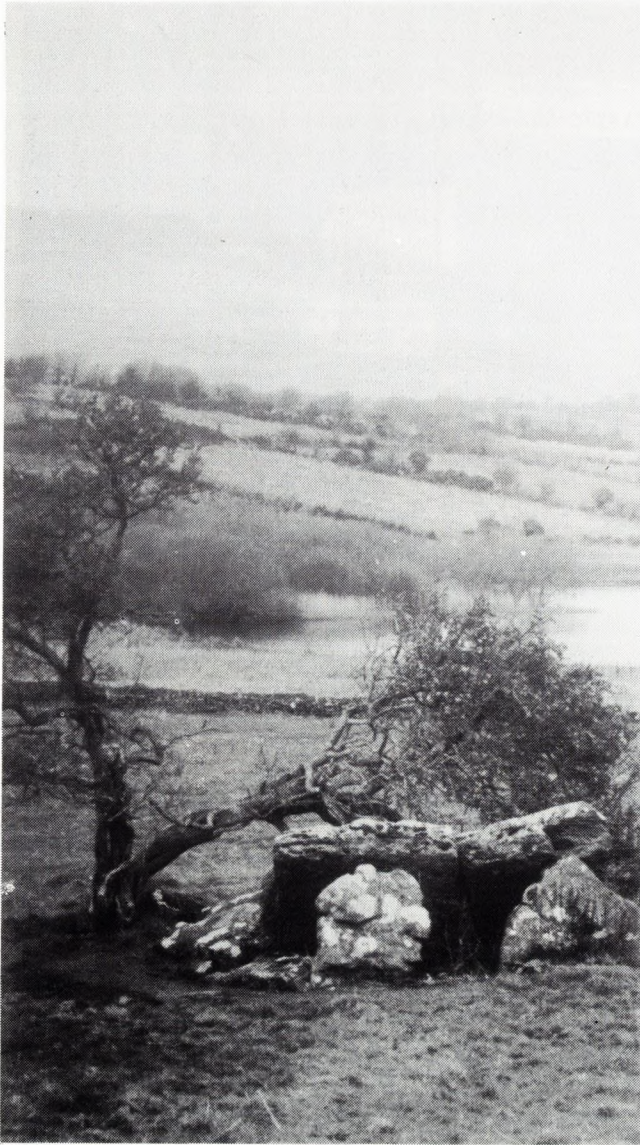
1 May, 1984.

KILTUBRID

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Aghaginny | 41 Aghakilmore |
| 2 Aghakilbrack | 42 Drumrukill |
| 3 Mohercregg | 43 Loughconway |
| 4 Gortnawaun | 44 Drumbollog |
| 5 Mullagharve | 45 Roscarbin |
| 6 Derrien | 46 Driney |
| 7 Bunrevagh | 47 Rossy |
| 8 Rantogue | 48 Kilclarbeg |
| 9 Aghacashel | 49 Kilclare Mor |
| 10 Drumany | 50 Scrabbagh |
| 11 Liscarbin | 51 Mullaghaneigh |
| 12 Mullaun | 52 Seltan (Moran) |
| 13 Drumaweel | 53 Seltan (McDonald) |
| 14 Crummy | 54 Letterfine |
| 15 Curragha | 55 Sheebeg |
| 16 Edenavow | 56 Gowley |
| 17 Drumad (Beirne) | 57 Rossy |
| 18 Drumad (Moran) | 58 Keshcarrigan |
| 19 Drumineigh | 59 Tooman |
| 20 Drumhubrid | 60 Drumingna |
| 21 Leitra | 61 Drumbranned |
| 22 Moherevogagh | 62 Kiltynashinnagh |
| 23 Carrickport | 63 Mullaghaneigh |
| 24 Cornaleck | 64 Edenmore |
| 25 Mullaghcullen | 65 Drumparsons |
| 26 Roscunnish | 66 Mullaghboy |
| 27 Lisdromacrone | 67 Garvagh |
| 28 Drumadkey | 68 Shanraw |
| 29 Aughrim | 69 Laheen |
| 30 Aghaslane | 70 Clooney |
| 31 Corrasmaghooil | 71 Prughlish |
| 32 Drumgud | 72 Drumaragh |
| 33 Drumkeelan | 73 Derrien (Lloyd) |
| 34 Aghnahoo | 74 Drumcromaun |
| 35 Corderry (Morton) | 75 Annaghkeenty |
| 36 Drumcong | 76 Laheen (Peyton) |
| 37 Corglass | 77 Corderry (Peyton) |
| 38 Leitrim | 78 Gortnagullion |
| 39 Kiltubrid | 79 Scardaun |
| 40 Annagh | 80 Funshinagh |







Beyond the Beginning

THE PARISH OF KILTUBRID or Cill Tiobraid, meaning the Church of the Well, takes its name from the ancient church in the townland of Kiltubrid which was demolished in early Penal times. This church, the remains of which are still standing, was built beside a holy well dedicated to St. Patrick. This well was filled-in when the church was demolished, but it sprang up a short distance away. The townland of Kiltubrid was therefore the ancient centre of the parish but that is no longer so. During the Penal times when this church was closed Mass was celebrated on the Mass rock in Gortnawan, and towards the end of the 1700s, with the relaxing of the Penal Laws, a temporary chapel, thatched and with wattles as walls, was built in the townland of Roscarbin beside where the new central school is today. Later a new church was built, not in the townland of Kiltubrid, but a few hundred yards away from the temporary building in the townland of Roscarbin. Thus a new centre, Drumcong, was created in the parish and the old centre of Cill Tiobraid was almost forgotten, though the parishioners continued to bury their dead there until the beginning of this century.

So, in many ways Kiltubrid is a parish without a centre, though some would argue it has several centres. This is partly due to the fact that the church is no longer in the townland of Kiltubrid and partly due to the fact that the townland of Kiltubrid is now called Annadale. The lady responsible for this change was a rather colourful and much loved person called Angel Anna Slacke who lived in the Big House (now owned by McGlynn's) in the townland of Kiltubrid during the latter part of the 18th century. About the year 1780 Mrs. Slacke was in Dublin 'for the purpose of enjoying the opportunities for pleasurable excitement which the metropolis at particular seasons afforded'¹ when she was converted to the newly founded religion of Methodism. From then on her house, which was situated a very short distance from the remains of the ancient Cill Tiobraid, became a centre for Methodism in the area. Services were held in the house and on two occasions, in May 1787 and in May 1789, John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, preached there and stayed with this 'lively and amiable'² family. Mrs. Anna Slacke was commonly referred to as the 'Queen of the Dale' and after she died in 1796 the townland became known as 'Annadale'. At one time there was a church, a townland and a parish called Cill Tiobraid. Only the parish remains.

¹ St. Patrick was the patron saint of the parish until sometime in the 17th century when he was replaced by St. Brigid. This was probably due to a mistaken derivation of the name Kiltubrid.

The French arrived in Killala two years after Anna Slacke died and they must have been a great curiosity as they passed through the parish on their way to Ballinamuck in the first week of September 1798. This unlikely mixture of French soldiers and Irish peasants inspired some parishioners to join them and march to their death, and they inspired George Nugent Reynolds, the young magistrate and poet from Letterfine, to write a dramatic musical. This varied reaction to the French marching through the parish is an indication of the two very distinct lifestyles of the people in the area: that of the landlord and that of the peasant.

Samuel Lewis, an Englishman, while passing through the parish in 1837, thirty nine years after the French, noted who the landlords were:

*'The principal seats are Loughscur, the residence of R. McNamara Esq.; Laheen of J. Reynolds Peyton Esq.; Annadale of W. Randal Slacke Esq.; Driney of G.H.C. Peyton Esq.; and Aughacashel of J. Johnston Esq. near which coal is partially worked by the peasantry.'*³

He would have referred to virtually all the people of the parish as 'peasantry' because they were practically all living in extreme poverty in over-crowded mud-walled houses, built on small patches of land, and depending on the potato crop for survival.

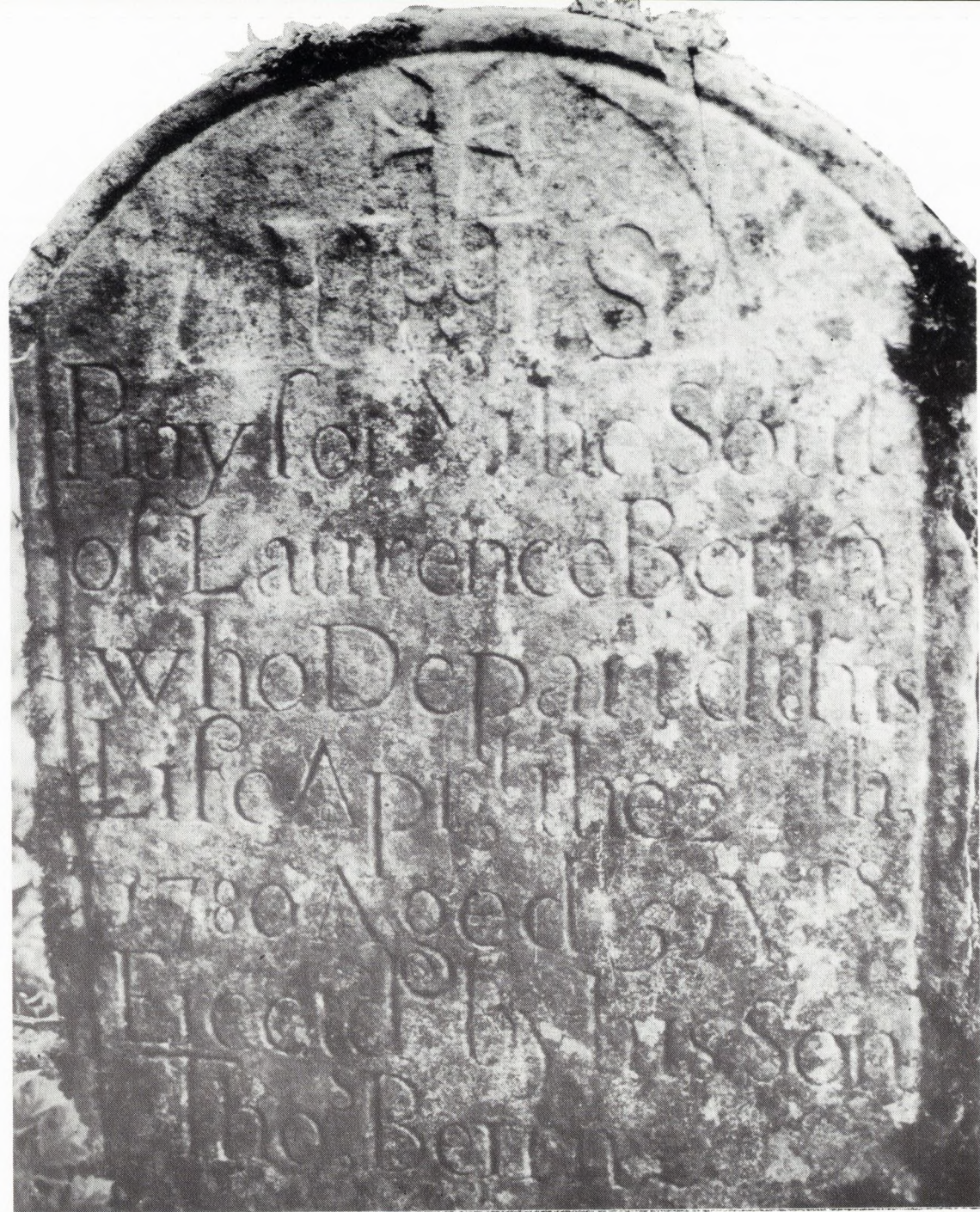
**Stone Bowl from the original
Church at Annadale.**



**Holy Well, Annadale.
(August 1889)**



Annadale House (August 1889)



Angel Anna Slacke was born in 1748. At the age of sixteen or seventeen she married her cousin, William Slacke. He it was who had Kiltubrid House renamed 'Annadale' in her honour. Angel Anna was an intelligent woman who liked to write, (though some would say she suffered from an excess of religious fervour after she became a Methodist). She kept a diary (at irregular intervals) beginning in June 1785 and ending in July 1796 — a few months before her death. The following transcript from her diary gives an insight into some of the disturbances in the parish in the years before the 1798 Rising.

June 1795.

It was suspected that the papists who are (in my mind) too much oppressed, were meditating a severe stroke against all the Protestants of this Kingdom, and to promote their scheme they cut down many trees in different parts of the Kingdom. I have heard the strokes of the hatchet from 10 till 2 o'clock at night, felling some of my husbands timber, some which grew very near the house, of which they formed handles for spears, pikes and forks.

On Thursday 23rd of April eleven policemen were murdered a few miles from my house, and that day all the roads, fields and hills seemed to teem with life. We were out taking the air as far as our Clafs Leader's house, and during time of prayer some man came in to demand his gun. One begg'd pardon and withdrew then appeared when he found prayer was over and many more came, and seemed to be on fire — rage, malice, revenge and murder was marked on their faces, and influenced their words and gestures. We returned home

and brought our pious leader with us — before we reached Annadale we were told that two parties of Mob had come, and the last set had broke open a window and enter'd the house and taken three or four guns and a blunderbuss. I found my soul thankful that the children and servants were safe. Mr. Slacke had left home early that day. We returned solemn praise to the King of Kings and sat down to our dinner in peace, but had not left the table when the Lawn, which is before our door, was filled with men, well armed and in a furious rage. They did not believe that our arms had been taken before, and went up stairs like a whirlwind swearing horribly — yet the Eternal God had his bridle in their mouth, and restrained their violence — and after much bustle they went away. Three parties more came at different times for arms but finding none, eat and drank and went on their way.

Mr. Slacke came home safe to us — my sons were also safe, being not thought old enough to force along with the people who were called Defenders, as it was said that they would compel Protestants to march in the front of their army to receive the first fire from the established soldiery. But thank God he took care for me and mine.

When the Military appear'd near a hill called Sheebeg, where above a thousand of the rebels had stationed themselves to give battle, a terror seized the poor undisciplined multitude and they fled away to confusion — After this they made head again and fought the Militia at Drumsna, but were overpowered and routed. Many battles they have had.

Those thirty nine years between the French passing through the parish in 1798 and Samuel Lewis passing through in 1837 was a time of dramatic increase in the population of the parish, and this increase was to continue until halted and reversed by the Great Famine which began on a large scale in 1847. The census returns of 1831 are the first figures we have available and according to that report (which may not be completely accurate) there were 6,508 people living in the parish. Ten years later, in 1841, this figure had increased to 7,228 and while we have no population figures for the parish on the eve of the Famine, chances are that there were almost 8,000 people living in Kiltubrid in 1846.

Since there are approximately 900 people living in the parish today, and since there were even fewer in the parish ten years ago, we find it difficult to visualize so many people living in the parish just one hundred and forty years ago. A few facts might help: In 1837 Samuel Lewis reported that there were approximately 750 children attending the six schools in the parish. In the month of January 1841 there were twenty one baptisms recorded in the parish register, and in the first two months of that year there were nineteen weddings in the parish with six weddings on one day, 22 February 1841 (most likely Shrove Tuesday). According to 'Griffith's Valuation', which was not compiled until 1856, when the worst of the Famine was over, there were thirty four householders in

the townland of Crummy. Today there are five householders in the same townland.

This alarming increase in population added to the poverty of an already impoverished people. People married young and had large families. Fathers divided their few acres among their sons. Land was starved by growing potatoes on the same patch each year. There were more people and there was less food. In 1844, John Duke, a doctor based in Mohill, who most likely attended people in the parish of Kiltubrid, reported to the 'Devon Commission' on the plight on the peasants:

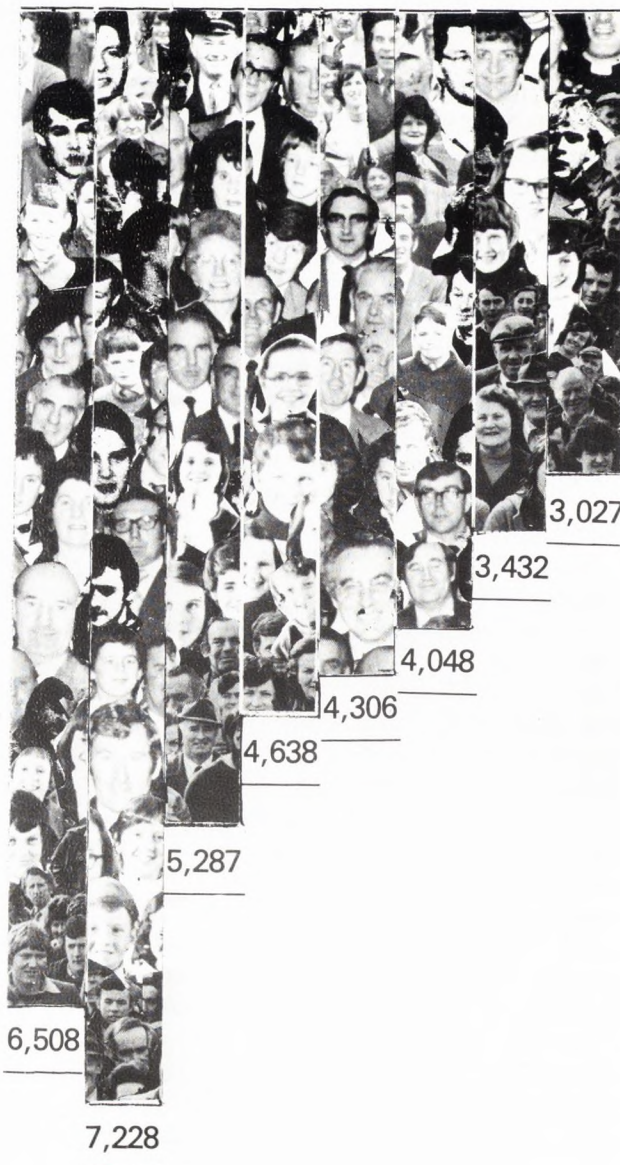
'They are not able to pay their rents, and they are lying naked and in such a state that it would hardly be believed...They have no bedstead; they are lying on a small quantity of straw, sometimes rushes; they have no covering over them, or one blanket among six...But I generally see one (bed) for the old couple and the rest of the family generally lie on the ground. It is lamentable to see their state, to which, above all other things, I attribute the fever that prevails to a frightening extent...With respect to food...it is never better than potatoes and milk in Summer, and in Winter they have not the milk. Sometimes they get herring or stirabout...but latterly they have not been able to get that.'

There had been rumours of blight on the potato stalks as early as 1845 but by September 1847 the potato crop throughout most of the country was destroyed. Many from the parish died from hunger, typhus, fever and despair. Often people had not the energy to bring their dead to Cill Tiobraid for burial, and besides, the parish priest, Fr. Michael Fanning (1846-1855), was

already overworked, so many from the upper end of the parish who died during the worst of the Famine were buried in an unmarked field in Mullaghgarve. Of those who lived some took to the road, begging. Others who got into the overcrowded workhouses in Mohill and Carrick considered themselves lucky. The younger and more energetic people began to emigrate to England and to the United States, though many of them never reached their destinations.

We do not know how many parishioners died or how many emigrated during the worst years of the Famine, principally because the parish records are scanty for these years. The growth in the population of the parish which continued for the first half of the 1800's was not only checked by death and emigration during the Famine, but in the four years between 1847 and 1851 the population of the parish decreased by approximately two and a half thousand. The following is a table of the population of Kiltubrid at ten year intervals between 1831 and 1901:

1831 1841 1851 1861 1871 1881 1891 1901



SCHOOLS IN KILTUBRID IN 1826

During the first two decades of the 1800's the old 'Hedge Schools' were on the way out and had been, in many instances, replaced by private schools. These private schools could be financed either by a local landlord or by a Church body or simply by contributions from the pupils. The information given below is taken from the Education Report of 1826. The number of pupils listed for each school may not be very accurate. I have taken the figures given by the Catholic enumerator, but the number actually attending the school regularly was probably much less.

Cordery Morton:

Conor Rowan, a Catholic, taught here in 'a mud wall cabin'. He was paid £10 annually by the London Hibernian Society. There were seventy pupils on the rolls, eight of them being Protestant.

Curroghin:

The school house was rented from a Mr. Hyland for £7-10-0 per year. Francis Mulvey, a Catholic, taught here and he was paid between £16 and £18 each year. There were eighty pupils on the rolls, nineteen of them being Protestant.

Drumkeelan:

There were two schools in this townland. The poorer of the two was only 'an outhouse, lent by a neighbour'. Abraham Taylor, a Protestant, taught there, and he was paid one shilling per pupil by the Rector. There were twenty six pupils on the rolls and sixteen of them were Protestant.

John Cowan, a Protestant, taught in the other school in the townland. Classes were held in 'the Master's dwelling house'. The teacher got an allowance from the London Hibernian Society and also from the pupils. There were thirty pupils in the school, half of them being Protestant.

Cashcarrigan:

There were two schools here too. One of the schools was 'an upper room in a Police barrack'. There were two women teaching in this school, Sarah Ormsby, a Catholic, and Mrs. Rodgers, a Protestant. Their salary

was only £3 per year.

Joseph Logan, a Catholic, taught in the other school in 'Cashcarrigan'. His school was a 'rented cabin' and there were eighty pupils on the rolls, seven of them being Protestant. He had a salary ranging from £16 to £25 and the school had associations with the London Hibernian Society.

Corglass:

It was a 'parish school', and the Rector subsidized it to the sum of £4-3-6. The building itself was described as 'a cabin' but the teacher, Timothy Beirne, a Protestant, had the handsome salary of £15-17-6 a year. There were thirty seven on the rolls, twenty two being Catholic.

Liscarbon:

This school was subsidized by Lord Southwell. The building was described as 'very bad; stone and mud'. Yet there were two teachers in it, Patrick Early and Hugh Mulvey, both Catholics. Their pay was fourteen guineas a year. There were fifty two pupils on the rolls, seven of them being Protestant. Of the total number on the rolls only eighteen were girls.

Ahcuslan:

This was a small school and the building was described as 'a mud wall, lent by a neighbour'. Andrew McWeeney, a Catholic, was the only teacher and his salary was a mere £6 per year. There were twenty three pupils on the rolls, all of them Catholics.

Derran:

(Derrien?). The school building was described as 'a mud wall house lent by some neighbours', and it was rented for £4 a year. John Spirit, a Catholic, taught here and his pay was £8 per annum. There were thirty nine pupils, all Catholics, on the rolls.

Mullaghboy:

This building was 'a bad mud house' and it was rented each year for six guineas. John Reynolds, a Catholic, was the only teacher in the school and he had an excellent salary of £20 per year. However, he had eighty pupils on the rolls, one of them being Protestant.

Lisgarny:(?)

Patrick Reynolds, a Catholic, teaches in this school. His father's house was used as the school building. There were twenty eight pupils on the rolls, one of them being a Protestant. The teacher's salary was £6 per year.

In the sixty years between 1841 and 1901 the population of the parish was more than halved. In 1901 there were 4,201 less people in the parish than in 1841. This pattern of emigration can be best understood if we examine two townlands, Aughacashel and Corderry Peyton. In 1841 there were 118 people living in Aughacashel. In 1901 there were only 27. In 1841 there were 252 people living in 43 houses in Corderry Peyton; in 1901 there were 80 people living in 16 houses and today there are 26 people living in 9 houses in the townland.

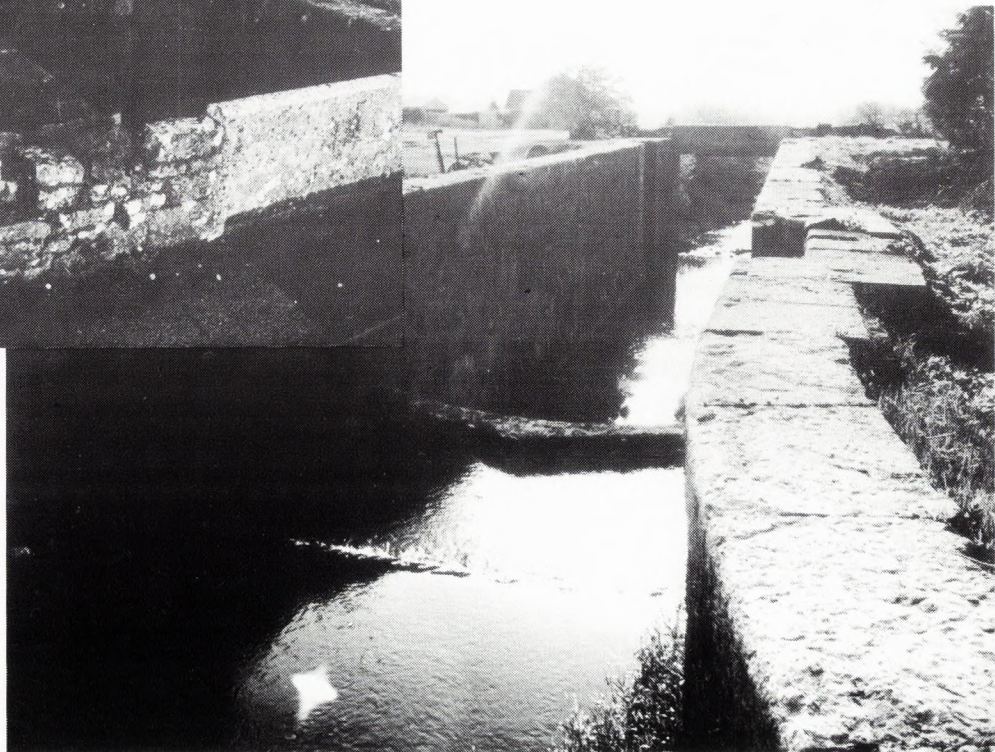
This pattern of emigration, which began on a large scale in those Famine years, continued at a slower pace but without a break until the early 1970's. And it is against this background of a parish drained of its youth that the history of the G.A.A. in the parish must be placed and understood.

The ambitious undertaking to build a canal linking the Shannon and the Erne was begun in 1846. This canal was to pass through the centre of the parish with Lough Scur, the highest point, having water flowing from it towards the Shannon and towards the Erne. Work began in June 1846 on the project but it was not until 1849, when the area was designated a distressed area, that work began on it in earnest, and that it was seen as relief work. It is estimated that at one time in 1849 there were almost 4,000 people working on the thirty-six mile stretch of canal. Some of the most difficult work was cutting through

rock at Letterfine. In 1850 they laid a special rail line from Letterfine to Lough Scur and used a horse-drawn tram to transport the rock and soil to Lough Scur. The mill belonging to John and Pat Doherty (Kilclare) was threatened by the development since water was diverted from it, though they continued to work it for many years with water which leaked from the canal. By 1859 the canal was completed. It was a failure from a navigational point of view, but it was a successful drainage system, and it provided employment in the parish at a time when such relief work was sorely needed.⁴

The Famine had a demoralizing effect on the Irish people. There was an ever-growing conviction that any improvement in their lot would have to be wrested from Westminster, though there was no general agreement about how best to do this. The system of landlordism, particularly absentee landlordism, was seen by many as the greatest obstacle to tenant farmers improving their situation. But there was hope, because even after the Young Irelander's activities of 1848 and the Fenian rising of 1867 seemed to have failed, there were new leaders emerging: Michael Davitt in the area of land reform, Parnell in the area of parliamentary agitation and Archbishop Croke in social and religious affairs.

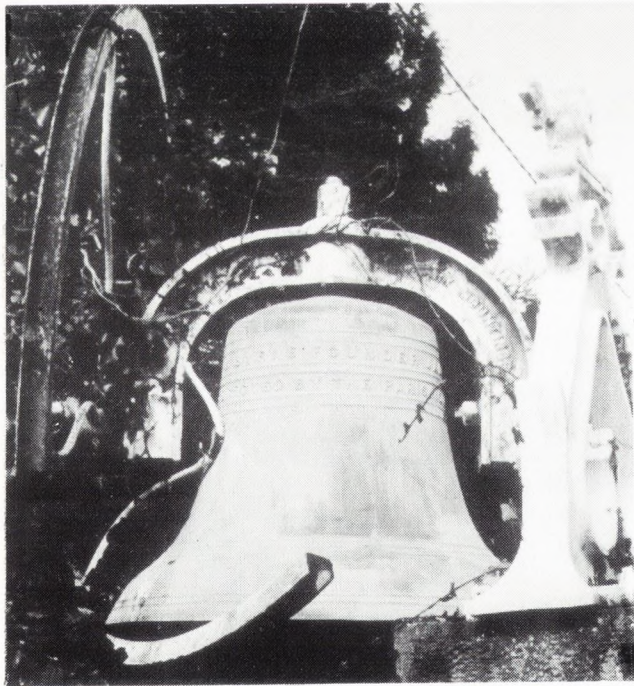
Canal Lock at Kilclare.



VALUATION OF TENEMENTS.

PARISH OF KILTUBBRID.

		CRUMMY. (Ord. S. 24.)												
1	a	Michl. M'Weeny, sen.	William Duckworth,	House, office, & land,	252	1	18	1 15 0	0 10 0	2 5 0				
	b	Michael Dwyer, .		House, office, & land,				1 15 0	0 10 0	2 5 0				
	c	Francis Mulvanaghty,		House, office, & land,				1 15 0	0 10 0	2 5 0				
	d	Michael M'Weeny,		House, office, & land,				1 15 0	0 10 0	2 5 0				
	e	John M'Weeny, .		House, office, & land,				2 5 0	0 10 0	2 15 0				
	f	Patrick Flynn, .		House, office, & land,				2 5 0	0 10 0	2 15 0				
	g	Thomas Flynn, .		House, office, & land,				2 5 0	0 10 0	2 15 0				
	h	James Reddicau,		House, offices, & land,				6 0 0	1 0 0	7 0 0				
	i	Patrick Reddicau,		House, office, & land,				2 0 0	0 10 0	2 10 0				
	j	John Dignan, .		House, office, & land,				0 15 0	0 5 0	1 0 0				
	k	Patrick Flynn, sen.,		House, office, & land,				2 10 0	0 10 0	3 0 0				
	l	John Mahon, .		House and land,				1 10 6	0 10 0	2 0 0				
	2	a		Edward Lynch, .				Same, . . .	1 1 31	0 10 0	0 5 0	0 15 0		
	3	a		Patrick Conway, .				Same, . . .	13 1 15	1 10 0	0 5 0	1 15 0		
4	a	Patrick M'Govern, .	Same, . . .	House, offices, & land,	46	1	10	6 5 0	0 10 0	6 15 0				
	b	Patrick Cullen, .		House, office, & land,				2 15 0	0 10 0	3 5 0				
5	a	Bernard M'Weeny, .	Same, . . .	4 2 27	1 0 0	0 5 0	1 5 0							
6	a	Michael Mitchell, .	William Duckworth,	House, office, & land,	16	2	15	1 5 0	0 5 0	1 10 0				
	b	Thomas Mitchell, .		House, office, & land,				1 5 0	0 5 0	1 10 0				
-	c	Michael Early, .	Thomas Guckian, .	House and garden,	0	3	0	0 5 0	0 5 0	0 10 0				
7	a	Thomas Guckian, .	William Duckworth,	House, offices, and land,	41	3	38	6 0 0	0 15 0	6 15 0				
-	b	Michael Murray, .	Thomas Guckian, .	House, . . .	-	-	-	0 5 0	0 5 0	0 5 0				
-	c	Patrick Mulvey, .	William Duckworth,	Land (no value), .	0	0	30	-	-	-				
-	d	James Mulvey, .	Thomas Guckian, .	Land (no value), .	0	2	15	-	-	-				
8	a	Michael Early, .	William Duckworth,	Land,	39	1	15	2 10 0	-	2 10 0				
	b	Michael Mulvey, .		House and land,				1 10 0	0 5 0	1 15 0				
	c	Terence Gillooly, .		House, office, & land,				2 0 0	0 10 0	2 10 0				
	d	James Mulvey, .		House and land,				1 0 0	0 5 0	1 5 0				
	e	Hugh Mahon, .		House and land,				1 0 0	0 5 0	1 5 0				
9	a	Margaret Winters, .	Same, . . .	House and land,	35	1	21	1 0 0	0 5 0	1 5 0				
	b	Michael Reynolds, .		House, offices, & land,				3 0 0	0 15 0	3 15 0				
10	a	Thomas Dwyer, .	Same, . . .	House, offices, & land,	6	0	0	6 0 0	0 15 0	6 15 0				
11	a	Michael Dwyer, jun.,	Same, . . .	Land,	16	0	39	4 0 0	-	4 0 0				
12	a	John Creamer, .	Same, . . .	House, office, and land,	8	1	27	2 0 0	0 5 0	2 5 0				
13	a	Thomas Reynolds, .	Same, . . .	House and land,	7	1	25	1 15 0	0 5 0	2 0 0				
14	a	James Mulvey, .	Same, . . .	Land,	1	3	8	0 5 0	-	0 5 0				
15	a	Denis Mulvanaghty, .	Same, . . .	House, offices, and land,	12	0	31	2 15 0	0 10 0	3 5 0				
	b	Mary Gillooly, .		House & gar. (no value),				0	0	23	-	0 5 0	0 5 0	
16	a	Michael Reynolds, .	Same, . . .	Land,	16	2	23	4 0 0	-	4 0 0				
	b	Thomas M'Weeny, .		House, office, and land,				10	0	0	4 15 0	0 15 0	5 10 0	
					Total, . . .		525 3 11		84 15 0		14 15 0		99 10 0	



In 1823 a group of Dublin lawyers started the Catholic Association, an organization pledged to work for Catholic Emancipation. Soon Daniel O'Connell became the leading figure in the association and he organized it countrywide on a parish basis, with each member contributing a penny each month. This interesting letter was sent by the parish priest of 'Kiltubrid and Cashcarrigan' to the Catholic Association in 1828.*

My Dear Sir,

As a constant reader of your patriotic paper, I beg leave to request that you will hand to the secretary of the Catholic Association, my subscription to the Catholic rent of one pound. I assert that the people of this poor parish are sensible of their wrongs, and are anxious to pay the new C.R. as they have spiritually done previously to the close of the Old Association. Their hitherto non-commencing the collection of the rent is to be imputed to the distress under which they labour, by getting a new roof on their chapel last year, and enlarging it this year by building galleries unaided by their Protestant brethren, although solicited when assembled in public vestry to lay on an adequate sum in addition to the Church Cess. Notwithstanding their being at present destitute of money, and a great debt impending over them, yet I can judge from their spirit that they will, ere long, make an effort to join in the general struggle for the emancipation of Ireland.

I have the honour to be, etc.

*John Maguire, P.P. of Kiltubrid and
Cashcarrigan, Co. Leitrim.*

SCHOOLS IN KILTUBRID IN 1868

In 1831 the British Government set up a National Board of Education. This Board was responsible for the setting up of the 'National' schools. There were twelve schools in the parish in 1868, many of them being recently established 'National' schools.

Moherrevogagh:

There were sixty pupils on the rolls and five of them were Protestant.

Aughacashel:

This was a 'National school' and there were forty one pupils on the rolls, thirty six being Catholic.

Crummy:

This too was a National school. There were thirty one pupils on the rolls and all of them were Catholic.

Funshinagh:

There were fifty seven on the rolls here and two of them were Protestant.

Gowley:

According to the Education Report of 1868 there was no school in Keshcarrigan but two schools in the nearby townland of Gowley. One of these was an all-boys school with twenty three on the rolls and the others was an all-girls school with fifteen on the rolls. All of the girls at this school were Catholic.

Kiltubrid:

(Annadale). This was a Church of England school and it had no connection with the Na-

tional Board. Of the eighteen pupils on the rolls five were Catholic.

Kilclare:

There were seventy one pupils on the rolls in this National school. Four of them were Protestants.

Liscarbon:

There was an all-boys school here. This was not a National school. There were forty four boys on the rolls, two of them being Protestant.

Moher Gregg:

This was an all-girls school with thirty four pupils on the rolls.

Rossy:

There were only seventeen pupils on the rolls here, all of them being Catholic.

Drumkeelan:

There were twenty four boys and nineteen girls in this school and all of them were Catholics.

This was an all-girls school with thirty four pupils on the rolls.

Rossy:

There were only seventeen pupils on the rolls here, all of them being Catholic.

Drumkeelan:

There were twenty four boys and nineteen girls in this school and all of them were Catholics.

Scoil Lior Scarbhin
Scoil Naíonca
LISCARBINNATIONAL SCHOOL

Scoil Céir Carrigin.
Scoil Naíonca
KESHICARRIGAN NATIONAL SCHOOL

CRUMMY
NATIONAL
SCHOOL
1885

AUCHACASHEL
NATIONAL SCHOOL
1904

KILCLARE
NATIONAL SCHOOL
1894

Scoil Ros Ár
Scoil Naíonca
ROSSY NATIONAL SCHOOL

Yet, for the majority of the people of Kiltubrid the threat of starvation was never far away. By 1880 things were reaching a crisis point again. It was an exceptionally bad year weather-wise and crops were once again lost. Many tenants were badly in arrears with rents and were threatened with eviction. But the people of the parish were now getting organised to prevent such evictions. On 19 September 1880 a huge meeting of tenant farmers was held at Proughlish 'in reference to proposed evictions'. This mass meeting, which was probably held at the junction with the Drumsna road was attended by five bands leading contingents from Mohill, Ballinamore, Carrick-on-Shannon, Fenagh and Keshcarrigan. Jasper Tully, the editor of the *Roscommon Herald* and later to be an M.P., was the main speaker. Among the locals on the platform were John Rutledge (Kesh), William Walsh (Proughlish) and T. Ward (Proughlish). Mr. Thomas Moran (Tooman) proposed a resolution protesting against evictions and pledging not to take farms from which tenants had been evicted. William Walsh, described as a tenant farmer from Proughlish, proposed that

'we resolve to use all the means in our power to abolish the system of landlordism which has operated against the peace and happiness and prosperity of the country, and we will regard as the only final solution of the land question the immediate establishment of a system of peasant proprietary'.⁵

These resolutions were passed amid shouts and cheers, but an even greater enemy than the landlord was said to be the land-grabber, the one who took the land from which another had been evicted. The report on the meeting in the *Leitrim Advertiser* concludes by saying:

'The people dispersed quietly. A government notetaker was refused admission to the platform. A large body of police, under the command of the County Inspector, were drawn up under arms about one hundred yards from the place of the meeting'.

This was only one of a series of large meetings to be held in surrounding towns and the Kiltubrid contingent, carrying their own banner and marching behind their own band, attended each one of them.

So, as evictions became more common in the parish, people began to resist and retaliate. It was at this time that 'boycott' became a new word in the English language and a new weapon in the hands of the tenant farmers. There was retaliation as well as resistance. A number of people from the Kilclare area were taken to court for assaulting a family who had taken over a farm from which another had been evicted. John Reynolds Peyton, a landlord who owned 400 acres of land in Laheen, Clooney and Letterfine died in 1850. His eldest son, Richard, who succeeded him, leased the house in Laheen to Michael Fitzgerald. He died in 1875 and the then owner, James Reynolds Peyton leased it to Patrick Murphy. By 1880 Murphy was in arrears with rent and in November of that year,

CORDERRY HILL

when Michael Barrett and another of Peyton's bailiffs went to collect the grazing rents they were met by a crowd of over four hundred people outside Keshcarrigan and 'persuaded' to turn back without the rent. Twenty-three of the crowd were prosecuted for obstructing the bailiffs but the case was dismissed when Barrett (who was generally popular in the area) refused to give evidence against them. Eventually Murphy surrendered the farm and it was boycotted. When Peyton heard of the boycott he stocked the land at Letterfine himself. Soon the cattle were driven off and the walls and fences broken down. Michael Murphy of Glasdrumm in the parish of Fenagh, who was only seventeen years old, was arrested and charged with organizing the party who drove the cattle off the land. He got a hero's send-off at Carrick railway station on his way to jail in Galway.⁶

Richard Reynolds Peyton of Laheen leased his estate to Michael Fitzgerald, a Longford man, c. 1855. Fitzgerald, a Catholic, was a brother of Canon Thomas Fitzgerald who was parish priest in Carrick on Shannon from 1872 to 1887. He was a magistrate and was very popular with the people of the area. Duffy, Peyton's gamekeeper, was not so popular. Costello, the man who owned the greyhound, lived in Annaghkeenty. Corderry Hill is in the townland of Corderry Peyton and is tucked in between the townlands of Annaghkeenty and Laheen. This ballad recalls an incident which took place sometime between 1855 and 1875 (the year Fitzgerald died). I am indebted to Eddie Flynn, a native of Kilnagros, for the words of this ballad. He learned it in 1906.

*Come all ye gay sportsmen who follow the game,
Give ear to these verses I'm going to explain.
Where'er you go hunting go where you will
But never go hunting to Corderry Hill.*

*In the month of October one morning so fair,
For sweet recreation we all did repair.
When Costello's greyhound the chase did pursue,
Then gamekeeper Duffy appeared in our view.*

*Then concealed from our sight in close ambush he lay,
Just like any prowler who lurks for his prey.
We did not degrade him, we thought it a shame
For some gallant hero belongs to that name.
Be it not for that reason his blood we would spill,
When he shot our fine greyhound on Corderry Hill.*

*To the Court in Keshcarrigan one morning so fair
To stand at our trial we all did repair.
The lake by the courthouse looked tranquil and still
And bright shone the sun over Corderry Hill.*

*'Twas Mr. Fitzgerald who sat in the chair.
"Come all ye gay sportsmen and what brought you here?"
"We were summoned by Duffy our trial to stand
To be fined or confined by the laws of the land".'*

*"Well", says Mr. Fitzgerald, "It seems very strange,
It can't be such treason those hills for to range.
Old Nimrod had hunted and sported at will
On plains more extensive than Corderry Hill".'*

*Up spoke Captain Kelly, his answer was keen.
"The laws are quite altered from what they had been.
In the days of old Nimrod the Scriptures shows plain,
No laws then existed, few monarchs did reign".'*

*"Those men have trespassed on the landlord's domain.
They've broken his fences and hunted his game.
To do your duty I know you'll not fail,
But send those culprits to old Carrick jail."*

*"Well", says Mr. Fitzgerald, "it will not be so.
For I will befriend them as well you may know.
I'll pledge for their conduct £100 bail.
And one of my tenants shall not go to jail.*

*Our trial is over and now we are free
From fine or confinement as right well you see.
Three cheers for the sons of our country we gave,
And three cheers for Fitzgerald so noble and brave.*

Yet, despite the poverty and the continued emigration from the parish in the 1880's, the picture was not a totally dismal one. The village of Keshcarrigan had been largely unaffected by emigration. In fact, in 1841 there were twenty-one houses and 132 people in the village, and forty years later there were twenty-seven houses in the 'town' and a population of 140. The town of Keshcarrigan (often spelled Cashcarrigan) was the only area of the parish to have an increase in population during the forty years from 1841 to 1881. And while the houses were small, thatched and poor, especially those in the two back streets which ran parallel to the main one, Kesh could boast of a police barracks, a courthouse, a market-house, post-office, three taverns, a forge and a national school. Besides, the fair of Kesh was still a thriving one. But the 1880's was the high point of the town of Kesh and by 1901 there were only 98 people living in it.

By the 1880's it was obvious that the canal was a failure from a navigational point of view. From 1883 onwards there were rumours of another transport system, a narrow gauge railway, being built to link some towns in West Cavan and South Leitrim. In October 1886 work started on the line and it was completed towards the end of the following year. From then until it was closed in 1959 the chugging and whistling of the steam engine were familiar sounds in the area as the train wended its way from Cornabrone along the road to Kiltubrid station and from there to Drumshanbo. The sounds were slightly different as it returned with its cargo of coal from Arigna. The narrow gauge, which ran dangerously close to the road, and which caused a number of deaths, was a great boost to the parish at a time when it was sorely needed. In those early days it gave some locals employment and it was too a sign of hope.⁷



**The Cavan, Leitrim Roscommon Light Railway
stopped at Annadale (August 1889).**



'Dear Sir,

I have often wondered why the grand game of football has never made any progress in this county. In the whole round of amusements none can be compared with this manly pastime. It is played at a season when no other outdoor sport can be indulged in. The exercise it gives is admirably suited to develop the body, and the coolness and judgement required in playing has a beneficial effect on the mind. It was my privilege to learn the game in that cradle of football, Santry school. Since then I have played in England, Wales and Dublin, but no place have I seen men more suited for it than the men of Leitrim. I would urge upon them, through the columns of your influential journal the advisability of at once starting a club and arranging matches. If this be done I have no doubt that the day is not far distant when Leitrim shall not only make a name for itself and Connaught, but shall send forth men who will uphold the honour of old Ireland.

I am dear Sir, yours faithfully,

*John Taylor,
Funshinagh, Keshcarrigan'.*

There had been little sporting activity in the parish in the 1880's, though according to local folklore some hurling was played with 'whin' or furze sticks. But the young men who did not emigrate after the Famine had no sporting activities and there seemed little for them to do except to lounge idly around on a Sunday afternoon or destroy the boredom with alcohol. And even though the G.A.A. was founded in 1884 there was still no organized sport in the parish five years later. One parishioner, though, was aware of the need for some organized sport in the area when he wrote the following letter to the *Leitrim Advertiser* in January 1889:

Mr. Taylor saw that the time was right to get some sporting activity organized in the area. But the game which was to be played in the parish within a short time was not the game of rugby football he advocated, but the not too dissimilar Gaelic football. This was a game played under the rules laid down by the G.A.A. which was founded in Thurles in 1884 and since that had 'spread like a prairie fire'⁸ throughout the country. That fire reached Kiltubrid in the early spring of 1889.



Mikey Lynch, Lisdromacrone (August 1889)



**Shop of Thomas Conboy, Annadale, 1889, now
owned by Gaynors.**

1. 'The Irish Evangelist' 1 October, 1861.
2. John Wesley's Journal, vol. 8.
3. 'Topographical Dictionary of Ireland', S. Lewis.
4. cf. 'The Ballinamore and Ballyconnell Canal', P. Flanagan.
5. *Leitrim Advertiser*: 30 Sept. 1880.
6. For an excellent account of land agitation in South Leitrim during these years cf. article by Fr. D. Gallogly in 1983 issue of 'Breifne'.
7. cf. 'Cavan and Leitrim Railway', P. Flanagan.
8. Michael Cusack

In The Beginning

ALTHOUGH the Gaelic Athletic Association was founded in 1884 it was not until five years later, early in 1889, that there was any attempt to organize a branch of that association in the parish of Kiltubrid. Early that year a number of young men from the Kilclare, Drumcong and Annadale areas of the parish got together each Sunday to practice Gaelic football as laid down by the rules of the association. These practices were held on Beirne's rock beside Annadale. This land was owned by Thomas Beirne, who, as we shall see, was very involved in the setting up of the first G.A.A. club in the parish, and he normally refereed those early practices.

New clubs had been formed in several parishes in Leitrim during those early months of 1889, and on Sunday 14 April, mainly due to the efforts of the Mohill Faugh-a-Ballagh club, these clubs came together for the first time at a meeting in Mohill 'to put Leitrim in line with the other counties of Ireland by forming a Co. Council for the management of the affairs of all the

branches in the county.'¹ Eleven clubs were represented at this meeting including Kiltubrid who were represented by John Ward (Drumhubrid). This is the first reference there is to a G.A.A. club in the parish but in fact John Ward represented a phantom club, a club that did not exist, because it was not until a week later that the Kiltubrid Michael Davitt club was formed.

Sunday 21 April, 1889 is where the history of the G.A.A. in Kiltubrid really begins. On that day a group of Kiltubrid men



met for the purpose of setting up a branch of the G.A.A. in the parish. Thomas Beirne (Annadale) was elected president. This is the Thomas Beirne referred to in the opening paragraph of this chapter. He played a vital role in the setting up of the club as president, referee, and as provider of a playing field for those first practice games. Luke Doherty was elected vice-president. He was the father of John L. Doherty, Kilclare Mor, and he was a player on the Michael Davitt team. John Ward was elected treasurer. He also played football on the Davitt's team and he represented the club at meetings of the Co. Council. Francis Kellegher (Kilclare) was elected secretary of the newly formed club. He was a most efficient secretary and were it not for the comprehensive reports of the club's activities which he sent regularly to the *Roscommon Herald* we would have little information on the birth of the G.A.A. in the parish. The following committee was elected: C. Reilly (Mullaghagarve?),² William Slack (Drumcong), J. O'Neill (Dromod Moran), Tim McKiernan (Drumgood), Thomas Gallagher (Mullaghcullen), M. Judge (Tooman), and Thomas McMorrow (Drumkeelan?).

Having elected the officers and committee they then enrolled over sixty members to the club. So there were approximately eighty men at this first meeting. They decided to name the club after Michael Davitt, the one-armed Mayo man who was then working tirelessly for the

impoverished tenant farmers of Ireland. They then made arrangements for the supplying of 'G.A.A. uniforms'. We do not know what colour these jerseys were.

This first meeting may have been held at Drumcong, though we cannot be sure about that. Another possibility is that the meeting took place in McKiernan's workshop at Aughaslane, as did the meeting of Aughaslane Young Ireland's thirty years later. But once the formalities of the meeting were over things livened up. This large body of men had to get from the meeting place to Annadale for a practice match and this was done in a manner befitting the occasion. There was a great sense of occasion, there was colour, excitement and pageantry. The *Roscommon Herald* reports:

'All the members of the club and a large contingent of the parishioners headed by their fife and drum band and a splendid new football marched to a field given by our president for the football match. The place was marked off according to the rules and Luke Doherty and John Ward appointed captains who called off twenty-one members each side, all of whom cheered heartily for the honour conferred on them. Many of the young men left standing in the cold joined the club immediately after the match was over. The Dohertys won the toss and having some practice lately, made two points and one goal in the first half time. The Wards improved their play a little but were beaten, the Dohertys making a goal and three points to nil. All present were well pleased with the play.'

Luke Doherty — Vice President of Michael Davitt's Club.

So the G.A.A. began in the parish on a wave of excitement and enthusiasm. Over sixty members enrolled at the first meeting and many more after the first practice match. Forty-two players took part in that match, and many more were waiting their chance to play. When the practice was over arrangements were made to meet in the same field the following Sunday at two o'clock to enrol new members and to have another practice. We have no account of this practice which was held on 28 April 1889, but it appears that each Sunday the newly-formed club met to enrol new members and to deal with any other club business that arose, and after the meeting held a practice match on Beirne's rock at Annadale. We have an account, however, of the club's activities two weeks later on Sunday 12 May, 1889:

An Irish Cottage, August 1889, later to become Drumcong Post Office.



*'The members met on Sunday last, and after the transaction of some routine business they repaired to the club grounds to have a practice match. At four o'clock over one hundred members were in prompt attendance, followed by a large concourse of people from the surrounding districts. The two opposing captains stepped forward and immediately forty-two picked men were in readiness, one half under the command of James Doherty and the other under Thomas McMorrow. The ball was thrown in at half past four o'clock by Mr. Thomas Beirne who acted as referee and in the course of a few minutes the ball went flying over the field. The rules were carried out in the strictest manner. A good many falls were given, which were taken in good part by the players. The first half time resulted in a draw. Owing to the heat of the day a few minutes breathing time was ordered, and again the athletes were in full swing. On the second half time the McMorrow team placed one point to their credit against nil. It was arranged by the committee that another practice match be had in the same field next Sunday.'*⁴

Obviously the club had got off to a great start and was gradually getting more organized and the players were learning the playing rules and getting in some practice. Unfortunately we do not have a list of players at this time, but we do know that people like Luke Doherty (Kilclare Mor), John Ward (Drumhubrid), James Doherty (Letterfine), and Thomas McMorrow (Drumkeelan?), played on the first Michael Davitt team. Chances are that more of the committee named above played too.

The first record we have of Kiltubrid Michael Davitt's playing a match against another club is on 31 May 1889, in a tournament in Drumshanbo. The report in

the following week's issue of the *Leitrim Advertiser* begins:

*'On last Thursday, Ascension Day, a football tournament was held at Drumshanbo, and the meeting proved to be fairly successful. The day was fairly good only for some slight showers. The attendance was fairly large and the fair sex fairly represented. A very large number of people availed themselves of travelling by the Cavan and Leitrim line of railway, and the officials acted very civilly and courteous to all. As the clubs arrived at the railway station they were greeted by the Drumshanbo team. The matches were played on the grounds of an evicted farm outside the town.'*⁵

Three domestics at Annadale (August 1889). The lady on the right is Ellen Egan.



The report then goes on to give details of the first game between Kilronan J. J. O'Kelly's and Drumshanbo St. Patrick's which ended in a draw. It has this to say about the second match:

'The next match was played between the Kiltubrid Davitt's and the Gowel Lord Edward's. This match was well played on both sides (although a good deal of argument cropped up) and at the call of full time the score stood Davitt's 1-0 to 0-4 for Lord Edwards.'

Since at this time no amount of points equalled a goal the Davitt's won their first match on record. But things did not go well for them in the Drumsna tournament held on 27 June. This is the report on the Davitt's game which appeared in the *Roscommon Herald*:

*'The next contest lay between Kiltubrid Davitt's and Kilmore Wolfe Tones. The men were pretty evenly matched in point of stature, and the play would be more interesting if they talked less. Mr. P. McManus of Drumshanbo was referee and Mr. Beirne PLG and Mr. Doyle acted as field umpires. After a short time the play got warm. A Kilmore man was bringing the ball down the lines when two brothers from the Davitt side assailed him, and both collided while their opponent got away. The brothers seemed slightly impaired by the fall and they rested a while. During the first half-time the Wolfe Tones scored the only point and when the second half time was up, the Kilmores had scored three points to nil.'*⁶

This report is given to understatement! If we substitute 'argued' for 'talked' and 'heated' for 'warm' we would get a better picture of the proceedings. One can just imagine those brothers resting after their

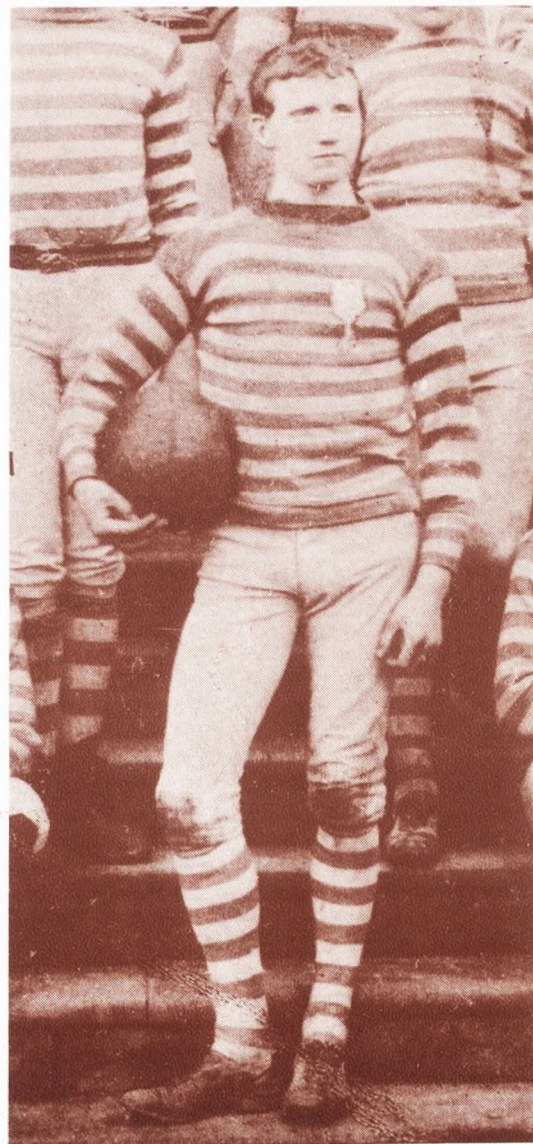
attempted 'sandwich' had failed! The Davitt team were beaten two days later by Eslin Sarsfields at a tournament in Carrick-on-Shannon by the same score of three points to nil. So it appears that despite the great enthusiasm and support for the Davitt team, the players still had some things to learn in the art of playing football.



There was no championship played in 1889 but it was customary for each club to organize a tournament by inviting a number of teams and matching them off. There was usually no overall winner since each team normally played only once. Kiltubrid Michael Davitt Club held their first tournament on 11 August 1889. A report in the *Roscommon Herald* begins:

'A football tournament was held in Kiltubride on 11 August which reflected great credit on the promoters for the manner in which all the arrangements were carried out. Nothing was ever witnessed in Kiltubride to equal the sports and the good humour of the large attendance of people who looked on at the results of each match. The time fixed for the tournament was two o'clock but the teams did not attend for some time after. Nothing could exceed the playground which was situated in the lawn of Letterfine House given by a Gaelic friend, Mr. James Doherty.'*

* This Letterfine House is of great historical interest. It was to here that the Reynolds family moved when they vacated their castle on Lough Scur. It was to this house that Torlac O'Carolan, the great Irish harpist, first visited when he began his wanderings in 1691. George Reynolds welcomed him and it was while staying here that O'Carolan wrote 'Sheebeg Sheemore'. Almost one hundred years later, in 1786, George Nugent Reynolds, a magistrate and direct descendant of the above George Reynolds, was shot in a duel at Sheemore. Robert Keon of Keonbrook was charged with shooting him before the duel was arranged and he was hanged in 1788. George Nugent Reynolds, the only son of the man shot in 1786, was a poet, patriot and wit of note, but he died in 1802 leaving no heir. His sister, Mary Anne had been married to Lt. Col. John Peyton (Leitrim Militia) of Laheen and had a son by him. When he died she married Richard McNamara, a brother of William Nugent McNamara, M.P., from Doolin, Co. Clare, and they took over Letterfine in 1802. Mary Anne McNamara's grandson, Richard Reynolds Peyton gave Letterfine House as a residence to Fr. Henry Kennedy, the parish priest in 1855 and he remained there until his death in 1876. Fr. Patrick O'Farrell who succeeded him had the parochial house (now McKeon's) built in 1877.



Thomas Doyle, Drumcong. Probably played with Kiltubrid-Michael Davitt's.

George Nugent Reynolds, the poet and the last direct male descendant of the Reynolds of Loughscur, was born circa 1770. (While we cannot be sure about the year of his birth, he certainly was not twenty years old when his father was shot at the Sheemore duel in 1786). He was a magistrate and lived in Letterfine House. Sometime before the 1798 rising, a group of men were brought before him charged with having houghed a cow and fastening a threatening notice on her horn; it was also alleged that they belonged to a group called 'the defenders'. Reynolds not only acquitted them but went bail for them too. Because of this decision Lord Clare had him removed from the position of magistrate. He was also Captain of the 'Cashcarrigan yeomanry', (a group of thirty militia set up during the disturbances leading up to the 1798 rising) who somehow managed to arrive at Ballinamuck when the battle was over.

He was never in great health during his short life and in the last few years of his life he could not lie down because of his asthmatic condition. He usually passed his sleepless nights composing verses. Emigration, exile and the wrongs inflicted by the English on Ireland are the main themes of his poetry. He did write some love poetry too, the best known, perhaps, being 'Kathleen O'More'. But perhaps the poem 'The Exile of Erin' is his best known and most controversial one. This poem has been claimed by the Scottish poet, Thomas Campbell, but there seems little doubt but that Reynolds is the author of it. Another of his better known poems is 'Eileen O'More', part 1 of which is included here. Reynolds left Letterfine for England in the Spring of 1801 and he died at Stowe in 1802.

EILEEN O'MORE

(1)

*You soldiers of Britain, your barbarous doing,
Long, long will the children of Erin deplore:
How sad is my heart, when I view the black ruin,
That once was the cabin of Eileen O'More!
Her father, poor Dermot, his country loved dearly,
Its wrongs, its oppressions he felt most sincerely,
And with all friends of freedom united sincerely -
Such was the fond father of Eileen O'More.*

*One dark winter night honest Dermot sat musing;
Loud curses alarmed him, and crash went his door;
The fierce soldiers entered, of treason accusing
The mild, but brave father of Eileen O'More:
Their scoffs he returned not, with blows they assailed him,
His soul roused indignant, his prudence now failed him,
Their blows he repaid, and his country bewailed him,
For stabbed was the father of Eileen O'More.*

*The children's shrill screams — and the mother's distraction —
The parent — the husband - fall'n weltering in gore;
Ah! who this can hear, and not curse the foul faction
That murdered the father of Eileen O'More?
"Oh, my father! my father!" she cries, wildly throwing
Her arms round his neck, as his heart streams were flowing,
She kissed his pale lips until, still fainter growing,
He groaned, and an orphan left Eileen O'More.*

*Unsated with blood, this infernal banditti,
Resolved on destruction, dire vengeance still swore;
Those friends of the Castle, but strangers to pity,
Set fire to the cottage of Eileen O'More.
The mother and children half naked and shrieking,
Escaped from the flames, with their hearts almost breaking,
But while these poor wretches some shelter were seeking,
Oh, mark, what befel hapless Eileen O'More.*

*From her loved father's corpse, which her lap had supported,
To an outhouse the ruffians this innocent bore,
With tears, her entreaties, and sorrows they sported,
And ruined forever sweet Eileen O'More:
Who, now a poor maniac, roves o'er the black common;
Against British soldiers she warns every woman,
And sings of her father in strains more than human,
While heart rending sighs burst from Eileen O'More.*

*Ye daughters of Erin, retain this narration,
While ocean's rude billows break round your green shore,
Remember the wrongs of your poor hapless nation,
Remember the woes of sweet Eileen O'More:
To your brothers, your lovers, recall this aggression,
Nor cease till the story make such deep impression,
That from such examples of lawless oppression,
Relieved is the country of Eileen O'More.*

This is the only reference we have to football matches being played in Letterfine beside Luke Doherty's new house. The second game of the afternoon was between Kiltubrid Michael Davitt's and Drumshanbo St. Patrick's. The report continues:

'...both teams being composed of fine stalwart young men. Mr. Laurence Early acted as referee and Mr. Thomas Beirne and Mr. Pat McManus as field umpires. The St. Patrick's made a gallant dash on the Davitts which was repelled with such skill and prowess that the St. Patrick's had to defend their own ground. In the first half-time the Davitt's succeeded in putting three points to their credit against nil, one of them being disputed by St. Patrick's. The St. Patrick's are always remarkable for concentrating their energies in the second half time and after the change of sides they placed three points to their credit against nil.'

So the game ended in a draw but since one team failed to turn up the Davitts had to play the next game also, this time against Gowel Lord Edwards. And the report says that 'owing to the best part of the day being over this match stayed longer.' When full time was finally called the game was a draw. No doubt after that marathon day's football there were a few tired and sore limbs among the Davitt players. The report concludes by saying that 'every person dispersed quietly to their respective homes.'

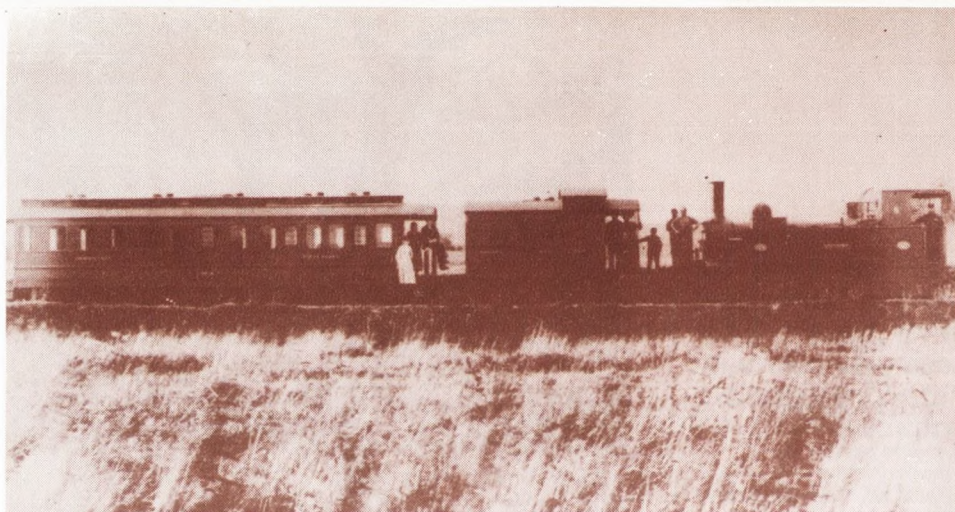
So it appears that the first tournament held in the parish was a great success, and no doubt since the attendance was big the club got some much needed finance. But this tournament was to land the club in trouble with the Co. Committee of the G.A.A.,



Standing Stones near Letterfine.

because they held the tournament without the consent of the Co. Committee. Francis Kellegher, representing the club at a meeting of the Co. Committee in Drumshanbo on 15 September 1889, pleaded ignorance of the ruling, and said that if the club had been aware of the situation they would not have played the tournament without first getting permission. His defence must have been adequate because the club escaped suspension.

1. *Leitrim Advertiser* 4 April 1889.
2. I have inserted a question mark whenever there is uncertainty as to the townland an individual lived in.
3. *Roscommon Herald* 27 April 1889.
4. *Roscommon Herald* 18 May 1889.
5. *Leitrim Advertiser* 6 June 1889.
6. *Roscommon Herald* 29 June 1889.
7. *Roscommon Herald* 24 Aug. 1889.



Train along the road.

At the Hall door, Annadale (August 1889): Standing, Mrs. Carry Duncan, James Slacke, Mrs. Slacke, Ethel Slacke. Seated, Harriette Slacke and Beauty, F. Warrington, H.R.A. Robinson.





Two boys and a dog outside Conboy's shop (August 1889)

Two Clubs in the Parish (1889-1890)

THE ENTHUSIASM with which the G.A.A. was greeted in the parish was quite extraordinary. The Michael Davitt club had an abundance of players, members and supporters. We know that at a practice held at Annadale on 12 May 1889 there were over one hundred members of the club present and a large number of supporters from the surrounding district. The problem

was that the club fielded only one team and despite the fact that a team then consisted of twenty-one players there were at least that many more players who did not get playing in any of the tournament games. This inevitably led to dissatisfaction among some of the players. Besides, there was a fairly large section of the parish, notably the Keshcarrigan area, which was not involved in the Davitt club. So it was not surprising that by Autumn 1889 attempts were made to start another club in the parish.

The Co. Convention for the year 1889 was held in Drumshanbo on 24 October, and there were four delegates from Kiltubrid present: Thomas Beirne (Annadale), and John Moran (Dromod Moran) representing Michael Davitt's and James Rutledge (Kesh) and Bernard Bohan (Funshinagh) representing 'Keshcarrigan Sullivans'. This is the first we hear of the Sullivans, named after the Nationalist M.P., T.D. Sullivan. But the Sullivans, based in the Keshcarrigan area of the parish, were not an officially recognized club and were merely trying to get affiliated at, and be recognized by, the Convention.

Their task was a difficult one because the G.A.A. discouraged having more than one club in a parish. There was a close affinity between the G.A.A. and the National League, the agrarian movement which was organized nationwide on a parish basis, and the G.A.A. felt that to have two clubs in a parish would weaken the National League.



The Mountain from Annadale (August 1889)

The result was that the delegates from the Davitt's and Sullivan's clubs who attended the Convention were persuaded to join forces and form one club to represent the whole parish. And this club was to be called by the new name of 'Kiltubrid William Redmonds'. The Redmonds would be, it was hoped, a strong club and truly a parish one, but these hopes were never realized. It was dogged by divisions from the beginning.

Yet the Redmond's did field a team at a tournament held in Gowel on Friday 1 November 1889. They played Drumsna Connaught Rangers 'in a spacious valley within a short distance of Gowel chapel.'¹ The game ended in a draw on the score of two points each. The Redmond's football team appear to have been a stronger side

than the team fielded by the Davitt's earlier in the year, but there was little unity within the club itself. At a meeting of the Co. Committee which was held in Keshcarrigan two days after the game in Gowel, Peter Maguire (Derrien) was elected as the Redmond's representative on the Committee. He replaced John Ward (Drumhubrid) who retired after holding the post for only three weeks. John Ward was one of the founder members of the Davitt club and his retirement is an indication that all is not well in the Redmond ranks. The following letter which appear in the *Roscommon Herald* two weeks later was further evidence of discontent and convinced nobody:

'I hope you will be good enough to publish in the next issue of your valuable paper that there is no Gaelic club affiliated in this parish of Kiltubride only the one known as the Redmond club.

Peter Maguire, President, Derrien.²

True, there was only one club affiliated, but there was much dissension within that club. It appears that none of the officers of the Davitt club held office in the newly formed Redmond club. Peter Maguire (Derrien) was president, Farrell Leddy (Drumara) was secretary and James Rutledge (Kesh) and Bernard Bohan (Funshinagh) were also officials. Yet despite their problems the Redmonds went ahead and organized a tournament for Sunday 24 November, to be held at Keshcarrigan. We are not sure where exactly this tournament was held, but chances are that it was at Dooloughan where the championship games were held the following year. But this tournament turned out to be a disaster and surely can have done nothing to resolve the internal disunity in the club. This account of the tournament appeared in the *Roscommon Herald*:

'Though the severity of the day was enough to mar the proceedings the Redmonds had the honour of receiving contingents from Oughteragh, Drumreilly, Ballinamore, Mohill and even Killenumery. The teams that did not attend require no apology for their absence, for it is fresh in the minds of all the incessant rain that fell on that day. Still the ardour and the enthusiasm of most of the members would not allow them to either give up or postpone the proceedings. The Oughteragh Wolfe Tones and the Redmond's went onto the field, and a sharp but friendly contest ensued for about twelve minutes, the

Redmond's winning a point or two. The field umpires and several others forced them to desist as it was impossible to withstand the rain.

The William O'Brien's felt greatly disappointed in not meeting the P.A. McHugh's. Of course they could not by any means expect that men could come thirty miles on such a day and they got on their wagonette and started for home. But they were scarcely out of the town when the van containing the P.A. McHugh's made their appearance at the other side of the town. Mr. Fallon took his men to the field and kicking being out of the question, took the opportunity of administering a wholesome and sensible lecture to all the teams present and warned them strictly about their future conduct, referring them several times to the wise counsels of Dr Croke. His remarks being brought to a close he expressed great disappointment at not meeting the O'Briens but he hoped the Co. Secretary would convene a meeting at some central venue such as Drumshanbo where they would have an opportunity of a re-match with the O'Briens. After this all the teams retired to their homes but the athletes from Killenumery with Mr Fallon at their head have the universal good wishes of the men of Keshcarrigan.*

Farrell Leddy, Secretary.³

The secretary of the Redmond's club was speaking for the 'men of Keshcarrigan' and not the men of Kiltubrid, as the convention in October had hoped. It is arguable if indeed the Redmond's club ever got off the ground as a parish club. What appears to have happened is that any of the Davitt members who threw in their lot with the Redmond's club when it first formed gradually withdrew and soon the Redmond's was a Keshcarrigan club and not a parish one.

*Chairman of the Co. Committee of the G.A.A.

Yet Redmond's did field a team at a tournament in Drumsna on New Year's Day, 1890, in which they were beaten by one point to nil. But the Co. Convention's hope to have just one club in the parish was obviously not going to be fulfilled. A meeting of the Co. Committee was held in Mohill on 6 January 1890 and delegates from the former Davitt club, led by Mr. Patrick Reynolds (secretary of the Kiltubrid branch of the National League) attended. They sought to have the former Michael Davitt club re-affiliated. The Redmond delegates present objected but Mr. Reynolds stated that the Davitt's were all true nationalists—no one had a better right to know than he—and the deserved to be re-affiliated. The report in the *Roscommon Herald* states that

*'The case was sent back to Kiltubrid and the re-affiliation of the Davitt's club depends on the decision of a bona-fide parochial meeting to be convened by the secretary.'*⁴

Presumably the 'parochial meeting' was to be a meeting of the parish branch of the National League and the secretary referred to was the above mentioned Patrick Reynolds.

In any case the matter was raised again at a meeting of the Co. Committee in March and this time the Committee agreed to re-affiliate the Davitt club. Thus the end result was that by March 1890 there were two clubs in the parish, the Michael Davitt club and the Keshcarrigan Sullivan club. The latter club was given a variety of names: 'Kiltubrid Wm Reynolds', 'Cashcarrigan

Redmonds', 'Kiltubrid Sullivans' or 'Cashcarrigan Sullivans' and this invariably led to confusion about the number of clubs in the parish. But there were never more than two clubs in the parish. For clarity sake I will, from now on, refer to the club from the Keshcarrigan area as the 'Keshcarrigan Sullivans'.

There is less information available about the Sullivan's club than there is about the Michael Davitt club. We do know that Peter Maguire (Derrien), James Rutledge (Kesh), Farrell Leddy (Drumara), Edward Mealis (Gowley), Bernard Bohan (Funshinagh), T. Gibbons (Cornavad), James Ward (Proughlish) and Edward Pinkman (Mullaghboy) were members and officials of the Sullivan's club but it is not known whether any of these men played football on the Sullivan's team.

By March 1890, once it was obvious that the Redmond's parish club was not going to survive, both the clubs in the parish got on with the business of organizing their individual clubs and preparing their players for the first-ever county championship to be held in Leitrim. It was not until 1928, thirty-eight years later, that two teams from Kiltubrid were again to compete for the same championship.

* Because there were several 'Patrick Reynolds' who lived in the area at this time I had difficulty in identifying who this man was. It seems most likely that he was from Cornabrone and grandfather of Anselm Reynolds N.T.

1. *Roscommon Herald* 9 Nov. 1889.
2. *Roscommon Herald* 16 Nov. 1889.
3. *Roscommon Herald* 30 Nov. 1889.
4. *Roscommon Herald* 11 Jan. 1890.



Thomas Reilly, the Blacksmith, his family and friends outside his house at Annadale (August 1889).

Extracts from the Memoirs of Adelia Jane West, granddaughter of Angel Anna Slacke, written in 1895.

In my youth the Irish language was usually spoken among themselves by the lower order, and in all the counties on the Connaught circuit there were sworn interpreters, appointed to translate the evidence of the witnesses (who could not speak English) at the Assizes. Year by year however the language was dying out, but still many expressive words and phrases that had no adequate English were understood and occasionally used by us. My father meeting one day when out riding, the wife of a respectable farmer whose daughter had just been married stopped "to wish her joy". She would not have known what congratulate meant. "And which of the girls is it Mrs. Mackern!" "Which, why the ouldest of course Your Honour" - "But why of course" "If he didnt take her I wouldnt let him have any of them, do you think Your honour I'd let any man make "Spot-thaw" of one of my girls?" My father was much amused knowing what 'spot-thaw' was, but as few now would, I must explain its meaning. When the creel was taken each morning to the turpicks to be filled for the days consumption any wet useless sods that were met were called 'Spot-thaw' rejected and thrown on the refuse heap in the corner of the yard. I should here say that I know not how this or any other Irish word should be spelled, so try and give its sound as well as I can. I at one time was about learning Irish - My kind old friend Mrs. McNamara got for me grammars dictionary &c and was looking out for a teacher when we unexpectedly left home for a two years stay in Switzerland and so the matter fell through. I wish all success to Dr. Douglas Hyde in his efforts to restore the ancient literature of Ireland.

Meetings and Matches (1890-1891)

BY MARCH 1890 then there were two teams in the parish:— Michael Davitt's team who seemed to be based in the Kilclare area, but with players from the upper end of the parish too; and the Sullivan's who were based to a large extent in the Keshcarrigan area. Both these teams entered the first championship held in Leitrim in the Spring of 1890.

The county was divided into four area-divisions for the championship and both Kiltubrid teams were in the Drumshanbo division along with Drumshanbo St. Patrick's and Dromahaire Joe Biggar's. St. Patrick's beat the Sullivan's on 6 April in a first round match played in Drumshanbo. The report in the *Roscommon Herald* the following week states that:

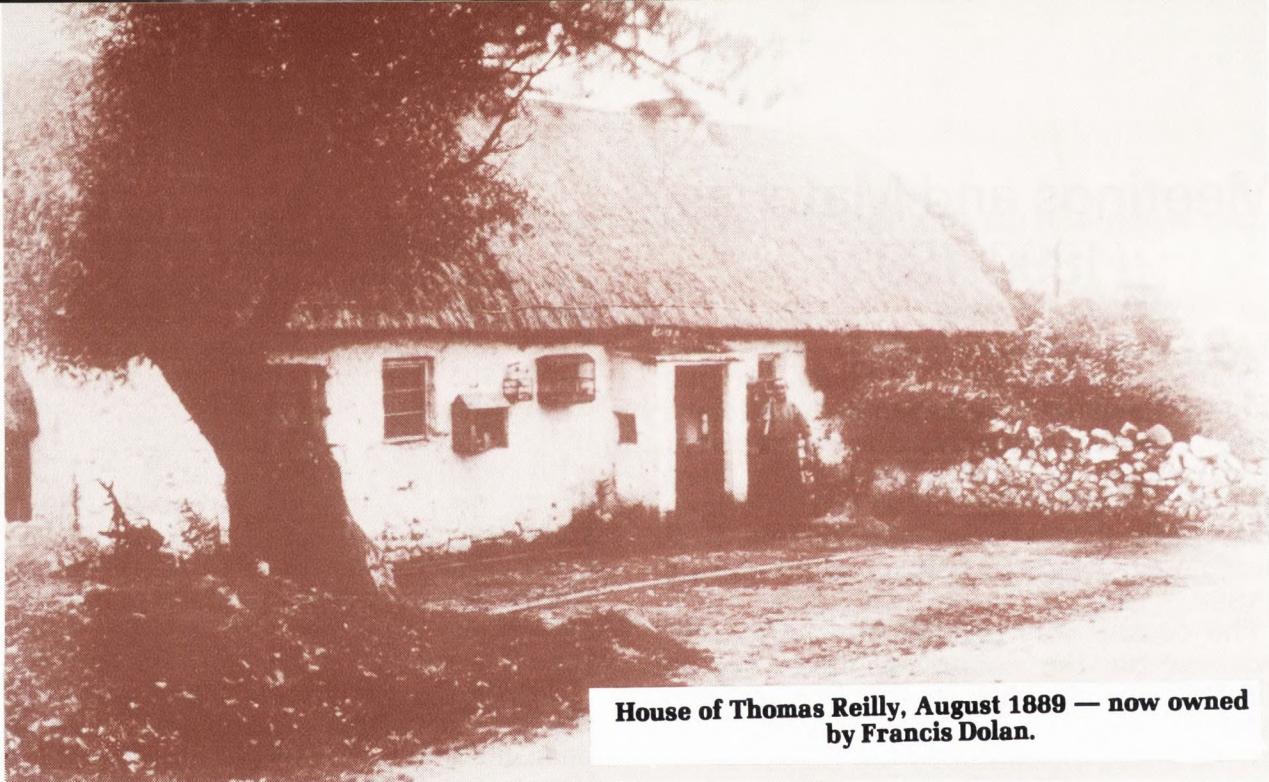
'At twenty minutes to four both teams lined up, the St. Patrick's in blue and white looked remarkably well, and the Redmond's (Sullivans) in their green and gold also looked well.'

The Sullivans were beaten by 2-4 to 0-1. The Davitt's were no more successful, it appears, because St. Patrick's and the Biggar's contested the final of the division.

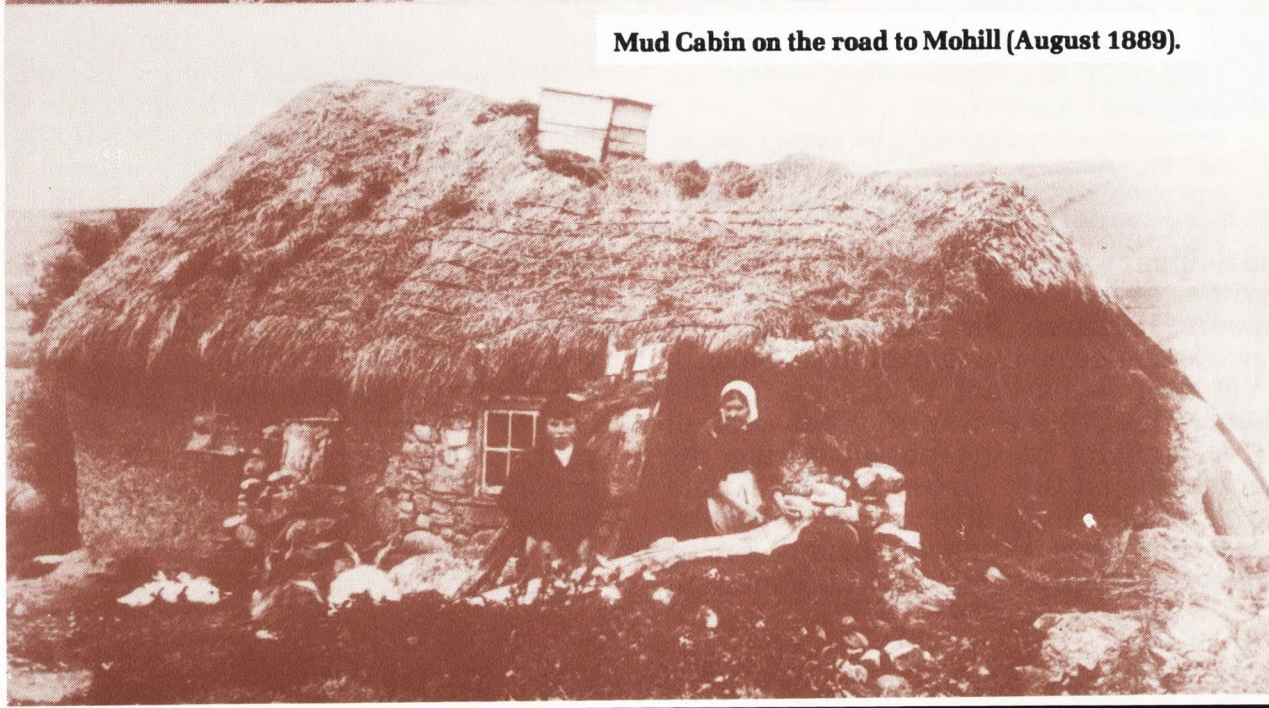
Yet despite the lack of success on the playing field, there was a great deal of G.A.A. activity in the parish during the years 1890 and 1891. In fact Kiltubrid could claim to be the centre of all important G.A.A. activities within the county during these years because virtually all important

Co. Committee meetings, Co. Conventions and football semi-finals and finals were held in the parish. It may seem strange that Keshcarrigan should be the venue for these important meetings and matches but we must remember that it was then, according to the Census of 1891, a thriving small town with twenty-seven houses and a population of one hundred and sixteen people. Besides, since virtually all the G.A.A. clubs in the county were from South Leitrim it was a central venue for all the clubs to meet in an age when travel was a greater problem than it is today.

These Co. Conventions and meetings of the Co. Committee of the G.A.A. may have been held in the Market House which was situated on the fair green beside the bridge, or, as appears more likely, in the Courthouse which was situated beside the police barracks. There have been some misconceptions about where exactly in the parish the first county final was played. This confusion was due mainly to the fact that most reports stated that the game was played near Keshcarrigan and beside a lake. The lake referred to was not Lough Scur (although some reports state that it was within view of this lake) or Kesh lake but the winter-time Dooloughan lake, which is now a lake for the greater part of the year. I am indebted to John Skinnion, captain of the 1918 Aughaslane team for pinpointing this field (which now belongs to Ben McKeon) as the venue for those early championship games.



**House of Thomas Reilly, August 1889 — now owned
by Francis Dolan.**



Mud Cabin on the road to Mohill (August 1889).

This must have seemed a strange choice of venue for the most important football matches played in the county at this time. Obviously the surface was not good. It was hilly on one side and spongy and wet on the other. But it was a central venue and it was a natural amphitheatre surrounded on three sides by hills which provided a natural viewing stand. Besides, this land then belonged to James Reynolds Peyton of Laheen, and according to the Census of 1891 he was an absentee landlord, so it may have been a case of 'when the cat is away the mice can play'.

PEYTON OF LAHEEN.

JAMES REYNOLDS PEYTON, of Laheen, co. Leitrim, J.P. and D.L., High Sheriff 1879, b. Dec. 1842; s. his brother 1875; m. 4 April, 1894, Alice Mary, dau. of the late Major John Edward Riley, late 88th Connaught Rangers, and has issue,

JOHN REYNOLDS, b. 19 Jan. 1896.
Dorothea Reynolds.

Lineage.—REV. THOMAS PEYTON, 2nd son of Thomas Peyton, of Bury St. Edmunds, by Lady Cecilia Bourchier, dau. of John, 2nd Earl of Bath, matriculated Trin. Coll. Dublin, 1610, B.A. 1614, M.A. 1617, Fellow, Nov. 1617, D.D. 1625, Dean of Tuam 1625, Prebendary of Kinvarra, in the Cathedral of Clonfert, Oct. 1627, and Rector of Ballinrobe, co. Mayo, 5 Nov. 1631, d. 1638. He m. Dorothy, dau. of George Andrewe, Bishop of Ferns and Leighlin, and was father of

JOHN PEYTON, of Boyle, co. Roscommon, m. Catherine, dau. of Humphrey Reynolds, of Loughscur, co. Leitrim, by Russell his wife, dau. of Sir James Ware, Knt., Auditor-Gen. of Ireland, and by her (who d. 19 May, 1664) had issue,



Many of the reports on games played here were critical of the playing field. The report in the *Leitrim Advertiser* of the 1890 final states:

*'The ground which was situated a short distance from Keshcarrigan in a low valley, though not very level, appeared to have been as nicely arranged by the home team as the field would admit.'*¹

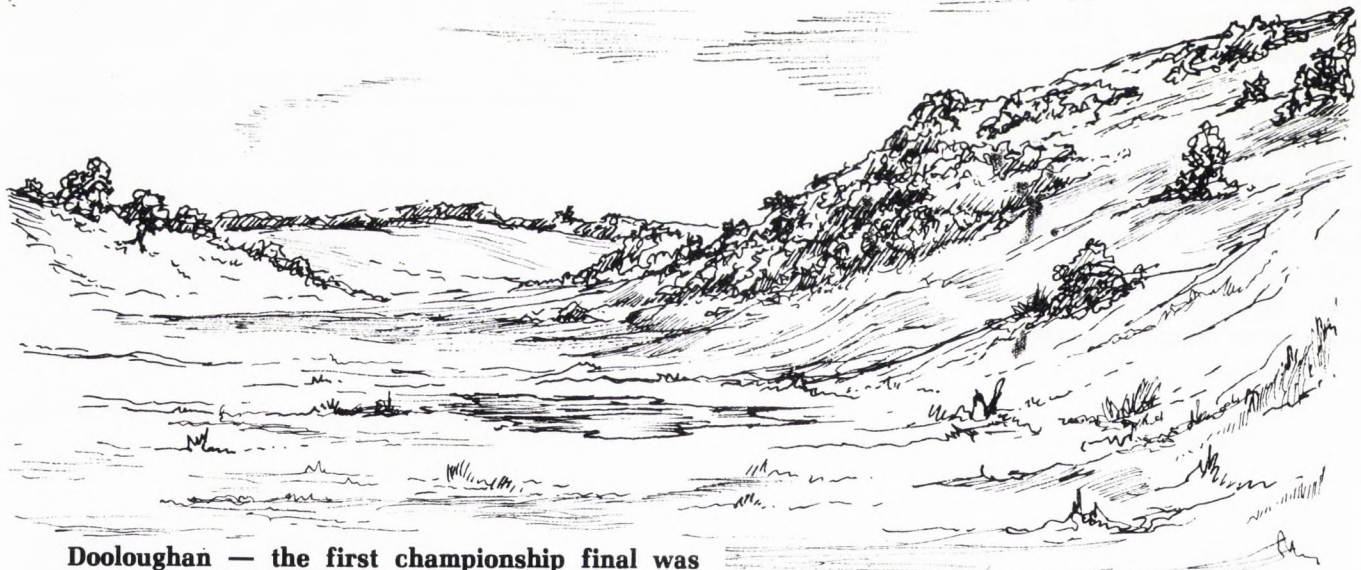
But the report in the same paper on the championship semi-finals the following year, which were held at the same venue, was much more critical. It states that the field

*'was one of the most unsuitable grounds we ever witnessed a football match played on, being of a soft elastic nature, partly on a lake, and was intersected by holes and blocks.'*²

The first semi-final that day was between Eslin Sarsfields and Fenagh Sons of St. Callian, and it was only after much persuasion that they agreed to play there at all. Today one can only try to visualize what type of football was played then when one considers the underfoot conditions and the fact that there were forty-two players and only one ball! It is not surprising that games were so low scoring then.

We know little about the activities of either of the clubs from the parish after they had been eliminated from the championship of 1890, except that the Keshcarrigan Sullivan's were busy preparing for the county final since it was being played in their territory. The county final was fixed for Sunday 22 June. The *Roscommon Herald* reports:

¹The land was leased at this time to John Barrett.



Dooloughan — the first championship final was played here on 22 June, 1890.

'The championship of Leitrim was brought to a close on Sunday last 22 June in Cashcarrigan. The field lies between Laheen and the rocks of Sheebeg. it was somehow as usual not the best, and in addition the unfavourable day helped to leave it more uncomfortable for the contesting Gaels. It is hilly on the west side and spongy and marshy on the east side by means of Lake Sheebeg or otherwise Laheen pool, which I believe would be a touch play line for the playground if it were the winter months. However, the soft surface suited very well for the competing teams managed to keep their nimble light dashers on it, so there was no obstacle in their way as they could bounce like kids over the waving earth.

Early in the day the road and hill sides were bracketed with young and old wending their way to the rocks of Sheebeg, where the Faughs and O'Briens were to contend for the championship of Leitrim. About midday the weather began to look discouraging as darkness was showing in the air, and immediately a thick drizzle of rain began, which was the means of preventing a great many more spectators being present. But still the fair sex, that never yet failed on sporting occasions 'toed the lines' in grand array, the downpour of rain was gliding off them like ducks.'

The reporter certainly gave a graphic description of the playing-field, the crowd, and the weather which spoiled the day. The opening game was a challenge game between Rory O'Donnell's (Aughawillan) and Keshcarrigan Sullivan's. It was a very scrappy game by all accounts with the spectators getting very involved. Of this game the reporter says:—

'It is needless for me to give a full account of the performance, for as far as tumbling, collar and elbow, yes and a little tripping if it is not out of order to mention with words of 'lift the ball' 'referee here' 'referee there', there was any amount of such acts during play but it answered pretty well for the championship match, for the embracing of mother earth so often left the field quite level, the outsiders as usual being the touch lines and in the latter end the ground was as narrow as Jemmy Lawder's railway.'

The 'collar and elbow' mentioned in this report refers to wrestling; so obviously it was a tough game with the referee over-worked and the crowd pushing in from every side until the playing area was as narrow as the recently built narrow gauge!

The final was a much better affair. It began at 5.17 p.m. and the Keshcarrigan Sullivan's marshalled the crowd very successfully and 'never allowed any individual within yards of the lines'.³The Faughs defeated the O'Briens in this game by 2-2 to 0-1. Thus ended a rather eventful and full day for the Keshcarrigan Sullivan club.

The Davitt's were not idle for long either. On Sunday 21 September they organized a tournament for medals which was played at Kilclare, probably in the 'football field' on McDermott's land in the townland of Kilclare Mor.

The second annual Convention of the G.A.A. in Leitrim was held in Keshcarrigan on Sunday 20 October 1890. One of the main problems to be dealt with was rough play. The Co. Secretary, J. M. Mulligan stated that:

*'some stringent bye-laws must be adapted to prevent roughness at matches. Such practices as jumping on a player's chest, violent shouldering, tripping and collar and elbow, and playing the man instead of the ball should not be tolerated.'*⁴

Francis Mulvanerty

(August 1889)



The Davitt's representatives at the Convention were James Doherty (Letterfine) and Thomas Flynn (Crummy?), while Peter Maguire (Derrien) and Farrell Leddy (Drumara) represented the Sullivan's. The Convention decided that the Council would hold a meeting on the second Sunday of every month in Keshcarrigan at one o'clock.

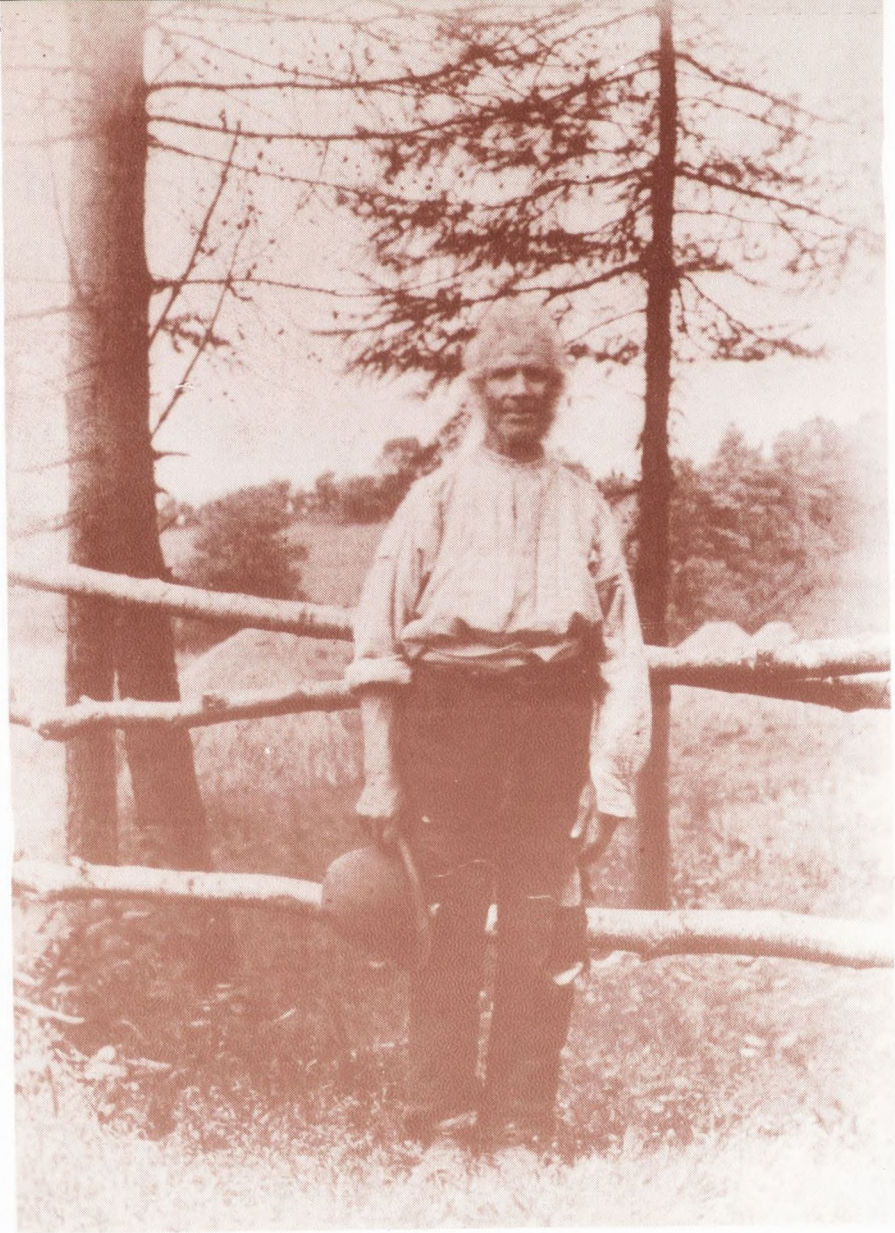
So 1890 was a very successful year for the G.A.A. in Kiltubrid. The Davitt's and the Sullivan's, having realised that they could not live together as one club, both consolidated their individual positions. The

two big events of the G.A.A. year, the county final and the annual Convention took place within the parish and passed off very smoothly. Things seemed to be looking up for the G.A.A. both in the parish and within the county. But by November 1890 there were dark clouds gathering on the horizon and when the threatened storm eventually came it wrecked all the newly born G.A.A. clubs in the county.

1. *Leitrim Advertiser* 26 June 1890.
2. *Leitrim Advertiser* 9 May 1891.
3. *Roscommon Herald* 28 June 1890.
4. *Roscommon Herald* 25 October 1890.

Three young Kiltubrid People (August 1889).





**Francis Mulvanerty — gardener at Annadale
(August 1889)**



Charles Stuart Parnell and Kitty O'Shea.

The End of the Beginning

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL was first elected to the House of Commons, for Meath, in 1875. From 1880 onwards he ably led the Irish Parliamentary Party and articulated the Irish cause in the House of Commons, or as W.B. Yeats put it:

*'He fought the might of England
And saved the Irish poor.'*¹

When the G.A.A. was founded in 1884 it formed a close liaison with Parnell and in particular with the Irish National League. This was especially true in the case of Co. Leitrim, and in most instances the National League and the G.A.A., both of which were organized on a parish basis, had many members in common. In many clubs in Leitrim it was necessary to be a member of the National League before one could be accepted as a member of the G.A.A. For instance in November 1889 the Annaduff Parnellite G.A.A. club resolved

*'that no person who is not, or some member of his family, a member of the National League will be admitted to the membership of the Parnellite G.A.A.'*²

And it elaborated by saying:

'That in order the more effectively to preserve the G.A.A. as a purely national institution, we will in future not admit young men to membership, who act in the mean capacity of bagmen or beaters for exterminating landlords and London ex-horneys, and we call on the committee of the National League of this parish to throw off this lethargy and look after some of their members who are guilty of similar meanness.'

So the fortunes of the G.A.A., particular the G.A.A. in Leitrim, was inextricably bound up with those of Parnell. Parnell always had his detractors and the most damaging rumours now circulating were that he was having an affair with Kitty O'Shea, the wife of another Westminster M.P. By the end of the year 1890 it was generally accepted that these rumours were true. Some said he should quit as leader of the party. Others said they would support him, come what may. There were those of both opinions within the G.A.A., although the influential Archbishop Croke of Cashel, one of the founders of the G.A.A. and a friend of Parnell's, said he should quit.

It was now up to the G.A.A. in Leitrim to decide if they should continue to support Parnell or not. There was no doubt as to how the Co. Secretary, J.M. Mulligan felt. He placed a notice in the *Roscommon Herald* calling a special meeting on the Parnell question to be held in Keshcarrigan on Saturday, 20 December, 1890. This was a biased letter in which he sided with Dr. Croke against Parnell, and tried to pre-empt the decision of the meeting. The letter states:

*'It is hoped that few Gaels who love faith and fatherland will forsake their venerable patron, Dr. Croke, the archbishop, who above all others blessed the association.'*³

and he finished the letter by saying that any member who absented himself from this meeting would be looked on as a coward.

This meeting, in fact, took place in Mohill and not in Keshcarrigan. There were several delegates missing from the meeting and the majority of those present decided against Parnell. This decision sparked off much controversy in the county. Letters were written to the local papers condemning the action of the Co. Secretary in calling the meeting and swaying the decision against Parnell. Francis Kellegher, the secretary of the Davitt club, had a letter in support of the Co. Secretary published in the *Roscommon Herald*. Thus the conflict continued among the ranks of the G.A.A. in Leitrim, undermining the great progress that had been made in the previous two years.

A meeting of the Co. Committee of the G.A.A. was arranged for Sunday 8 February, 1891, in Keshcarrigan, for the purpose of making the draw and arranging the fixtures for the coming championship. Mr. Murphy, the Co. Chairman, was absent so Pat Flynn (Ballinamore) presided. There were fifteen delegates at the meeting. Edward Mealia (Gowley) represented Keshcarrigan Sullivan's and Patrick Reynolds (Cornabrone?) represented the Davitt's. This meeting was to become perhaps the most colourful and controversial in the history of the G.A.A. in Leitrim. No sooner were the minutes of the last meeting read than Mr. Cryan, a Carrick delegate, proposed that the resolution passed against Parnell at the last meeting be rescinded and a resolution be passed



Kiltubrid Station.

from this meeting in favour of him. Mr. Cryan described the Mohill meeting as a 'hole and corner meeting'. His proposal was seconded by Mr. Ward (Annaduff).

There were questions as to why Mr. Cryan was not at the Mohill meeting, and suggestions that he was afraid to attend it. He was reminded that the purpose of the meeting was to make the draw for the championship and not to discuss politics. But the Carrick delegate persisted. The Chairman pleaded with him not to press the matter because he said:

*'I believe that in the course of a few days the difference that has arisen in the ranks of the Irish Party will be settled and it is our duty to keep silent as to such time as they do. For myself I am in favour of Mr. Parnell but for peace sake I would rather keep silent at present because it does not matter a pin what we do in this matter. It will be abler men that will settle this affair.'*¹⁴

But his pleading fell on deaf ears. Mr. Mulligan called for 'all that loved faith and fatherland and a spotless leader' to come to

his side. Mr. Cryan called for 'all that loved Parnell to come to his side'. When the vote was taken there were six who voted against Parnell and five who voted for him. The chairman refused to cast his vote despite being called on by the Parnellites to do so. Three delegates, including the two Kiltubrid ones, abstained.

Thus ended what must have been one of the most historic meetings ever held in Keshcarrigan. One can only conclude from this meeting that by February 1891 the G.A.A. in Leitrim was well and truly divided. This really is the beginning of the end, or rather the end of the beginning, of the G.A.A. in Kiltubrid and in Leitrim.



Yet, despite the great divisions in their ranks, the G.A.A. continued to limp on. The Drumshanbo St. Patrick's club was suspended for continuing to side with Parnell and being involved in 'rowdyism'. Rallies both for and against Parnell were held and very often they ended in disorder. The first rounds of the county championship in the Keshcarrigan division were fixed for Keshcarrigan on St. Patrick's Day, 1891. The first game was to be between Michael Davitt's and P.A. McHugh's and the second between Keshcarrigan Sullivan's and Gladstonian's, but the games did not pass off without incident. A report in the *Roscommon Herald* the following week tells the story of the day's events in Kiltubrid:

'The people of Kiltubrid are true and to the front in the course of faith and fatherland. St. Patrick's Day 1891 is a day to be remembered with joy and pride in this parish. The Church was filled at all the Masses by the people of the parish, all wearing the green and immortal shamrock. The wearing of the national emblem was conspicuous among the females as well as among the men, thus manifesting the universal determination of all to make the great national festival one of gladness and enthusiasm.'

In the afternoon sports were engaged in with staunch and good cheer. The football was launched forth on the verdant fields at Keshcarrigan and the Gaels began a brisk match. It was found that some of the 'Sham-boo-drums', the rowdies from Drumshanbo, were in the match and the true men of Kiltubrid, following the example of the brave men of Arigna, would not kick with the men now brought to universal dishonour....So the Drumshanbo helpless creatures got away safely for which they must be thankful.'

So it appears that some of the suspended St. Patrick's players attempted to play in the first game, but once they were detected they were chased from the field. And the local anti-Parnellites were not satisfied with that because the report goes on to say:

'The village of Keshcarrigan during the evening presented a lively appearance. Hundreds of fine young men of the parish marched up and down the streets cheering for Justin McCarthy and groans for Parnell. This manifestation of true nationality the police could not bear, but the young men had their way and all returned home well pleased.'

This report would have us believe that all the 'fine young men of the parish' were anti-Parnellites. But this was not the case. In fact the Drumshanbo players had attempted to play with the Michael Davitt's team. We know little about these divisional games in the championship of 1891, but it appears that Keshcarrigan Sullivan's were to play Kiltubrid Michael Davitt's, but they objected to the Davitt's on the grounds that they had players in their ranks from Drumshanbo 'where rowdyism exists'. This objection was discussed at a meeting of the Co. Committee held in Keshcarrigan towards the end of March. It appears that the Sullivan's were awarded the game. We do know for sure that the Sullivan's represented the Keshcarrigan division in the semi-finals of the championship that year.

The semi-finals of the championship were played at Dooloughan on 27 April 1891. Obviously the weather was much better

than for the final the previous year, but the playing field was even in worse condition than usual. As is usual, the reports in the local papers have much to say about the setting, the crowd, and other asides but little to say about the games themselves. The *Roscommon Herald* states that:

'On Sunday last there collected at Keshcarrigan a large and influential assembly of Gaels of this county. The day was all that could be expected and crowds of people of all ages could be seen from early morning enquiring the place that the four choice teams of Leitrim would compete for the laurels of the county.'

No person was disappointed as Sunday's proceedings will ever appear a brilliant page in the history of the Gaelic movement. The teams that played against each other were Eslin Sarsfields against Fenagh Sons of St. Callian, and Mohill Faugh-a-Ballaghs against Keshcarrigan Sullivans. The field was not as good as might be expected for the closing ties of the Co. Championship but every team that played there acquitted themselves like men. The ground upon one side was surrounded by the elevated hills of Sheebeg and Laheen, while not far from the other could be seen the wretched ruins of an ancient castle which was once occupied by a lordly monster...Shaun na Gann.' Crowds of Gaels stood around the touchlines while Breffny's chastened, beautiful daughters assembled in hundreds around the sporting field.'

Of the games themselves we know very little. The first one was between Eslin Sarsfields and Sons of Callian which the former won by 0-3 to 0-0. The Sullivan's were unlucky to be drawn against the champions of the previous year, Mohill Faugh-a-Ballaghs, though the *Leitrim Advertiser* does state that:

*'The Sullivans made very good play throughout the match and very few disputes arose on either sides.'*⁶

Yet they were beaten by 1-3 to 0-0. Eslin Sarsfields eventually won the championship, the final being played in Kilmore, Co. Roscommon, so as to avoid disturbances.

Jail Island, Lough Scur.



There appears to have been very little G.A.A. activity in the parish or in the county for the remainder of 1891, and whatever little there was appears to have caused controversy. The death of Parnell in October did little to heal the divisions. The Kiltubrid Michael Davitt club continued at loggerheads with the Co. Committee. They held a tournament in December 1891 and the final was fixed for 13 December between St. Callian's and Sarsfield's, to be played at Rooskey to avoid crowd trouble. The Sarsfield's did not turn up for the game and so the St. Callian's claimed the medals which the Davitt's refused to hand over.

The matter was raised at a meeting of the Co. Council held in 'Keash' on 7 February, 1892. The Keshcarrigan Sullivan's were represented at this meeting by Farrell Leddy, Tom Gibbons, James Ward and John Rutledge, but the Davitt's were not represented. A resolution was passed stating

'if the Kiltubride Davitt medals are not lodged with the Co. Secretary on or before the next meeting of the Council on 13 March, the Davitt club will be suspended.'

The medals were not lodged and the Davitt's were duly suspended at the March meeting of the Co. Council.

This was rather a sad end to a club which had started with such promise and enthusiasm three years previously. However, it was to matter little whether the club was suspended or not, because the Parnellite crisis wrecked havoc on all the G.A.A. clubs within the county.

The parish branch of the National League changed to the National Federation, and the curate in Kiltubrid, Fr. John Quinn, was president of the branch and was also one of the leaders of the Federation in the county. There is no record of the parish priest, Fr. Hugh Brennan, being involved in the National Federation, and it appears that neither priests in the parish involved themselves in either the Davitt's or Sullivan's G.A.A. clubs.

The Kiltubrid branch of the Federation became very active in the latter part of 1891 and 1892, working on behalf of the tenant farmers who were threatened with eviction. Patrick Reynolds was secretary of the Federation branch in the parish. Those on the committee included J. Ward, F. Leddy, F. Kellegher, T. Reynolds, T. Beirne, J. Rutledge, E. Pinkman, and many of these men were involved in both the Sullivan's and Davitt clubs. So it appears that as the G.A.A. activities dwindled these men became more active in the parish branch of the National Federation.

At a meeting held in Kesh in February 1892 the Co. Council of the G.A.A. passed a resolution that

*'no championship be played off this year in Leitrim, not on account of the difference in the Irish ranks, for we the Gaels of Leitrim are all marching under the branch of the Federation, and by having no championship it will leave us better cemented as Irishmen and Gaels.'*⁶

⁶This is a reference to John Reynolds, the leader of the McRannall clan from Lough Scur in the latter half of the 1500's. It was he who built the castle and the prison there. He was known locally as 'Sean na gCeann' because of the many atrocities he committed.

Young Kiltubrid boy (August 1889.)



So obviously the G.A.A. was fighting a losing battle. The danger of disturbances at the games was too great and so they held a few athletic meetings instead.

The G.A.A. in Kiltubrid had got off to a tremendous start in April 1889, but within three years, events outside the parish and outside the county were to destroy it again. But the seeds had been sown and the G.A.A. was to remain underground for a long time until the conditions were once again favourable for it to re-emerge.

**Thomas — the servant man,
at Annadale (August 1889).**



1. 'Come Gather Round me Parnellites', W.B. Yeats.
2. *Roscommon Herald* 2 November, 1889.
3. *Roscommon Herald* 20 December 1889.
4. *Roscommon Herald* 16 February 1891.
5. *Leitrim Advertiser* 9 May, 1891.
6. *Roscommon Herald* 20 February 1892.

PARISH PRIESTS OF KILTUBRID

John Maguire	1828-1836
Michael Dogherty	1836-1846
Michael Fanning	1846-1855
Henry Kennedy	1855-1876
Patrick O'Farrell	1876-1880
Hugh Brennan	1880-1896
Anthony McGaver	1896-1933
John Kiernan	1933-1955
Patrick O'Flynn	1955-1961
Joseph Skelly (acting)	1961-1962
Edward Colreavy	1962-1972
Peadar O'Floinn	1972-1975
Hubert Fee	1975-1983
Michael Killian	1983+

CURATES IN KILTUBRID

Felix Doherty	1881-1882
John Quinn	1882-1883
P. McGauran	1883-1884
B. Geraghty	1884-1885
G. Dawson	1885
Matt Conefrey	1885-1886
T. Sheridan	1886-1887
Anthony McGaver	1887-1888
P. McNamara	1888-1890
John Quinn	1890-1894
* Francis Murphy	1894-1896
* J. A. McGivney	1894-1895
Matt Conefrey	1896-1898
John O'Farrell	1898-1902
T. Masterson	1902-1907
P. Markey	1907-1909
P. J. Kelly	1909-1911
P. O'Reilly	1911-1912
J. Bannon	1912-1913
M. Burke	1913-1924
John Kiernan	1924-1933
Andrew Lynch	1933-1948
M. Dooner	1948-1949
P. Mollaghan	1949-1954
P. O'Floinn	1954-1955
Gerard Skelly	1955-1963
Thomas Kellegher	1963-1969
Gerard McEvilly	1969-1975

* 2 curates in parish



**Thomas O'Floinn — player and official with
Kiltubrid United Gaels.**

Kiltubrid United Gaels

THE PARNELLITE split and the death of Parnell in October 1891 was a severe blow to Irish morale and the chances of achieving Home Rule by parliamentary means was more distant than ever. Yet there were hopeful signs: The Gaelic League was founded in 1893 and in the years that followed there was a revival in interest in the Irish language, literature and culture. There was a new nationalism and a new romanticism and, with the turn of the century, a new hope.

There was little or no G.A.A. activity in Leitrim between the years 1892 and 1904. By 1904 most of the divisions which had bedevilled the association twelve years earlier were healed, and early that year clubs began to re-organize themselves and play challenge games. A meeting was held in Kelly's Hotel, Mohill, on Sunday 15 May, 1904, to form a Co. Committee which would co-ordinate G.A.A. activities in the county.

Thomas O'Floinn, a native of Kilnagros, who was then teaching in Liscarbin N.S., was one of the delegates at that first meeting. He must have promised to field a team at a tournament to be held in the 'Bullfield', Carrick-on-Shannon, the following Sunday because a 'Monster Tournament' was advertized in the *Leitrim Observer* and the following teams were to take part:— Fenagh, Boornacoola, Drumshanbo, Kilnagros, Mohill and Carrick. We have no record of Kilnagros having a team at this time but we do know that within a short time Thomas O Floinn was representing a club called 'Kiltubrid United Gaels' at meetings of the Co. Committee of the G.A.A.

Twelve years earlier the G.A.A. in the parish had disintegrated with the two clubs disagreeing with each other and disagreeing among themselves. But lessons had been learned and now in 1904 a parish club was formed and named 'Kiltubrid United Gaels'. Unlike the clubs of the earlier era, this was truly a parish club and, unlike them too, they had unity in their ranks.

When exactly this club was formed or who the officers were we do not know. Undoubtedly the contribution of Thomas O Floinn (who lived at Hillstreet, Co. Roscommon, and cycled to Liscarbin each day) cannot be over-emphasized. He was a player and referee and represented the club at Co. Committee level. Chances are that he was an officer in the club too. Pakie Flynn (Gowley) was a player on the team and represented the club at some Co.

Committee meetings too. Michael Carter (Shanraw), the only resident of the parish ever to be elected a T.D., was also involved with the club and refereed some tournament games for them. But there is no evidence to show that any of those involved in the G.A.A. in the parish in the years 1889 and 1892 were involved now. Perhaps they had had their fill.

The 'United Gaels' held their practices in the 'football field' on McDermott's rock in Kilclare Mor, but they held their tournament games in 'Laheen Park'. This field, which was first used for Gaelic



John Flynn — captain of United Gaels.

football matches in 1904 or 1905 was to become one of the most popular playing fields in the county, and was always referred to as Laheen even though it is in the townland of Clooney. A possible explanation for this is that previous to 1904 the 'Deerpark', which is on the other side of the avenue and in the townland of Laheen was used for horseracing and athletic meetings and sometimes football matches, and perhaps that is why the new sports-field nearby in Clooney continued to be referred to as Laheen. In any case, by 1907 Laheen Park was well known. A tournament was held there on 23 June, 1907, and the notice in the *Leitrim Observer* the previous week stated that 'the grounds of the above club (United Gaels) are justly famed throughout the county'. Laheen Park was used for football matches from this time until the late 1960's, and many outstanding games of football were played before large crowds there, but it was never really a club grounds since it was not usually available for practising on.

* He was a T.D. for a few months in the Summer of 1927. There were, however, several M.P.s from the parish between the years 1632 and 1695—all members of the Reynolds family, Castle Island, Lough Scur.



Outside Doyle's, Drumcong c. 1913 are John, Thomas (sen.), Thomas (jun.) and Irene Doyle.



The records available for G.A.A. activities in these years are very scant, but we are fortunate in having a detailed account of one tournament organized by Upper Drumreilly and played on O'Hara's rock (Kilrush) on 30 September 1906 in which the United Gaels team took part. The Kiltubrid team which played Oughteragh Wolfe Tones (Aughnasheelin) that day was: John Flynn (Gowley) Captain, J. Rutledge (Kesh), E. Rutledge (Kesh), John Floyd (Selton), Pakie Flynn (Gowley), Michael Lee (Cornacranny), J. McElroy (Derrien), James Keating (Proughlish), Jimmy Gill (Kilclare), Pakie Shanley (Sheebeg), Charlie Curran (Drumcrumman), Tom Beirne (Shanraw), J. McGovern (Corderry Peyton), Owen Ward (Shanraw), Jimmy Mahon (Drumcong), Patrick Cullen (Mullaghboy), P. McKeon (Tooman).

The report on the game in the *Leitrim Observer* states that

'United Gaels won the toss and the game was refereed by Mr. Michael Rogers. Tosses and tumbles were frequent during the play and the goal-keepers were very active and spirited. There was a dispute also in the play which the referee settled in favour of the Wolfe Tones. The play was Oughteragh 0-1, Kiltubrid 0-0.'

The Oughteragh Wolfe Tones team which defeated them that day was:— M. McTague, Captain, Patrick McTague, John Heslin, Tom Costello, Michael McPartland, Francis Bohan, Patrick Mulvey, Peter Mulvey, Patrick Kellegher (goalkeeper), John Mulvey, Frank Kellegher, J. Callaghan,

P. Darcy, P. Flynn, T. Cafferty, C. O'Hara, J. Kellegher. A team now consisted of only seventeen players but still the game was generally rough and tumble and low scoring.

These years were times of progress in the parish, despite the continuing widespread emigration. The system of landlordism in the parish was gradually on the decline and the land they held was being divided. In 1906 workmen were busy laying footpaths in Keshcarrigan, but they had to blast large boulders and rocks first. In November 1909 Rantogue new church was dedicated and there was lavish praise for the work of the parish priest, Canon Anthony McGaver*. In the same year attempts were being made to revive the fair of Kesh. Kesh was most suitable for a fair, it was argued, because of its large dry fair green and because of the nearness of the railway line at Kiltubrid station. A dance was held in the Courthouse in Keshcarrigan on Hallow E'en night, 1910, to raise funds for the fair committee. A large crowd turned up and 'dancing commenced at 8.00 p.m. and continued into the early hours of the morning'²

Meanwhile Sinn Fein had been founded by Arthur Griffith and in 1907 Charles J. Dolan resigned his seat at Westminster, left the Irish Parliamentary Party and in 1908 contested the North-Leitrim by-election as a Sinn Fein candidate. So there was now a little more bite in local politics and some G.A.A. clubs had leanings either towards Sinn Fein and their abstentionist policies, or

* A colourful and outspoken man. He was parish priest in Kiltubrid for thirty-seven years (1896 to 1933).

towards the Remondite Home Rule party. Besides, the I.R.B. were growing in strength and had members in many G.A.A. clubs. As a result of these local rivalries games were often very colourful, dramatic and noisy affairs. Thomas O Floinn, in an article published in the *Irish Press* G.A.A. Supplement for the Golden Jubilee of the Association (1934) called "Had Leitrim less counties on its borders . . ." writes of the football matches in these years:

'Matches then were not the rather tame affairs that we witness nowadays. Parish rivalry was stronger than it is to-day and a match was an inter-parish demonstration. Men, women and children attended in thousands . . .'

Crummy School c. 1910.





Each club had its own flags and its own war cry. The war cry of the United Gaels was innocuous enough and gives no indication of the club's political leanings:

*'United Gaels, hip hip hooray,
It would gladden your heart to see them play.
I'd rather be dead and under clay
Than lower the flag they have raised to-day'.*

It is debatable if 'it would gladden your heart to see them play' because it is said that in fact they never won a game! This may be so, but during the years 1906 to 1908, when the club was at its strongest, they were, it seems, quite a good team. For instance, in March 1907 the Wolfe Tone club held a tournament in the lawn of Ballyduff House and Kiltubrid played Ballinamore in one of the games. The *Leitrim Observer* report states that 'this was one of the best games seen in South Leitrim for some time. The game was lively from start to finish'. The match ended in a draw on the score of two points each.

¹*Leitrim Observer*, 6 October, 1906.

²*Leitrim Observer*, 5 November, 1910.

³I am indebted to Joseph Flynn, St. Mary's, Carrick-on-Shannon,

By 1909 the United Gaels were going downhill. Other players like Dan Early (Edenavow), Luke McKiernan (Mullaun), and John 'Blackfoot' Skinnion (Drunhubrid) joined the team, but they could not halt the decline. Emigration and the continuing lack of success made it impossible for the club to survive. And although Thomas O Floinn, the main inspiration behind the club, continued to teach in Lisscarbin until 1915, most of the club's activities seem to have ceased by 1911.

The Kiltubrid United Gaels club appeared to have been a failure. Yet many young men were active in the club between the years 1904 and 1911 and their efforts must be recorded and praised. Besides, they were an important link between the early G.A.A. clubs in the parish and the Aughaslane team which came later: it was they who kept the flag flying during the first decade of the twentieth century.

for this information and for much of the information about his uncle Thomas O Floinn.

⁴*Leitrim Observer*, 16 March, 1907.



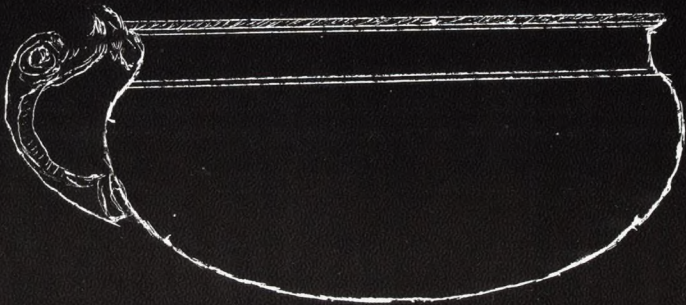
Moherevogh National School, 1914. Front row:
 (left to right) T. Cassells, J. Jordan, J. McManus, A.
 Jordan, P. Bohan, M. Jordan, G. Rowley, T. Meehan.
Second row: M. Rowley, R. Taylor, B. Taylor, M. Mc-
 Cabe, K. Jordan, A. Vaugh, M.A. McManus, B. Cunn-
 ingham, B. Rowley, K. Rowley, R.A. Reynolds, R.A.
 Fanning, E. Cunningham, M.K. Fanning, K. d'Arcy.
Third row: L. McCabe, M.J. Rowley, R.A. Rowley, B.
 d'Arcy, L. Beirne, L. Cassels, M.A. Bohan, M.A. Cun-
 ningham, K. Beirne, M. Reynolds, A. Rowley, M.K.
 McCabe, M.E. d'Arcy, L. Vaugh, B. McManus, —.
Fourth row: K. Bohan, M. Rowley, J. McManus, J.
 Bohan, —, B. Rowley, J. Cassels, P. Reynolds, P.
 Rowley, E. Cassels, J. McCabe, O. Beirne, P.
 McManus, J. McManus, J. Cunningham, M. Cassels,
 P. d'Arcy, T. Bohan.



The Keshcarrigan Bowl. This beautiful vessel was found in the river between Loughs Marraw and Scur near Keshcarrigan, Co. Leitrim (Nat. Mus. Dublin).

The Keshcarrigan bowl is of a fine golden bronze, about 1 mm. thick. It was formed by spinning, the marks being clearly traceable on the interior and faintly in places on the exterior, it has a small spinning centre on the exterior of the base. It seems to have been spun into an external mould and its neck finished off against an interior mould. There are possible faint signs of beating round the neck.

The rim has been expanded out slightly to a hollow moulding along the edge with a rib crimped into a zig-zag formed by alternate applications of a punch of circular cross-section on either side. The space on either side of this rib apparently never carried enamel. The interior groove on the rim is rather irregularly tooled, that on the exterior of the shoulder being more regular.



The cast bronze bird handles seems to be soldered to the body at the base, but at the top a wedge of bronze has been 'run-on' (in two stages) to adapt the bird beak to the profile of the vessel neck. Even then the fit here is not good, and there is a space of 1.2 mm. between the bronze wedge and the bowl, only a small tongue of metal actually making contact. This is in contrast to the excellent workmanship otherwise—unless there had been originally a washer of organic material here, which seems unlikely. The handle has been well tooled over, and no sign of casting seams can be seen.



DETAIL OF HANDLE.
BIRD HEAD MOTIF
IN GOLD BRONZE.



Aughaslane Young Ireland's

DURING the winter of 1917 the world was far from settled. The war which began in 1914 was still dragging on and the winter merely added to the suffering and misery of the trenches. In Ireland the Easter Rising of 1916 had, at first, appeared insignificant and a failure, but after the execution of its leaders there was a general outcry and attitudes changed dramatically. In Kilubrid the Sinn Féin party was getting organised.

Early in the month of December, 1917, an after-Mass meeting was held at Drumcong

'for the purpose of organising and strengthening the Sinn Féin movement in the parish and to explain generally the policy of Sinn Féin as enunciated by the responsible leaders of the new generation, Comdt. E. de Valera and Mr. A. Griffith'.¹

Members of the Aughaslane Team who won the Junior Championship in 1919: T. Gannon, J. Travers, J. Skinnion, P. Gannon.

The Kiltubrid fife-and-drum band, under the charge of Mr. T. Doherty, were present and played some national airs. James Dolan, brother of Charles J. Dolan, Manorhamilton, was the main speaker. When he had finished Mr. Sean O'Kelly, Gaelic League organiser for Sligo-Leitrim, spoke in Irish, urging the use of the native tongue whenever possible. The hope was expressed that, at the end of the meeting, every man in the parish would be enrolled as a member of Sinn Féin. This was a large and enthusiastic gathering and the speakers were loudly applauded. It was on this wave of enthusiasm that the Aughaslane branch of Sinn Féin was formed, and it was on this same wave of enthusiasm that the 'Aughaslane Young Ireland's' G.A.A. club was formed early in 1918.



Driney House, Lough Scur — burned in 1920.

It was Patrick Reynolds, who was then teaching in Carrigallen, who suggested the club be named after the insurgents of 1848. The meetings of the new club were held in McKiernan's workshop near Aughaslane bridge. This family of coach-builders were involved with the G.A.A. in the parish from the beginning. Tim McKiernan was on the committee of the Michael Davitt club in 1889 and now his two sons, John and Hubert, played with the Aughaslane team. Funds were raised for the new club by running open-air dances at Aughaslane bridge. The club was then affiliated and they indicated their intentions of fielding a team in the Junior Championship. Once they had enough funds they bought a set of jerseys. The jerseys were white with a green sash and a gold shamrock crest.

Practices were normally held in Driney but the club had no permanent playing field. Usually the practices were not organised, they just happened. A few players would occupy a field on a Sunday afternoon and the sound of the ball being kicked or hopping and the full-blooded cheers of the players soon attracted others to join them. Before long there would be enough players to start a game, but by then the owner of the field would have arrived and they would have to move into the next man's land. It was not uncommon for players to move three or four times on a Sunday afternoon. But the practices were not always so haphazard: John Gannon, who then lived in Dublin, would sometimes bring a 'real' football home with him and coach the players in some of the basic skills. They

learned much, too, from older players like Dan Early, who was a great exponent of the drop-kick, but unfortunately he only played a few games with the Young Ireland's. Like many from the parish, before and after him, he was forced to emigrate to the United States.

Aughaslane's first game was a challenge with Kiltyhugh and it was played in Willowfield, outside Ballinamore. Kiltyhugh had a strong team at this time, backboned by the Martins and the Flynns and they were pre-match favourites. There was an added bite to this game because the Kiltyhugh team were regarded as Hibernian and the Aughaslane team as Sinn Feiners. A huge crowd left the parish that day to support their team. They travelled by side-car and bicycle but the majority of them walked. Pakie McWeeney (Crummy) recalls that he was in his early 'teens then and



House of Sonny Reynolds. This house was opposite the Vocational School in Kesh.

would not be allowed to go to the game lest he wear out his only pair of shoes. He resolved the problem by walking the ten-mile journey barefooted!

The game was a colourful and noisy event. There was as much drama on the sideline as on the playing field. The flags that were waved were not the colours of the rival teams but the Hibernian and Sinn Fein flags. The loud cheers were more often intended to out-do rival supporters than to encourage their own players. After a close and hard-fought game, Aughaslane emerged winners. John Skinnion, who was full back and captain, was a great asset to the team. He had a great positional sense and an effortless style of play. Bernie Slack, a small but accurate corner forward, was the chief scorer in this and most other games. Tom Gannon was at this time a student in St. Patrick's Training College, Drumcondra, and this was his first competitive game to play within the county. Within a decade he was to prove himself to be one of the finest players ever produced in the county. Aughaslane had won their first game and by mid 1918 it was obvious that both Aughaslane Young Ireland's and Sinn Fein were on the crest of a wave.

But these years were difficult years for the G.A.A. because of the 'Troubles'. Games were stopped by the military and police and the harassment was so great that the G.A.A. organised Sunday 4 August, 1918, as 'Gaelic Sunday' when they would play as many games as possible as a nationwide

Tom Gannon — Captain of the Leitrim 1927 team.



protest against the restrictions being imposed on them. Yet the Cavan *Anglo Celt* reported a game being stopped in Kiltyclogher later that month: the police occupied a field from early morning. So even if clubs did succeed in playing games they were seldom reported in the local press. Consequently, I am indebted to men like John Skinnion, Johnny Travers (R.I.P.), Paddy Gannon, Tom Gannon, Tommy McGovern (R.I.P.), and Pakie McWeeney for much of the information on the Aughaslane Young Ireland team.

Aughaslane entered a team for the Junior Championship of 1919 too. They had won some of their games in the 1918 Championship and by 1919 they were a more mature and experienced team. We have not got information on all their games in 1919 but we do know that they defeated Kiltyhugh in the early rounds of the Championship. They then defeated Ballinamore on 25 May, in Ballinamore, and on 10 August they defeated Drumreilly in Fenagh. The *Leitrim Observer* report on the game states that:

*'Before a large attendance and under glorious weather conditions, two interesting matches in the Leitrim Senior and Junior Championships were played in Fenagh on Sunday last . . . In the junior contest Aughaslane (Young Ireland's) easily disposed of Upper Drumreilly and were declared winners by 4-2 to 0-3.'*²

This high scoring by the Young Ireland's is an indication that they were quite a strong team and they were, by then, favourites to win the junior final. Due to the



Garda outpost in Aughacashel 1923. Mullagharve R.I.C. Barracks was burned in 1920.

'Troubles' the final was not played until April 1920. Their opponents in the final were Cloone and the game was played in Willowfield. Aughaslane won on the score of 3 points to 2. They had made history. A Kiltubrid team had won a Championship for the first time. The Aughaslane team which played that day was Johnny Travers (Aughaslane), Francie Reynolds (Cornabrone), John Skinnion (Cornabrone), captain, Paddy Gannon (Drumhubrid), Francie McLoughlin (Drumcarra), Tommy McGovern (Drumroosk), Tom Gannon (Drumhubrid), Pakie Winters (Derrien), Hubert McKiernan (Drumgood), Paddy McManus (Corglass), Tom Reynolds (Cornabrone), Tommy Winters (Derrien), John McKiernan (Drumgood), Tom Reynolds (Corrasmaghooil), and Bernie Slack (Drumhubrid).

Garda Frank Holland and Mary Moran outside Kesh Barracks c. 1925.



Having won the Junior Championship of 1919 Aughaslane Young Ireland team went up to senior grade in 1920. But it became increasingly difficult to play due to the worsening troubles. All G.A.A. clubs were supect, but particularly those with leanings towards Sinn Fein. Soon the club had to cease all activities.

The Home Rule party had been eclipsed by Sinn Fein in the election of December 1918 and as 1919 progressed it was clear that the country was fast slipping into a state of war. Many of the Young Ireland football team were actively involved in the 'Troubles' at local level. By the middle of the year 1920 the R.I.C. barracks in Mullaghgarve and Keshcarrigan were burned. So too was the Courthouse in Kesh and the 'big house' in Driney. From this time on the police and the 'Black and Tans', from their base in Carrick-on-Shannon, patrolled the area in their Crossley trucks. On 4 March, 1921, the No. 1 column of the South Leitrim Brigade ambushed a contingent of military and police at Sheemore as they were returning from Gowel Church to Carrick-on-Shannon. They inflicted a number of casualties on them and escaped without injury themselves. Michael Geoghegan (Mohercregg) and Harry McKeon (Edenmore) were in the ambush party that day. But the euphoria following this success was shortlived. Exactly a week later six members of the No. 2 column of the South Leitrim Brigade were killed at Selton, near Gortvagh. With happenings such as

these on either side of the parish, people's thoughts were far removed from playing football.

It was not until 1924, when the War of Independence and the Civil War were over, that the Young Ireland's club was reformed. John Skinnion handed over £4-10s to the reformed club. He had safely guarded the funds of the club since they had ceased to function in 1920. The club continued in existence as a junior club until 1928, but they had no more Championship successes. Players like Jamsie Winters, Mick Winters, Tom Reynolds, Pakie McWeeney, Paddy McGlynn and Pdraig Redehan joined the team but, like many Kiltubrid players, they got no medals to reward their efforts. By 1928 there were again two teams, Aughaslane and Kilclare, in the parish, but both of these teams were too weak to survive and soon they were to give way to a single and stronger Kiltubrid team.

But the Aughaslane Young Ireland team had its success in the Championship of 1919 and it did re-emerge after those difficult and critical years from 1920 to 1923. But it was a changed club that emerged in 1924: it would no longer be carried along on a wave of enthusiasm as it had in 1918, nor could it be assured of the unity it had then. Events of the intervening years had seen to that.

¹ *Leitrim Observer*, 8 December, 1917.

² *Leitrim Observer*, 16 August, 1919.



Crummy National School c. 1925, included are: Mrs. Flynn (Teacher), J.J. Reynolds, A. Duignan, J. Leydon (R.I.P.), T. Mulvey (R.I.P.), T.W. McWeeney, T. Kevilly (R.I.P.), M. Mulvey, M.K. McWeeney, A. McWeeney, L.A. Gilmore, M. McKiernan, M. Mahon, W. McManus, E. Flynn, J. Mulvanerty, M. Dwyer, C. McWeeney.

A. Luscarbo {muse}

National School

X Monday 2nd July

1923

C	D	E	F	G	PUPIL'S NAME	I	M	H	CLASS ROLL No.	Week ending Saturday		
										Week ending Saturday	Week ending Saturday	Week ending Saturday
	13 3 23		9-17		<i>Left.</i>				1			
	21 3 23		5-6	297	Thos. Sasly			R.C.	2			
	20 6 23		6-6	298	Bernard McIlmoe			" "	3			
			4-0	299	John Mulvey			" "	4	335-5	335-5	
	14 22		5-0	298	<i>Left.</i> Rose Flynn			" "	1			
	14 22		6-0	299	Julia Goff			" "	2			
	28 22		5-0	300	Gretta McKernan			" "	3			
	28 6 22		4-0	301	Una McKernan			" "	4			
	18 6 23		7-6	302	Kathleen McKernan			" "	5			
	18 6 23		5-3	303	Brian Mulvey			" "	6	10	00-0	
									7	6-5	53-5	
									0			
	1 23		8-0	288	Thos. Mulvey			" "	1			
	1 23		8-9	293	Thos. Mulvey			" "	2			
	1 23		5-9	294	Thos. Mulvey			" "	3			
	1 23				Wm. Mulvey			" "	4			
									5			
	1 23		9-11									
	1 23		6-9	292	Thos. Nolan			R.C.	1			
	1 23		8-6	294	Bernard Brady			" "	2			
									3			
									0			
	1 23		8-3	295	Gallagher			" "	1	0-0	00-	
	1 23		9-3	296	Annie Gilbride			" "	2			
	1 23		9-0	288	Katie Flynn			" "	3	0		
									4			

10-23	10-9	279	Mary A. Dugnan	R.C.	1			A
10-23	10-9	282	Mary A. Dugnan	" "	2			X
10-23	10-3	287	Mary A. Dugnan	" "	3			X
					0	3333	2033	2
			III					
11-22	11-0	278	Patk O'Neill	" "	1			A
11-22	9-3	279	Mr. Gaffney	" "	2	0000	00-0	
11-22	11-0	282	Patk Dugnan	" "	3	0000	00-0	
11-23	10-0	280	Patk Logan	" "	4	0000	00-0	
11-23	10-0	283	Joe Gilbride	" "	5			A
11-23	10-0	287	John L. Dugnan	" "	6	0000	00-0	
11-23	9-9	289	John S. Mulvey	" "	7	0000	00-0	
11-23	7-0	291	Joe Mulvey	" "	8			A
					9			A
					0			
			III					
11-23	9-9	291	Mary A. McKernan	" "	5			A
11-23	8-9	292	Josephine McKernan	" "	6			A
11-23	10-9	293	John Sweeney	" "	7	0000	00-0	
11-23	8-3	294	Katie Mulvey	" "	8			A
11-22	11-2	291	Katie Gaffney	" "	9			A
11-22	11-3	298	Maggie S. Gallagher	" "	0			A
					1			
					2			
			V					
11-23	13-0	239	Brigus Gilbride	" "	1			A
11-23	12-9	244	Maggie O'Neill	" "	2			X
11-23	12-9	243	Jamie Flynn	" "	3	0000	00-0	
11-23	10-9	286	Rose A. Burnie	" "	4			X
11-23	10-1	302	Mary T. Rowley	" "	5			X
11-23	11-3	303	Brigus Dolan	" "	6			X
					7			X
					0			
			Stagg		1			
			Mary Kate Rabin		0			
			Rose McKernan		4			

Liscarbin National School 1923: Back row, Annie Gilbride, Barney Brady, Pat O'Neill, John J. Duignan, Tommy Gafney, Kath McKiernan, Jimmy Mulvey. Middle row: Mary Ann Duignan, M.A. Mulvey, May Gilroy, Maggie O'Neill, Rose A. Beirne, Bridgie Dolan, M. McKiernan, Katie Mulvey, Dotie O'Neill. Front row: Willie Early, Tom Dolan, Frank Dolan, John Mulvey, Bertie McCormack, Frank Beirne, Tom Early, Julia Gafney, Gretta McKiernan.





John Clarke, Captain of Kiltubrid Team in 1929.

Changes and a Championship (1928- 1930)

LEITRIM won the Connaught senior football championship in 1927 and Tom Gannon, a Kiltubrid man, though at this time playing with Fenagh, played a vital role as captain and centre half back on that team. Aughaslane, the club he had made his debut with in 1918, did field a team for the Junior championship in 1928 but, despite the fact that they beat Drumshanbo by 2-3 to 0-0 in the first round of the championship, they were on the decline. This Aughaslane team, though, was not really a parish team since it took most of its players from the Aughaslane area and the rest from the adjoining townlands in the parish of Fenagh. There were young men interested in playing football in the rest of the parish too, notably in Kilclare and in the area known locally as 'Lloyd's land' (townlands of Tooman, Drumara, Druminga and Derrien Lloyd). So it was no great surprise, considering the enthusiasm after Leitrim's Connaught championship victory the previous year, that Kilclare fielded a team to play in the Junior championship of 1928.

Francis Kellegher, a nephew of the Secretary of the Michael Davitt club in

1889, was Chairman of the new club. Pee Lee was secretary and Luke Doherty, whose father was vice-president of the Michael Davitt club, was treasurer. They set about organizing their club and preparing the team for the Junior championship. They practiced in McDermott's 'football field' in Kilclare Mor, though they played most of their home games in the sports field in Drumrookil.

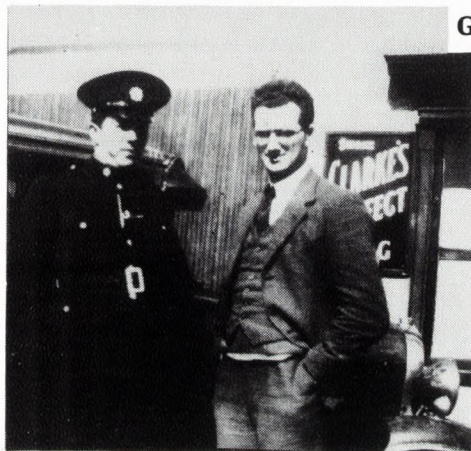
It appears that the championship was run-off on a league basis and Kilclare's first game was against Dowra. It was played in a field given by George Laird, Killucan, on 3 June 1928. The report in the *Leitrim Observer* on this game states:

'Dowra won the toss and after they had endeavoured to score Kilclare attacked and keeping up the pressure, a well directed shot from the right forward (Heeran) beat the Dowra custodian. At midfield a Kilclare player got knocked out for a few minutes and play was consequently delayed. On resuming Dowra attacked and the effort resulted in a goal. The Dowra and Kilclare ends were visited in turn and a fifty to Dowra was sent wide. Both teams lacked good combination and as a result chances were lost. Before the end Dowra added a point which left the scores at half-time reading Dowra 1-2, Kilclare 1-0.'

Shortly after turning over Kilclare added a point. Dowra now put on the pressure for some time and eventually Kilclare got clear and coming along in strong fashion scored a goal. Dowra, in the next few minutes replied with another goal. A free to Kilclare gave them no advantage and the next try by Dowra for a goal was wide of the mark. Soon Dowra scored another goal. Kilclare and Dowra added a point each before the end. The final score was Dowra 3-3, Kilclare 2-2.'

Unfortunately we do not know the full line-out of this Kilclare team. But we do know that the 'Heeran' referred to in the report was Frank Heeran (Tooman), a very able forward. John McWeeney (Derrien Lloyd) was goalie. Michael Tracey (Tooman) was full back. Other backs were James Shanley (Corrick), Eugene Bohan (Fenagh), and Frank Doonan (Cornagon). Luke Doherty (Kilclare Mor), one of the better players on the team, usually played at midfield. Bernie J. Leddy (Tooman), Sonny Gilmartin (Kilclare), and Willie 'Hoot' Reilly (Drumshanbo) were regulars in the forward line.

So Kilclare were beaten in their first championship game and they failed to fulfil their next fixture against Carrick on 2 July. Yet they fielded a good team at the annual horse-racing event in the sports field, Drumrookle on 15 August, when they defeated Dowra by two goals to one in a tournament game. Dowra reached the junior final in 1928 but were defeated by Drumeela.



**Guard Bill Logan
and John Doyle.**

By Autumn 1928, then, it was obvious that the GAA in the parish was in a disjointed and disorganized state. There were two weak junior teams, Aughaslane and Kilclare, based in the parish, and both were supplemented by players from outside the parish. So it was only a matter of time before someone would suggest amalgamating the two clubs and forming a stronger parish team. John Clarke, a Garda from Mullagh in Co. Galway, was moved to Keshcarrigan early in 1928 and he played a vital role in GAA affairs in the parish, and indeed in the county, over the next few years. He talked to Paddy McGlynn, who was at this time playing with Aughaslane and they arranged a game between Kilclare and Aughaslane in the hope that they would join forces having seen how weak the individual clubs were. Kilclare won the game and perhaps for this reason insisted that they would field a team in 1929 too.

However, the Aughaslane club disbanded and threw in their lot with the new Kiltubrid club which was formed in the first months of 1929. The players from 'Lloyd's land' who previously played with Kilclare, joined the newly formed Kiltubrid team too, with the result that the Kilclare club was greatly weakened and depended more on players from the parish of Drumshanbo. We do not know exactly how the Kilclare team lined out in either 1928 or 1929 but all the following men played with them at one time or another: John McWeeney (Derrien Lloyd), Ned McGowan (Drumshanbo), Michael

Tracey (Tooman), Eugene Bohan (Fenagh), Frank Doonan (Cornagon), Pat Muldoon (Fenagh), Bernie J. Leddy (Tooman), James Shanley (Corrick), Sonny Gilmartin (Kilclare), John Begley (Kilclare), Pakie Flynn (Tooman), Willie Flynn (Tooman), Luke Doherty (Kilclare), Bernie McKeon (Drumshanbo), Bernie Allen (Drumshanbo), Pee Allen (Drumshanbo), Francis J. Foley (Kilclare), Willie 'Hoot' Reilly (Drumshanbo), Francis Kellegher (Kilclare), Frank Heeran (Tooman), John Joe Doherty (Derrien Lloyd).



St. Bridgid's Church, Drumcong.

The Kilclare club, which was formed early in 1928, provided a number of young men with an opportunity to play football which they otherwise would not have had. It was following on a great tradition of GAA activity (begun by the Michael Davitt club in 1889) in the area; and it was following too on a great tradition of involvement in sports such as horse-racing, athletics and handball. But the Kilclare club of 1928 to 1930 was always doomed to failure. Its base was too narrow to begin with and emigration, which was continuing like a creeping cancer, was taking away many of the young and active men from the area upon which the club depended for survival. In any case, by 1930 the club was no more.

Garda John Clarke was stationed in Kesh for only three years—1928-1931, but his contribution to the GAA in the parish and in the county (he was Co. Registrar of the GAA) was immense during that time. It was mainly due to his enthusiasm and organization that the Kiltubrid club was formed early in 1929. Edward Rutledge was chairman of the new club. Charlie Pinkman was secretary and Patrick Shanley was treasurer. They held a number of dances in Rutledge's garage (beside the bridge) in Kesh to raise funds and they then bought a new set of jerseys, which were blue and gold hooped jerseys. John Clarke was elected captain of the team.

Practices were held in Donnelly's yard in Kesh. In this confined space it was usually the survival of the fittest as every ball was

competed for by at least half a dozen players, and technique gave way to toughness. It was no place for the faint-hearted. The players became fit and fearless and after a few practice-matches, improved in skill and combination. Kiltubrid entered a team for the junior championship that year and their first round game was against Tully and they won this game. The Kiltubrid line-out varied from one game to the next but they normally lined out as follows: J. McWeeney (Derrien Lloyd), Eugene Bohan (Corrabarrack), Michael Tracey (Tooman), Willie Tighe (Aughaslane), Frank Doonan (Cornagon), George Rowley (Carrickport), James Shanley (Corrick), Pakie Flynn (Cornabrone), Guard Bill Logan (Kesh), Bernie J. Leddy (Tooman), John Joe Foran (Drumkeelin), Willie Flynn (Lisdromacrone), John Clarke (Kesh), captain, Frank Heeran (Tooman), Tommy Flynn (Cornabrone). Others who played with them that year were Willie Foran (Drumkeelin), Pakie Flynn (Tooman), and two clerical students, John Mahon (Drumaweel) and Michael Doherty (Kilclare Mor), whenever they were home from college. Their full back, Michael Tracey, got injured during the year and Willie Tighe moved into the centre.

Kiltubrid continued their successful run by beating Cloone in Fenagh on 5 May, and by beating Fenagh in Laheen on 3 June. They were fortunate against Fenagh because they won by a single point and Fenagh scored an 'own-goal'. But these

games paled into insignificance when compared with the semi-final of the championship which was played in Laheen on 11 August. This match produced one of the most unusual pairings in the history of the GAA in the parish because Kiltubrid's opponents in the semi-final were none other than Kilclare. Because they were from the same parish the rivalry was all the keener. The fact that Kilclare had objected to Kiltubrid getting affiliated earlier in the year was just an indication of the coolness between the two clubs, and was a guarantee that the game would be a keenly contested one. The result was as unusual as the game itself. Kiltubrid won on the score of one goal to nil. The report in the *Leitrim Observer* states that:

*'The field arrangements, in the capable hands of Mr. Charles Pinkman were all that could be desired...In the Kiltubrid versus Kilclare game a rousing game concluded with a score for Kiltubrid of one goal to nil for their opponents.'*²

The report in the *Anglo Celt* has little more information. It states that the game was

*'...characteristic of good play and combination...with Kiltubrid being a trifle lucky.'*³

This was a very significant result in GAA affairs in the parish because it effectively put an end to the short life-span of the Kilclare club and it gave the newly formed Kiltubrid club the boost it needed.

The final of the championship was played in Lynch's field in Drumruekill and Kiltubrid's opponents were Carrigallen.

This game was really an anti-climax after the semi-final. The day was wet and windy and it spoiled good football. Kiltubrid played with the wind in the first half but failed to benefit from this advantage. However they improved greatly in the second half and won by a narrow margin. The Kiltubrid junior team of 1929, in the first year of their existence, won the junior championship, just as Aughaslane had done ten years earlier. There was going to be a long wait, fifty-one years in fact, for the next Kiltubrid team to win a junior competition. By a strange coincidence that victory too was gained at the expense of Carrigallen.



1. *Leitrim Observer* 9 June, 1928. 2. *Leitrim Observer* 17 August, 1929. 3. *Anglo Celt* 17 August, 1929.



Liscarbin National School 1928. Front row: Frank Beirne (Lisearbin), John Joe Fanning (U.S.A.), John L. McCormack (Cornaleck), Paddy Mulvey (R.I.P.), James Cassels (England), John Mulvey (Mohercregg), Bertie McCormack (Dublin), Frank Dolan (R.I.P.) Second row: Lucy Flynn (Gortnawane), Kathleen McGee (Ballinamore), Mary Ann Mulvey (Mohercregg), Mary T. Earley (Carrick on Shannon), Madeline McKiernan (U.S.A.), Joe Riley (Dublin), Bridie Mulvey (Dublin). Third row: Una McKiernan (R.I.P.), Kathleen McKiernan (Letterfine), Margaret Flynn (R.I.P.), Julia Gafney (England), Liz Gallagher (England), Kathleen Flynn U.S.A.), Maimie McKiernan (U.S.A.), Kathleen Mulvey (U.S.A.) Back row: Miss Kennedy (Teacher), Leo Duignan (Dublin), James Mulvey (Bunrevigh), Alice Gallagher (England), Barney Brady (R.I.P.), Tom Gafney (U.S.A.), Pat Fanning (Ballinamore), Tom Dolan (Gortnawane).

Flynn Bros., Tooman, stonemasons.



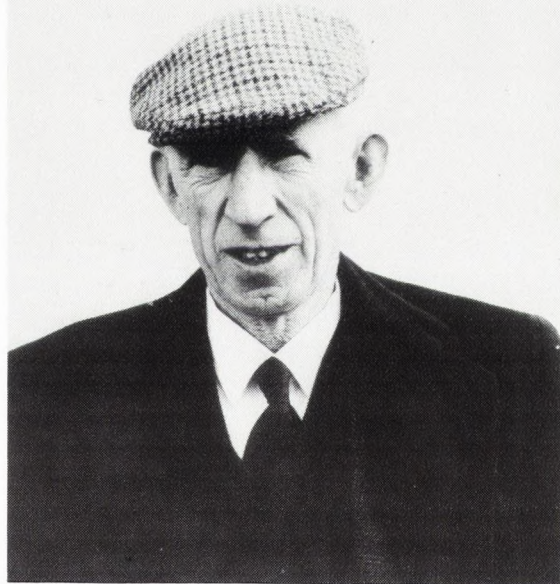
The 'Thirties

1930 was a strange year. The world was poised, wondering which way to go. The twelve years since 1918 had healed the flesh wounds on the people and on the land. Twelve years had changed wounds to scars and dulled memories. There could never be another great war, people said, and mercifully they could not know. But there was little hope at the beginning of the new decade because people had hoped and planned in the 'twenties and the Wall Street crash had come. In Ireland, democracy was having growing pains and Eamon de Valera was fast moving to the centre stage of Irish politics. In Kiltubrid young people were growing up and going away. And yet despite the depression and Ireland's trade war with England, despite the gathering clouds of war, despite the political turmoil and the re-run of the Civil War, now fought with marching boots and flying fists, despite all this the 'thirties was perhaps the greatest decade of them all in the history of the GAA in the parish.

Kiltubrid fielded a senior team in 1930. It was a changed team from the previous year. Ned McGowan (Drumshanbo) replaced John McWeeney in goals. Master McKenna (Drumshanbo) took over the full-back position. James Shanley and George Rowley were normally the two corner backs. Tom Gannon, who had made his debut with Aughaslane in 1918 but played most of his club football with Fenagh, played centre-half back on this team. This was to be his last year playing football. He was flanked

by his brother Paddy and a young but very promising player, Michael Leddy. Mike Leddy, one of the great footballers from the parish, made his debut on the parish senior team in 1930 although still a minor, and his playing career with Kiltubrid spanned a period of twenty two years. The two Foran brothers from Drumkeelin, Willie and J.J., played on this team too. Another new face in the forward line was J. Tuite, a Westmeath man who worked on the railway. John Clarke was still captain in 1930, but shortly after he married in 1931 he was transferred to Mohill. However, in the same year Padraig Redehan, a regular on the county team since 1928, was transferred to Crummy N.S. and he captained the Kiltubrid team until he retired from football in 1936. He was a fine athlete and was Connaught champion over 500 yards in 1931. He contributed a great deal to the GAA as a player and as a trainer of school-boys' teams in Crummy and later on in Kilnagros N.S. He was unlucky too that he missed out on Leitrim's victory in the Connaught championship of 1927 and the Junior All-Ireland victory of 1938. He was a regular with Leitrim, usually playing centre-half back or midfield, between the years 1928 and 1936.

Kiltubrid seniors did not win the League or Championship in the '30s but they did field a senior team from 1930 to 1939 and this was a great achievement for a parish which had a history of GAA clubs springing up, but, having no depth, withering away.



Michael Leddy, played with Kiltubrid for 22 years.

This senior team was always a team to be reckoned with too, and while it may have lacked balance it always had a few great players.

Canon Anthony McGaver, who was parish priest in Kiltubrid for thirty-seven years, died in January 1933 and he was replaced by the curate, Fr. John Kiernan. A few months later Fr. Andy Lynch was appointed as curate to the parish. He had a great love for athletics and in particular for Gaelic football and he involved himself in the GAA activities in the parish from the beginning. He was a quiet-spoken man who mixed easily and was soon well known and loved by the parishioners. He brought some order and discipline to the club and he saw the great need for a football field for the

team to practice on, since Laheen was available only for games. Tom Doyle gave the field where the new parish school is now built to the GAA to practice on, and the players worked hard at levelling the ditch in the centre and making it playable. Fr. Lynch was curate in Kiltubrid from 1933 to 1948 and it is no mere coincidence that these years were the golden years of the GAA in the parish. Besides being involved with the local club, Fr. Lynch was chairman of the Co. Board from 1934 to 1942 and he was too one of the best referees in the county.

Kiltubrid did win a major competition in the '30s though: the 'Fr. Lynch Cup'. The curate's house in Kiltubrid was a small hovel type house along the river near where the new church is now built. One of Fr. Lynch's first tasks was to raise funds to build a new house. In order to do this he organized football matches and gave a cup to be played for by all the junior and senior teams in the county. This competition was played each year from 1936 to 1939. Kiltubrid beat Carrick in the final of this competition on St. Patrick's Day 1938. The *Leitrim Observer* stated that the game was 'productive of good play' and Kiltubrid won by 1-3 to 0-5. A Monster Tournament was arranged for Carrick-on-Shannon on 5 July 1936 to raise funds for the new house. Leitrim played Longford and St. Mel's College played a Connaught colleges selection. The fund raising efforts must have been successful because the new house, built by the Flynn brothers, Tooman, was completed in 1937.

The slates, which were given free by Rev. W. Peyton, were those used on the 'big house' Driney which was burned during the Troubles in 1920.

Kiltubrid had minor and juvenile teams during the '30s too. 'Clooney Rovers' was a minor team started in 1931 and it took its name from the townland of Clooney where they practised. Mike Leddy was just over-age for the Clooney Rovers team but he did play on the county minor team in 1930. Players like Michael Keating, Frank Carter, John Canning, Jimmy Rourke, M.J. McWeeney, Dan Heeran, J.J. Golden, Tom Donnelly, Jim Donnelly and Tom 'Gunner' Shanley played on this team. They practised behind the 'cottages' near 'Clooney stick'. They did not play very many games



Fr. Andy Lynch, Curate in Kiltubrid from 1933 to '48.

altogether but they did beat Ballinamore on 23 April 1932 by 7 points to 4. Ned Donnelly recalls one game they played in Fenagh. Willie Moran (Boneil) had a 'Tin Lizzie' Ford which was in a bad state of repair, but nonetheless he got the job of bringing the Clooney Rovers players to the game. He refused to bring the machine into Kesh for no other reason than there was a Garda barracks there, so he parked it at 'Bearer's' and loaded the players onto it. Before they had gone very far one of the tyres went flat. Since there was no spare wheel, he stopped and moved all the players to the other side of the Ford and thus, with his load re-arranged, he drove to Fenagh and home again when the game was over!

Tom Gannon, now teaching in Keshcarrigan N.S. was still very involved in GAA activities although he had retired from playing football. He was a referee and an official of the Co. Board and he trained a school-boys, under-15 team in Kesh. This team won the competition in 1934, beating Crummy, Kilclare and Carrick National schools. This team consisted of players like Sonny Keating, Michael Judge, Charlie Kane, Ned Donnelly and Liam Golden. In 1934, as part of the celebrations for the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the GAA, a juvenile match was planned between Connaught and Leinster to be played in Croke Park. The fact that two juveniles from the parish, Sean Mitchell and S. Donnelly were selected on the Connaught panel is an indication of the progress being

**Willie Duignan, Gertie Horan, Sonny Reynolds,
Kathleen Horan, 1937.**



made with the juveniles.

The year 1933 marked the beginning of the golden era of football in St. Mel's College, Longford. They won five Leinster senior championships and almost as many junior championships between 1933 and 1939. Students from the parish of Kiltubrid were playing on virtually all of those teams, and while they contributed greatly to these victories it must be said that they benefitted

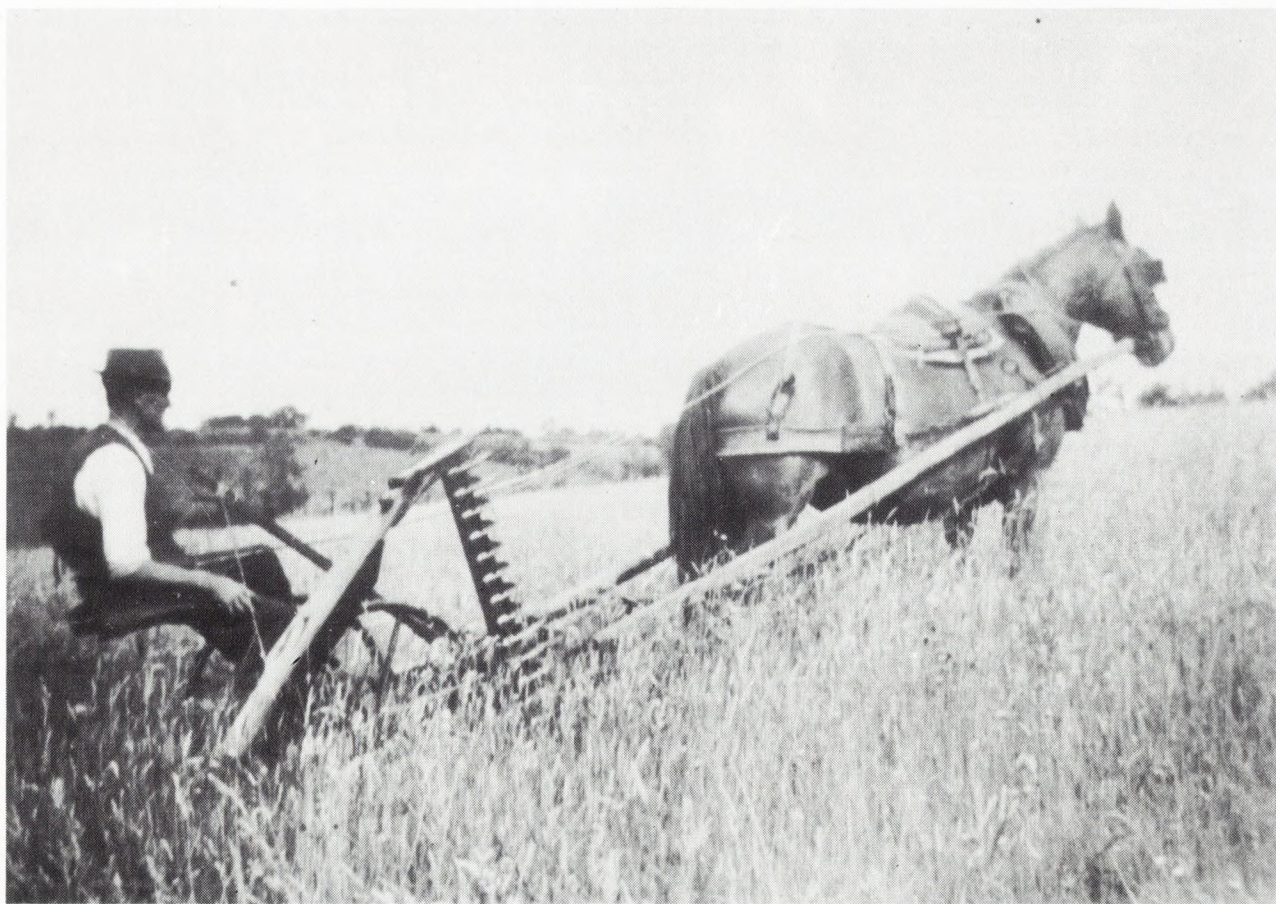
greatly too from the excellent coaching of Fr. Sean Manning. Frank Carter (Shanraw) was on the senior teams which won in the three years between 1933 and 1936. He normally played full back and centre half back and he was to develop into one of the best defenders in Connaught during his fairly short playing career. He played full back on the Leinster Colleges team which defeated Ulster in the inter-provincial final replay in 1936. The drawn game, which was played in Cavan, and the replay in Drogheda were examples of Colleges football at its best.

Danny Mitchell (Annadale) and Willie J. Doherty (Annagheary) were also on the winning St. Mel's team in 1936. Both these players played minor and senior football with Kiltubrid afterwards. Danny's brother, Sean, was perhaps the greatest forward player ever from the parish. In 1937, while still only fifteen, he won a medal with St. Mel's senior team and he was a substitute on the Leinster Colleges team. In 1937, he played centre forward on the winning St. Mel's team and on the Leinster Colleges inter-provincial team. Perhaps the best indication of his prowess at this time is that he played a vital role, playing at corner-forward, on the Leitrim junior team which won the All-Ireland (Home) Final in 1938 and he was not then seventeen years old! By comparison Frank Carter, the nineteen-year-old centre half back on that team was a veteran! There were four Kiltubrid men involved in this historic win: Fr. Andy Lynch

as Co. Chairman, Tom Gannon as Co. Registrar and adviser and these two brilliant young footballers, Frank Carter and Sean Mitchell. Frank Carter played at corner back in the early games of that Connaught junior championship, but was centre half back for the final. Sean Mitchell did not play on the team until the Connaught final when he played as a corner forward. He scored in each game he played.

'College players' were always regarded with a certain respect and awe at club level. They were fast movers and quick thinkers and they made up in skill what they lacked in brawn, it was said. Sometimes this admiration for the College player was misplaced, and at times they ousted a home based player unfairly. Yet in the '30s and early '40s Kiltubrid was fortunate to have a number of gifted young College players who gave a new hope and a new vitality to the club. Besides players like Frank Carter, Danny Mitchell, Sean Mitchell, and Willie J. Doherty there was another promising player, Sean Rutledge, who was attending Terenure College in Dublin. He was only thirteen in 1938 when the two Kiltubrid players were winning All-Ireland medals, but soon he too was to prove himself to be one of the 'greats' from the parish. He was to soon play for his club and county and he was one of the three Kiltubrid men (along with Tom Gannon and Frank Carter) who played for Connaught.

1935 was a very significant year in the parish because in October of that year the



John Farrell, Cornaleck, getting ready to mow.



Jordan, P. Bohan, M. Jordan, G. Rowley, M. Mc
 Second row: M. Rowley, R. Taylor, B. Taylor, M.
 Cahill, K. Jordan, A. Vaughn, M.A. McManus, B.
 Loughan, B. Rowley, K. Rowley, R.A. Reynolds
 Fanning, E. Cunningham, M.K. Fanning, K. d
 Third row: L. McCabe, M.J. Rowley, S.A. Row
 d'Arcy, L. Beirne, L. Cassels, M.A. Bohan, M.A.
 Wingham, K. Beirne, M. Reynolds, A. Rowley,
 McCabe, M.F. d'Arcy, L. Vaughn, B. McManus
 Fourth row: S. Bohan, M. Rowley, J. McMan
 Bohan — B. Rowley, J. Cassels, P. Reynol
 Rowley, E. Cassels, J. McCabe, O. Beir
 m. M. C

**Frank Carter, one of Kiltubrid's
 greatest foot-ballers.**

Vocational School in Keshcarrigan, the first in the county, was opened. Mr. Con Murphy, a Sligo-man, and the first headmaster, was very popular in South Leitrim where he had been conducting woodwork classes for many years previously. However he died after a short illness in November 1935 and he was succeeded as headmaster by Peadar O'Griofa, a teacher of Irish who was to be headmaster in the school until 1964, and his name became synonymous with that of the school. It would be difficult to overstate the contribution of this school, not just to the parish, but to a very large area of South Leitrim. Because apart from the high standard of teaching in general academic subjects, manual instruction, domestic science, rural science and commercial courses, the school became a community centre for the area, and its teachers contributed greatly to the social and sporting life of the parish.

A charge often levelled at the GAA is that it has concentrated on one of the stated aims of the Association to the exclusion of the others, and in many cases this charge was justified. In Kiltubrid the emphasis was on the playing of Gaelic football with little emphasis on the other games of handball, camogie or hurling, or on social and cultural activities. But the Vocational School in Keshcarrigan, largely due to the efforts of Peadar O'Griofa, helped right this imbalance in the parish. By 1936 they had a ceili band in the school. In 1937 the first Annual Aeridheacht was held. This was a



Padraig Redehan, captained Kiltubrid from 1931 to 1936.

festival of Irish music, song and dance and was normally held on the fair-green beside the school. In 1944 and 1945, largely due to the efforts of Miss McKenna, the school fielded a camogie team. These developments, together with the forming of an active branch of Conradh na Gaeilge, meant that there was an emphasis on Gaelic as well as athletic activities in the parish. The Vocational School prepared many young men and women for life, but sadly most of those lives were and are being lived in exile. While we have no statistics available it is certain that the majority of the pupils educated in the school during its existence (1935-1969) were forced to emigrate. And the fact that it closed in 1969 is no reflection on the school itself, but merely an indication of how emigration had decimated the population of the area.

Opening of Handball alley, District Justice Rice speaking at . . .

There was always an interest in handball in the parish, especially in Kilclare and Keshcarrigan, where young men used whatever gable wall was available as a court. It was not until late in 1937, largely due to the efforts of Fr. P. J. Ward (who was then resident in the area), that a committee was organized to build a handball alley in Kilclare. They lost little time in building the court. Andrew Gill was the main contractor, but much of the work was done voluntarily.

The official opening of Kilclare GAA ball-alley took place on 19 June 1938. Mr. J. H. Rice, the newly appointed District Justice, himself a noted handballer, performed the opening ceremony. When Fr. Ward introduced him he gave an excellent speech laced with good humour. During the course of his speech he said:



'I have received an invitation from the committee of the Kilclare handball club to perform a pleasing duty, a duty which any lover of the grand old game would be delighted to undertake. This invitation which seems to have been sent to me on account of a sporting event of long ago in which I took part is very flattering. Therefore I am glad to be here today to see for the first time this magnificent alley which during the past few months has sprung from the ground as it were at the touch of a magician's wand and which stands a splendid monument to the perseverance and enthusiasm of the men who were responsible for its erection. Long may it remain a memento of the kindliness of heart which prompted and inspired that action. (Loud cheers). I am furthermore glad to be here because it gives me an opportunity at my first public function in the county of addressing one or two short remarks to such a large and representative gathering of the sportsmen of South Leitrim, assembled in such numbers and in such good cause. But on looking around me I find myself confronted by a strange phenomenon, a phenomenon, if I might call it, of rosy cheeks and sparkling eyes, which proves without a shadow of doubt the existence of a paradise for sportsmen in the vicinity of Sheemore.'

The alley was declared open and many people gave subscriptions to reduce the debt. This should have been a great and significant event in the history of the GAA in the parish but regrettably it was to cause disagreement and disunity, and as a result never achieved its full potential as a community sporting facility. The fact that the parish priest, Fr. John Kiernan was not at the opening of the alley is significant and an indication that he had reservations about the project. When the committee applied to District Justice Rice in Carrick

Court, for a licence to hold a ceili in the ball alley on Sunday 17 July 1938, in order to reduce the debt, Fr. Kiernan objected. Thus a dispute, which had been brewing for some time in the parish, boiled over into the courts and into the local press. It took time to heal the division. There were no winners and the game of handball and community spirit were the real losers.

Meanwhile Kiltubrid continued to field a senior team, though by 1936 the team was much changed from that of the early '30s. Papie Moran (Rossy) was now the regular goalkeeper. His interest in football, then, and until his death at a football match between Kiltubrid and Aughavas in October 1980, can never have been in doubt. Frank Carter and Tim McWeeney were two gifted full backs and John Canning and Andrew Jordan were regulars in the full back line too. George Rowley, who together with Willie Foran had played with the county junior team in the early '30s, was centre half back in 1936. He was flanked by Michael Leddy and James Shanley. Pdraig Redehan played at midfield in 1936 but this was to be his last year playing and in 1937 Michael Leddy replaced him as captain. Tommy Flynn and Charles McWeeney, two able players who represented their county at junior level, also played midfield at this time. Jim Tighe and Jimmy Flynn were playing in the half forward line. Tom Shanley, Frank Heeran and Hugh Tighe were also regulars in the forward line. This team of 1936 was a good team and they



LEITRIM JUNIOR TEAM 1938 - ALL IRELAND CHAMPIONS.

would soon be joined by young College players like Danny and Sean Mitchell and Willie J. Doherty. Yet they were never good enough to win a championship or to be depended on to beat teams like Boornacoola, Ballinamore, Cloone or Aughavas. And so, by the end of 1938, the team was on the decline because players like George Rowley, Tim McWeeney, Tommy and Jimmy Flynn, Willie Foran and Frank Heeran were hanging up their boots.

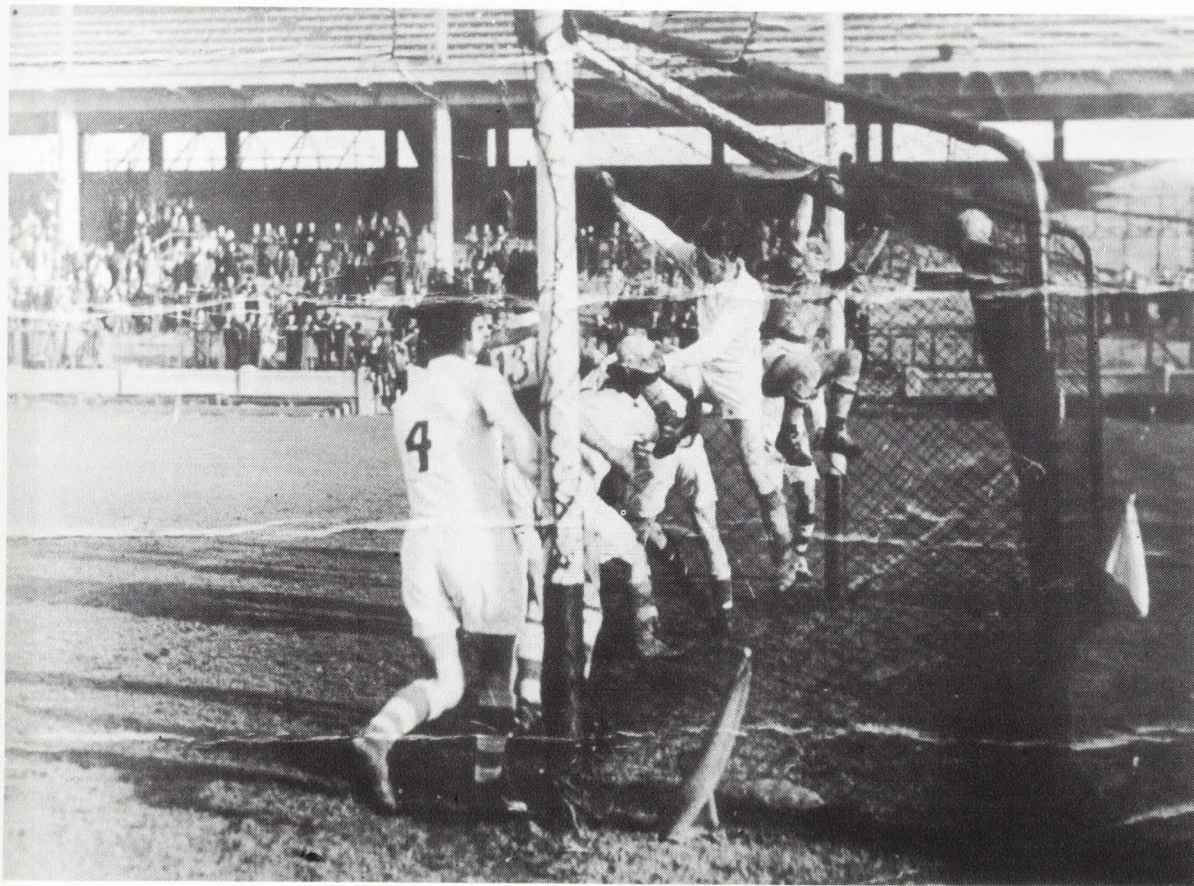
It is no surprise then that it was a junior team that Kiltubrid affiliated in 1939. This junior team was defeated by Drumreilly in the championship of that year. The score was 3-1 to 0-2. The defeated Kiltubrid lineout was: N. McGowan (Drumshanbo), D. Heeran (Tooman), G. Wynne (Drumshanbo), J. Canning (Selton), P. Roddy (Aughnasheelin), F. Carter (Shanraw), J. Shanley (Corick), C. McWeeney (Crummy),

W.J. Doherty (Annagheary), M. Leddy (Tooman), J. Collins (Aughnasheelin), P. Maguire (Aughnasheelin), P. Dodd (Drumshanbo), J. Tighe (Aughaslane), T. Shanley (Corderry Peyton). The substitutes were interestingly enough Aughnasheelin men too: J. Rourke, J.J. Reynolds and Patrick Keaney.

The '30s ended rather tamely with Kiltubrid fielding a rather mediocre junior team. The enthusiasm of the early and mid '30s was gone. They had won little yet they achieved a great deal. Kiltubrid had fielded, for the first and only time in her history, a senior football team for eight consecutive years (1930-1938). As the year 1939 progressed Europe was drifting towards war, and as often happens when a team is on the decline, the footballers of Kiltubrid were soon to be at war too.

1. *Leitrim Observer* 25 June, 1938.

**Sean Mitchell (far right), scores, in All Ireland
Junior Home final, 1938.**



**Ploughing with three horses: Frank Beirne
ploughing and Sonny O'Neill driving.**



The Emergency

AT DAWN on 1 September, 1939, Hitler invaded Poland. Two days later England and France declared war on Germany. Europe was at war again. Ireland was neutral, de Valera said, and thus "the emergency" began. Kiltubrid soon felt the effects of the fighting. It was a time of ration books and patches. People knew the value of a 'butt' or a pair of boots. Tobacco, tea, flour and petrol were scarce. The local shopkeeper tried to keep everyone happy. People learned to make do and followed the fighting wherever there was a radio set. They knew more about Lord Haw Haw than about Auschwitz. Emigration ceased temporarily. There was nowhere to go. Young men stayed at home, put in crop, cut turf, joined the LDF and played football.

The war bug must be contagious because shortly after it hit Europe it hit the G.A.A. in Kiltubrid! Kiltubrid fielded a junior team in 1940 called 'Sean McDermott's'. A notice in the *Leitrim Observer* dated 20 April, 1940, stated that the officers of the club were Willie Flynn (President), John P. Reynolds (Secretary), and Tom J. Flynn (Treasurer), and the report goes on to say:

'This team are making their first appearance on Sunday next when they meet Drumshanbo in a challenge match. The team will be captained by Charles McWeeney and no stone will be left unturned to bring home the laurels. All players are requested to be at Cornabrone at 2.0 o'clock old time.'

Cornabrone, a townland in the parish of Fenagh, but bordering on the parishes of Aughnasheelin and Kiltubrid, seems a rather strange meeting place for a Kiltubrid team. In fact the officials and half the players of the Sean McDermott club came from Aughnasheelin parish. And while this club was officially known as Kiltubrid Sean McDermott's and they used the blue and gold Kiltubrid jerseys, they were usually referred to as 'Cornabrone'. Only two players from the Keshcarrigan area of the parish, James Shanley and John Canning, played with this team. Frank Carter moved to Sligo and was lost to the club and to the county. He continued to play football with Craobh Rua, Sligo and Connaught. Michael Leddy and Dan Heeran joined Fenagh club. The following men played with Cornabrone: Andrew Jordan, Tim McWeeney, Charlie McWeeney, James Shanley, Joe Callaghan, M.J. Nealon, Johnny Rourke, P. McWeeney, P. Boyle, M. Quinn, John Canning, Jimmy Flynn, Willie Flynn, Jim Tighe, John P. Reynolds, Frank Reynolds, P. Maguire, G. Collins and Patrick Keaney. This team played their home games in Rossy. Ballinamore beat them by 2-5 to 0-2 in the championship of 1940.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the parish, Funshinagh fielded a team. Funshinagh, a townland half way between Mohill and Keshcarrigan, fielded a team in 1938. They got their players from a few surrounding townlands, though mainly from Mohill parish. They were not a very



Noel Holland and Tessie Lynch at Kilclare, 1942.

successful team, but then it was difficult to be successful in those years when there were so many good teams in the county. They played their home games behind Matty Bohan's house in the townland of Breandrum. The following men played with Funshinagh at one time or another between 1938 and 1944: Jim Woods, Matty Bohan, Peter Harkin, Tommy Beirne, Paddy Wryne, John Kennedy, Dan Kennedy, Johnny Grier, Willie Grier, Michael Flynn, Johnny Cassells, Pee Reynolds, T.P. Moran, Mike Kennedy and Stephen Flynn. Funshinagh did not play very many games altogether but there was still a team in Funshinagh as late as 1944 because Funshinagh played Kiltubrid in the championship of 1944. Chances are that this was the last game they played.

By 1940 the GAA in Kiltubrid was fragmented, much like it had been in 1890-'91 and 1928-'29. There were, on paper, two clubs in the parish, but both of these had the majority of their players from outside the parish. Besides, there was an unofficial and unaffiliated team in Keshcarrigan. This team practised in Donnelly's yard but refused to play with either Cornabrone or Funshinagh. They were annoyed that the blue and gold jerseys bought in 1929, were commandeered by Cornabrone, who had the audacity to call themselves Kiltubrid. Kesh played Funshinagh in a practice match along the lake-shore and early in 1941 they issued a challenge to Cornabrone to play them in a football match. The challenge was accepted. This was a challenge match in the true sense of the word and not a practice match like so many 'challenge' matches are today. The game was fixed for Driney and the prize was the blue and gold football jerseys and the right to represent the parish in football. The build-up to the game was intense. The game itself was tough rather than skilful. Keshcarrigan won and brought home the faded and worn jerseys with them. Ned Donnelly, Michael Leddy, Dan Heeran, George Taylor, Tom Shanley, James Shanley, M.J. McWeeney and J.J. Golden had been the main cause of the Cornabrone defeat.

Kiltubrid fielded a parish team in 1941 at junior level, and continued to do so until 1945. There were players from most areas of the parish on these teams, and, as in the

'30s, a few players from Drumshanbo too. Walter Shanley, though not a player himself, was very involved with these teams and was secretary of the club. In 1943 Kevin McDonnell, a Mayo man and an excellent footballer, got a teaching post in the Vocational school in Kesh. his contribution to the GAA in the area, both as a player and an organizer, was immense. In 1943, when the club decided to buy new jerseys, he suggested that they get the green and red of Mayo. His suggestion was accepted and those colours have been the colours of Kiltubrid teams since then.

Miss N. McKenna, a Domestic Science teacher, was appointed to the teaching staff of the Vocational School about the same time as Kevin McDonnell. She organized and trained a camogie team in 1944 and 1945. This team was trained and instructed through the medium of Irish. The following girls played camogie for the Vocational School in those years: Una McLoughlin, Kate McLoughlin, Mary Anne Bohan, Kathleen Early, Mary Kate McDermott, Evelyn McManus, Lily McLoughlin, Mary Ellen McWeeney, Irene Quinn, Lily McGarty, Molly Hardegan, and Mary Kate Cassidy. They were not very successful, though, and by 1946 the Co. Camogie Board had ceased to exist. But for those two years there was an honest attempt to organize camogie within the county and Keshcarrigan Vocational School was to the fore in that attempt.

It could be argued that the Kiltubrid team

of 1944 was the best ever in the parish, and yet they failed to win the junior championship. Football in the parish had recovered from the doldrums of 1939 and 1940 and it was beginning to reap the benefits of the halt in emigration during the emergency. Besides there were some new and exciting players on the team. Con O'Boy was goalkeeper. He was an excellent goalkeeper and played for the county team. Sean Rutledge, a tall nineteen year old, was an excellent and stylish full-back. He was flanked by Ned Donnelly, and Tim McWeeney, though John Canning played some games too as a corner back. The half-back line was Michael Leddy, John James Leddy and Michael Folen. John Glynn, a Galwayman who worked in Drumshanbo and played with Leitrim, was one of the



**Kevin McDonnell —
the man who selected
the green and
red jerseys.**



Patrick Joseph Reynolds, Corderry Peyton.

Kilclare National School.



midfielders. Jimmy Flynn was the other. The half forward line was Oliver Gaffney, Sean Mitchell and Benny O'Rourke. The full forward line was Tom 'Gunner' Shanley, Mike Joe McWeeney and Dan Heeran.

Kiltubrid played Funshinagh in the first round of the junior championship on 12 May. This game was played in Funshinagh and was refereed by Brother Gabriel. Kiltubrid won. The following Sunday they played Carrick in Laheen. *The Leitrim Observer* report states that:

'At Laheen Park on Sunday last, before a large crowd Carrick met Kiltubrid in the second round of the county junior football championship. As was anticipated the game proved to be a fine fast and exciting one. In the first half Carrick, favoured with a breeze, were slow to settle down and gave their opponents too much loose play. A few golden opportunities for registering scores were wasted during the first half. Scores read at the interval Kiltubrid 1-3, Carrick 0-4. Everything looked in favour of Kiltubrid at the turnover but contrary to all expectations Carrick took control of the game for most of the second interval and up to the last few minutes were leading by two points. Luck favoured Kiltubrid by getting a goal from a free at centre field thereby giving them victory by the smallest of margins.'

This free-kick, taken by Sean Rutledge, is one of the best remembered and most talked about incidents in Kiltubrid's football history. And while the re-telling of it can lead to exaggeration, it was, by all accounts, a magnificent kick from over sixty yards out and from near the sideline. And because of it, Kiltubrid advanced to the next round of the championship. When they



John (on bicycle) and Eddie Flynn.

defeated Annaduff in the third round of the championship a week later people began to realize that this was a better than average parish team.

The young men of the parish were involved in other local activities too, besides playing football. There was an active branch of the Irish Countrymen's Association in Kesh. They held their meetings in the Vocational school and did, for a time, try to revive the fair of Kesh. Many of the footballers were active too in the LDF and while the war continued into its fifth year, the training they did had an air of reality about it. To raise funds they decided to hold an 'Aeridheacht' in Laheen on 29 June 1944, a holy day. The highlight of the afternoon was a challenge game between Boornacoola, the senior champions of the

previous year, and Kiltubrid. Kiltubrid won. Three days later on Sunday 2 July they lined out against Cloone, a team regarded as being on a par with Boornacoola. Cloone had been forewarned by Kiltubrid's victory over Boornacoola and so they added Michael Moran (Aughavas) and Frankie Mitchell (Mohill) to their panel. Cloone won the game (and the medals) by a small margin, and went on to win the senior championship that year. These two games, played within three days of each other, were probably the best games of football ever witnessed in the parish. And they were further proof that Kiltubrid had indeed a first class team.

Kiltubrid played Carrick once more on 30 August, this time in the Canon Masterson competition. The game was played in Mohill and Carrick won. The score was 1-4 to 0-4. The following account of the game appeared under 'Carrick Notes' in the *Leitrim Observer*:

*'It was a game of thrills and considering that Kiltubrid have proved to be one of the best teams in the county this year and have some well known players in their team, the win for Carrick is all the more gratifying.'*²

Carrick had a good team in 1944 and went on to win the Junior League final. But Kiltubrid's success in the championship continued. They beat Eslin thereby reaching the final of the competition. Towards the end of October a challenge game was arranged between Kiltubrid and Carrick. They had met twice that year and there was

Tom Doyle and his Tin Lizzie.

2 **NOT TRANSFERABLE.** No. of Licence **217338**

THE MOTOR VEHICLES
(Traffic and Regulation) Act (Northern Ireland) 1926, and the Finance
(No. 2) Act (Northern Ireland) 1937.

**LICENCE to drive a Motor Car of any Class,
including a Motor Cycle.**

NOTE:—In the case of a Public Service Vehicle a further licence under
Section 12 of the Act of 1926, is necessary.

These pages must not

Thomas Doyle
of *Drumcondra*
Barrick- or - Shannon

is hereby licensed to drive a Motor Car for a period of Twelve Months
from the *14th* day of *March* 19*46*



March 14th inclusive

ST. C. O.
+ MR
AG
VEHICLES

A. S. O'Connell
Local Taxation Officer.

FERMANAGH
County or County Borough.

Bernie Joe Gilmore and Andrew Jordan working on the railway at Kiltubrid Station.



one win each. This was to be the decider. It was played in Carrick and Kiltubrid won. The score was 1-2 to 0-0. The *Leitrim Observer* report on the game said:

'The game was fast with good clean football and was up to the standard of any county game' ³

This was the last game Kiltubrid played before the championship final. The final was against Drumeela and was fixed for Ballinamore on 26 November. But Kiltubrid were defeated even before they began the game. Some of the clubs' funds were missing and there were rumours and accusations about who was responsible.

The enthusiasm and co-operation which had been present during the year was destroyed. Besides, the immediate preparation for the game by some of the players left much to be desired. The *Leitrim Observer* reported the game as follows:

'At Ballinamore on Sunday last one of the best games for some time was witnessed when Kiltubrid and Drumeela met in the junior county final. The standard of play was high even though the game was played on a water-logged pitch. The game was anyone's up to the last and on the sound of the final whistle the scores were Drumeela 0-11, Kiltubrid 0-10. Kiltubrid missed several fine chances of scoring.' ⁴

Thus the Kiltubrid team, a team which should have been capable of winning the senior championship failed to win even the junior championship. The problem was not just that the team had an off-day in the final, it was more deep-rooted than that. The club was hopelessly divided. It had destroyed itself.

It was hard to be hopeful in the first months of 1945. Men continued to destroy each other in the most efficient way they knew. People were tired of war. In Kiltubrid the emergency continued and football was at a low ebb. John Glynn moved to Sligo. Sean Mitchell began to play with UCG. Kiltubrid had a junior team in the early months of 1945 but they were lacking, not just some of their best players, but the vital ingredient — enthusiasm. So it was no great surprise when Carrick beat them in the first round of the championship.

1. *Leitrim Observer* 25 May, 1944.
2. *Leitrim Observer* 26 August, 1944.
3. *Leitrim Observer* 4 November, 1944.
4. *Leitrim Observer* 2 December, 1944.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki were devastated within three days of each other in the first week of August 1945. The war officially ended on 2 September. By then the GAA in Kiltubrid was dead too. The 'war' within the GAA in the parish had been fought with words, but they can destroy too. And in 1946, for the first time since 1923, the parish was without a GAA club. It was the end of an era.

A happy group in Keshcarrigan c. 1940.



36

CONNRADH NA GAEDHILGE

(Craobh Cheis Cairrgin).

CUIRM CHEOIL agus LEIRIU DRAMAI

(Concert and Dramatic Entertainment)

Sa Scoil Gairm-Oidis i gCEIS CAIRRGIN

Ar Oidhche Dia Domhnaigh 15adh Feabhra, 1942

Doirse ar oscailt 6.45 p.m. (sean-am).

Cuirm Cheoil a' tosú 7.15 p.m. (sean-am).

TICEIDI - - - - - 1/-

Eire Ghaedhenlach: Eire Shuor.

Kiltubrid Pipe Band
in Fenaghville, 1950.



Kilts in Kiltubrid

WHEN the war ended emigration began again. Like water dammed up for a time people rushed to the ports to emigrate. There was no G.A.A. club in the parish in 1946 or 1947. Sean Rutledge played with Carrick. Bennie Rourke and Jim Doran played with Fenagh. Mike Leddy, Ned Donnelly and Mike Joe McWeeney won Junior Championship medals with Gorravagh in 1947. But there was some activity in the parish in those years: there was talk of starting a new band.

On 21 April, 1889, the day the G.A.A. was born in Kiltubrid, the parish fife and drum band led the club members and supporters to the football practice at Annadale. That fife and drum band had led the tenant farmers of the area to monster protest meetings nine years earlier in 1880 and it was most likely in existence for some years before that. It was a Hibernian band and had at one time over seventy members. They marched behind a huge four-poled banner which depicted St. Patrick on one side and a greyhound gazing at 'Mother Ireland' on the other. This band continued in existence until 1918. There had been a split in the band the previous year over whether the

band should remain Hibernian or support the fast growing Sinn Fein party. The majority of the band continued to play at Sinn Fein meetings in those years but they disbanded altogether when the 'Troubles' began.

In 1945 a meeting was called to discuss the possibility of reforming the band, but no decisions were made. But within the next two years an energetic group of men consisting of people like Danny Mitchell, Paddy Gannon, Tom McKeon, Frank Beirne, Tom Doherty and Master Conifrey, had taken the decision to form a pipe band in the parish.

In 1948 the G.A.A. club was re-formed in the parish after an absence of two years. Fr. Andy Lynch was President of the club, Ned Donnelly was chairman, Con O'Boy was secretary, and Sean Rutledge was treasurer. They affiliated a junior and minor team. Fr. Lynch took charge of the training sessions which were held in Laheen. The team had a fairly successful run in the League, beating Cloone and Bornacoola and drawing with Gortlettragh. This game against Gortlettragh deserves special mention. It was played in 'the Grange' in Cloone on the first Sunday in June. It was an exciting and skilful game. The score was: Gortlettragh 0-9, Kiltubrid 3-0. The Kiltubrid team lined out as follows: Con O'Boy (Drumigna), Michael Leddy (Tooman), Sean Rutledge (Kesh), Jerome Donnelly (Kesh), Charlie Kane (Proughlish), Eugene Leddy (Drumara), Pat Treacy

(Tooman), Bennie Rouke (Derrien Lloyd), M. Marron (Drumshanbo), Paddy Fanning (Scardaun), Tommy McMorrow (Drumshanbo), Kevin Loftus (Drumshanbo), Michael Flannery (Drumshanbo), M. Eustace (Drumshanbo), Michael Ward (Scardaun). The substitutes were: Jim Gallogly (Derrien Lloyd), M. J. McWeeney (Proughlish), Johnny Beirne (Shanraw), Pat Flynn (Gowley), and Pee McKeon (Tooman). Paddy Fanning, the right half forward, was only sixteen years old, but was obviously a gifted player. However, he played most of his football with Kiltubrid and with Leitrim in the full back line. For some of the players and supporters who travelled to this game the journey home was as eventful as the game itself. John McLoughlin, from the townland of Stuck in Eslin, brought a lorry load of players and supporters to the game, but the lorry broke down in Cloone and the passengers spent much of the evening and night walking home. However, a few donkeys were commandeered along the way and there were stray Cloone donkeys around Keshcarrigan for some time after. Some say this was really the beginning of the modern phenomenon of hijacking!

Bornacoola beat Kiltubrid in the first round of the Junior Championship in 1948. Farlo Lynch (Kilclare), Peter Leddy (Drumara), Pat Kellegher (Derrien Lloyd), and Tom Kellegher (Derrien Lloyd), also played with Kiltubrid Juniors in 1948. Most of the forward line on this team were from Drumshanbo and when they left in 1949 the

team was much weakened. Besides, in that year alone, Con O'Boy, Pat Treacy, Bennie Rourke, Jerome Donnelly, Farlo Lynch and Pat Treacy all emigrated. It was no surprise therefore that the club disbanded towards the end of 1949.

This club had a short life-span but it did help considerably in raising funds for the new band. The highlight of the footballers efforts to raise funds for the band was a tournament game they played in Laheen on 16 May 1948 against Muiris Ui Neill's, a Dublin club, but consisting mostly of Kerry men. Kiltubrid were beaten by 0-9 to 1-3. The band committee were untiring in their efforts to raise the £1,000 necessary to

buy uniforms and instruments. An Aeridheacht was held in Aughacashel and a Gala Day in Kilclare, and £95 was raised in a house-to-house collection. By May 1949, due to the generosity of the people and the hard work of the committee and trainer, Sean Donohue, the band was ready for its first outing.

St. Brigid's Pipe Band, Kiltubrid, had their first outing on 26 May, 1949, at an Aeridheacht in Laheen. Over one thousand people were present to see Fr. Kiernan bless the band and to hear them play their first tune in public, 'Faith of Our Fathers'. During the course of his speech Fr. Kiernan said:

Kiltubrid Band's first outing 1949. Left to right: S. McKeon, S. Donohoe, B.J. Gilmore, J.J. McGirl, P. Flynn, L. Cullen, T. Kiernan, T. J. Beirne, P. Carthy, J. Lee, T. McKeon, J.J. McWeeney, J. Beirne.





The Band outside Drumcong, 1949: S. McKeon, J. Lee, J. Beirne, J.J. McGirl, T. McKeon, T.J. Beirne, S. Mulvey, R. Early, P. Flynn, C. Doherty, J. Leydon, P. Carthy, J.J. Farrell, F. McGlynn, T. Mulvey, J. Gill.

*'It is a pleasure to witness the first appearance in public of St. Brigid's Pipers band. We are puzzled as to what to admire most, the valuable instruments, the most exquisite uniform, the dignifying marching order of its members, and above all, the splendid rendering of its musical selections . . .'*¹

The Drumshanbo correspondent in the *Leitrim Observer* was eloquent in his praises of the setting and of the day too:

*'It is a great day in every sense of the word for the people of the Old Church of the Fountain. A fair verdant bank presented itself, courting the traveller to sit down and take his rest after wending his toilsome way up a long ascent into this peaceful and unexpected retreat. Laheen Woods, Old Sheebeg and the panorama of its encircling hills formed a picture fitting for a painter to sketch. Those who had the privilege of listening to St. Brigid's Pipers band were certainly not disappointed.'*²

Leitrim got to the Connaught Final in 1949, and Sean Rutledge, a member of the



**John Joe Farrell and
Tommy Mulvey.**

newly formed band, was on the Leitrim team. St. Brigid's Pipe band had the honour of playing the teams onto the field in Roscommon, but even having their own band could not prevent Leitrim from being routed by Mayo. There was little to praise in Leitrim's performance that day, but, by all accounts, much to praise in the performance of Kiltubrid Pipers Band:

*'In their black buckled shoes, tartan kilts, black tunics, green embroidered shawls with caps and plumes, St. Brigid's Pipe Band, Kiltubrid, made the downhearted Leitrim followers feel they had something to be proud of on Sunday last in Roscommon. This young band received the congratulations of hundreds from all parts of Connaught.'*³

Mr. Leo Neilan, Radio Eireann commentator, in his broadcast said:

'St. Brigid's Pipers Band are here all the way from Leitrim, and are being applauded for their rendering of some very nice music.'



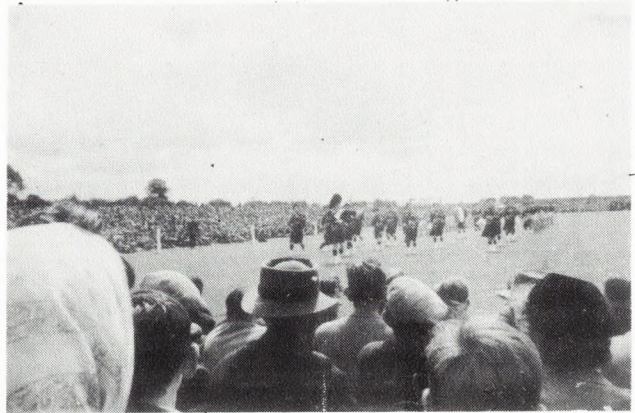
Sean Rutledge and Sean Mitchell — two great footballers who died within a few months of each other while still in their prime.

This was Sean Rutledge's last game to play for Leitrim. He died on 20 June, 1950, when he was still only twenty-five years of age. Sean Mitchell had died fifteen months earlier on 7 March, 1949. He was twenty-seven years old. The deaths of these two young men in the prime of their lives was a cruel blow. To all who knew them it was difficult to understand and accept that two young men who seemed so full of life were now dead. Kiltubrid was deprived of two of its greatest footballers. Their deaths hastened the decline of Gaelic football in the parish.

There was a third death too which affected the morale of the Gaelic footballers in the parish. Fr. Andy Lynch, the curate who did so much for football in Kiltubrid and in Leitrim, was transferred to Ballinahowen in June 1948 and died a short time later. Fr. John Kiernan, his parish priest during his fifteen years in Kiltubrid, wrote in the parish Records:

*'The shock following the news of his leaving had scarcely passed over in the parish of Kiltubrid when we were all stunned and overwhelmed with grief when we heard of his death. While acting as a referee at a football match in Ballinahowen on 8 August 1948 he collapsed on the field and died immediately.'*⁴

Band at the Connaught final 1949





Gorravagh Junior Team, 1947. Front row (left to right): J. Keegan, J. Rynn, P. Murphy, M. Leddy, T.P. Ellis. Second row: G. Murphy, M.J. McWeeney (R.I.P.), N. Donnelly, M. Reynolds, J.J. McCabe. Back row: J. Gill, — Reynolds, M.J. Reynolds (R.I.P.), T. Logan, M.J. Walsh, K. Conifrey.

There was no G.A.A. club in Kiltubrid in 1950. Con O'Boy played with Fenagh. Three gifted teenagers from the parish, Jim Gallogly, John Flynn and Paddy Fanning, played with the Drumshanbo Junior team which was beaten in the League final of that year. Some players from the upper end of the parish, notably B. Slack, T. W. McWeeney, J. J. McWeeney and T. Reynolds, played with Aughnasheelin. However, in 1951 a G.A.A. club was formed in the parish once more. Ned Donnelly was chairman of the club. Michael Beirne, a Donegal man teaching in Keshcarrigan N.S., was secretary, and Andy Reilly (Kesh) was treasurer. Meetings were held in Ned Donnelly's sitting room. And, as in 1948, they affiliated a Junior team. Seamus Rutledge (Kesh) normally played in goals on this team of 1951. Paddy Fanning was full-

back, and the Kellegher brothers, Tom and Pat, Michael Leddy and Eugene Leddy all played at various times in the full-back line. John Flynn (Gowley) was an able centre-half back. Andy Fenton, a Galwayman now teaching in Keshcarrigan, usually played a half-back too, as did Bernie Doran. Bennie Bourke and Michael Beirne, two gifted players, normally played midfield. Eoin Rutledge, who had won a Junior All-Ireland medal with Mayo in 1950, returned home after the death of his brother, Sean, and played centre half forward on this team. Jim Gallogly, Ambrose McKeon and Frank Moran also played in the half-forward line. Cathal Ward, Jerome Donnelly and Pee McKeon played in the full forward line. Others who played with this Kiltubrid team of the early fifties were Andy Reilly, Pat Flynn and Bernie M. Gallogly.



Keshcarrigan National School, 1949. Back row: P. Kerrigan, M. Guikian, M. McWeeney, P. Regan, E. Doran, B. Monaghan, M. Kerrigan, M. Mulvey, K. Reilly, A. Fanning. Second row: E. Gilmore, N. McGee, A. Griffin, B. McKeon, A. McNulty, B. McWeeney, L. Murtagh, J. Regan, A. O'Connell, N. McCormack, E. Shanley, N. McWeeney. Third row: R. Keenen, S. McWeeney, T. P. Murtagh (R.I.P.), K. Kelly, E. Flynn, F. McNulty, P. Griffin, O. Kerrigan, T. Doherty. Fourth row: E. Tracy, B.A. Bohan, K. McWeeney, K. Doherty, B. Carr, A. Moran, E. Moran, K. Guikian, A. Regan, Master Kerrigan (R.I.P.), V. McCormack, M. Kerrigan, P. Fanning, A. Guikian (R.I.P.), R. Kerrigan. Front row: T. Kelly, P. Griffin (R.I.P.), S. McNulty, N. McGee, T. Regan, E. Doyle, J. O'Connell, P. J. Fanning, S. Kerrigan, S. Duignan, M. Doherty. Seated: D. Monaghan, P. Duignan.



Anna Farrell.

This team won a few games in the League of 1951 but Aughnasheelin beat them in the first round of the Championship. They fielded a depleted team in 1952 and lost all their games. The club disbanded later that year. However, Kiltubrid were fortunate that, in that same year, Christy Gallogly, a Ballinamore man with a keen interest in the G.A.A., got a teaching post in Keshcarrigan Vocational School. He came at a time when the morale of G.A.A. officials and players in the parish was at a low ebb. He trained the football team in the Vocational School and he trained minor teams in the parish between 1952 and 1955. Perhaps his greatest success in these years was in training the county Vocational Schools team which reached the All-Ireland final in 1955. Five players from Keshcarrigan Vocational School were on that county Vocational Schools panel. They were Michael Anthony Mulvey, Frank McGlynn, Sean Conlon, Francis McKeon and Pdraig Griffin.

The Kiltubrid minor teams kept Gaelic football alive in the parish between 1952 and 1954. Frank McGlynn, Jim McCormack, Kevin Kelly, Josie McGee, Paddy McManus, Bernie Michael Gallogly, Michael Anthony Mulvey, Frank McKeon, Sean Conlon, Joe Taylor, Frank McNulty, Paddy McWeeney, Pdraig Griffin, Freddie Murray, Pakie Murray, Michael McGlynn, Pat Joe McGlynn, Cecil Reilly, Ambie McKeon, and two minors from Gortlettragh, Tom and J. J. Colreavy, all played with Kiltubrid minor teams in these years. And it was due to the

training and experience that these players got as minors that Kiltubrid was able to start a new G.A.A. club and to affiliate a junior team in 1955. The club officials in 1955 were Walter Shanley (chairman), Christy Gallogly (secretary), and Eoin Rutledge (treasurer).

Kiltubrid had a good Junior team in 1955 and they made good progress in the Championship until they were beaten by Aughawillan in the South-Leitrim final by eight points to four. And, although it was only three years since they had previously fielded a junior team, the team that lined out in 1955 was a much changed one. Eoin Rutledge played in goals on this team. Paddy Fanning played full back. Kevin Kelly, Josie McGee and Tommy F. Heeran all played in the full-back line at various times during the year. For the first time since 1930 Michael Leddy was not playing with Kiltubrid. He hung up his boots in 1952 after twentytwo years of service to the G.A.A. in Kiltubrid. John Flynn usually played centre half back or midfield. Others who played in the half back line were Pakie Murray, Eddie Flynn and Michael McGlynn. Frank McGlynn was an able footballer at midfield. Bernie M. Gallogly normally played midfield or a half-forward. Pdraig Griffin, a brilliant and promising young player, was centre forward on the team. Jim McCormack and Frank Moran were regulars in the half-forward line too. Others who played in the forward line were Ambrose McKeon, Cathal Ward, Francie McNulty, Bernie



Kilclare National School in the '50s. Back row: R. McWeeney, B. Guckian, M.M. McWeeney, C. Curran, M. Horan, B. Doran (R.I.P.), C. Mulvey, F. McKeon, M. Gill. Centre row: B. McKeon, Mary Gilmartin, V. McDermott, M. Doherty, J. Doran, M. Carthy, E. McDermott (R.I.P.), Mrs. R. Geoghan (R.I.P.). Front rows: Pat Gilmartin, M. Gilmartin, S. Foley, S. Doherty, P. Curran, J.J. Gilmartin, E. Doherty, A. Doherty, R. Carthy, P.J. Horan, L. McKeon, M.F. Curran, P. Gill, L. Horan, J. McWeeney, P. McKeon.

Aghacashel National School in the early '50s. Back row: Master Joe Conifrey (R.I.P.), Pat McGovern, Pat Gannon, Agnes Murray, Maura Ward, Kathleen Ward, Freddie Murray, Kathleen McWeeney, Peggy Murray. Middle row: Jim Murray, Tom Ward, Danny McWeeney, Peggy Murray, Brendan Murray, John Gannon, Kathleen Murray, Mick Gannon. Front row: Kathleen Ward, Sonny Murray, Brid Murray, Eva Gannon, Eileen Ward, Carmel Prior, Chris Ward, Tom Gannon.



Doran and Michael Anthony Mulvey. But like the G.A.A. clubs in the parish in the years 1948-'49 and 1951-'52, this club, which was formed in 1955, folded up after just two years in existence. However, in considering the failure of these teams to make an impact on the football field, and in considering the failure of any of these clubs to survive longer than two consecutive years, there is a danger that we would fail to realise that the parish produced quite a few good footballers at this time. Sean Rutledge, Con O'Boy, Paddy Fanning, Michael Beirne, Eoin Rutledge, Jim Gallogly, Bennie Rourke and Padraig Griffin were excellent footballers and all played on the

county team at one time or another. They were unfortunate not to have had greater success during these years.

The G.A.A. was on the decline then in Kiltubrid from 1946 until it ceased altogether in 1956. At three different times in those years a G.A.A. club was formed which had limited success the first year of its existence and which disbanded altogether the second year. The reason for this was not bad organisation or lack of enthusiasm, or indeed lack of footballing ability, but simply emigration. During the 1950's emigration from the parish reached a new high for the twentieth century. There were now less than one thousand people, or



Kiltubrid Band 1959. Left to right: B. Harris, J.J. Farrell, J.J. McGirl, O. Scollan, B. Mulvey, P.J. McFlynn, F. Beirne, T.P. Carroll, T. Mulvey, S. McDermott, T.P. Fanning, P. Flynn, S. Harvey.

one eighth the (estimated) population of 1846, living in the parish. And the majority of the people who remained at home were advanced in years. There were simply not enough young men staying in the parish to ensure the survival of the G.A.A. clubs. But the G.A.A. enthusiasts from the parish between the years 1946 and 1956 did not give up easily and their efforts to establish G.A.A. clubs during these years must be

understood in the proper context. And, once we understand that context, we can only praise their efforts. The late forties and early fifties was a dismal time for the parish, yet it was in those years that the Pipe Band was formed. There were now 'kilts in Kiltubrid' and this band brought music, colour and excitement to a parish at a time when it was sorely in need of them.

Right: Train, laden with coal from Arigna passes Drumcong Post Office.

(Photo courtesy of L. Hyland, Irish Railway Record Soc.)



Below: John Joe Farrell with steam roller and bicycle.



¹ *Leitrim Observer*, 2 July, 1949.

² *ibid.*

³ *Leitrim Observer* 16 July, 1949.

⁴ My thanks to V. Rev. Hubert Fee, P.P., for giving me access to all parish records.

⁵ I am indebted to P. Fanning, P. Griffin and F. McGlynn for their assistance in compiling this chapter.



Keshcarrigan Vocational School, 1959. Front row, left to right: N. McWeeney, B. Byrne, J. Gilmartin, P. Gibbons, T. Doran, T. P. Costelloe. Second row: F. Gildea, C. Foley, J. Melia, E. McGovern, B. McGovern, M. McKiernan, — Gibbons, D.L. Wrynn, W. Cassells. Thrid row: Anna Regan, D.L. McWeeney, A.T. Donagher, T. Costelloe, W. Moran, C. Carroll, C. Heeran, P. Walpole, P. Duignan. Fourth row: P. Gildea, N. Gildea, E. Mulvanerty, L. Shanley, B. Fanning, V. Horan, L. Moran, —, O. Scollan, F. Fanning, T. O'Donnell, J.J. Gilmartin, D. Doran, —. Fifth row: P.J. Fanning, T. Kelly, S. Foley, —.



Anselm Reynolds.

The Sixties And Seventies

ON EASTER TUESDAY, 1959, the narrow gauge train puffed its way through the parish for the last time. The rural electrification scheme had made the oil lamp obsolete and chased the dark corners from the kitchen: there were fewer hideouts for the ghosts of the past. John XXIII, although seventy-eight years old, was the new Pope. Eamonn de Valera, now seventy-seven and partially blind, retired from active politics and was elected President. Sean Lemass was the new Taoiseach. It was a time of change. And football was all but dead in Kiltubrid.

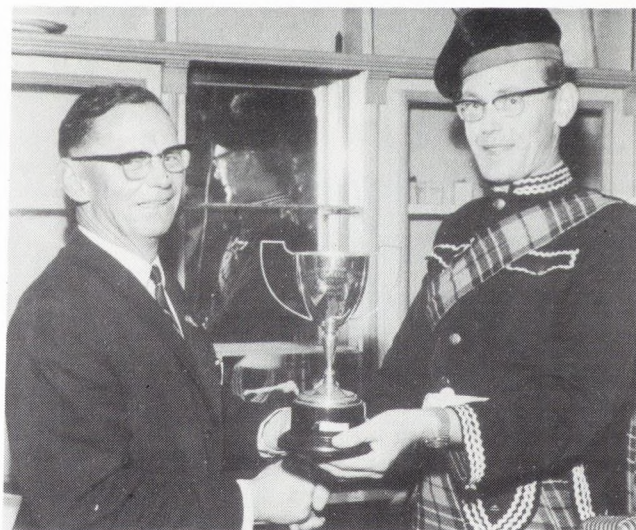
In May 1958 a Juvenile Board was set up to organise U-14 and U-16 football in the county. Walter Shanley was a member of that Board but there was no under-age football team in the parish. Kilnagros, a combination of Kilnagros and Kiltoghert National Schools, had a schoolboys team though. This team was trained by Padraig Redehan who was then living in Aughaslane and teaching in Kilnagros. According to the rules of the Juvenile Board, three players from an adjoining parish could play with a schoolboys team, and thus Tom Joe Keaney, Thomas Shanley and Liam Costello from Kiltubrid played with Kilnagros. This Kilnagros team was a good one and two members, Thomas Shanley and Joseph Flynn, played on the county under-14 team in their game with Longford in 1960. It was Fr. Sean Manning who arranged these annual under-14 games between Leitrim and Longford.

Anselm Reynolds became principal of Keshcarrigan N.S. in 1961. He talked and taught football at every break. Were it not for him chances are that there would be no football in Kiltubrid to-day. Soon challenge games were arranged between Keshcarrigan and Kilnagros National Schools and in 1963 Kiltubrid entered a team in the under-14 competition. C. Early, T. Early, T. P. Keane, M. Keating, F. Kelly, P. Shanley, S. Guckian, J. Fanning, G. Shanley, M. Bohan, P. J. McWeeney, M. McWeeney, M. Tighe, B. O'Connell, F. McCabe, L. Kelly and T. Canning all played on this under-14

team. In their first outing they defeated Annaduff, but were beaten in the next round by a strong Aughavas team. Kiltubrid continued to play in the under-14 competition for the next few years but without great success. The two 'Masters', Anselm Reynolds and Padraig Redehan, continued to work with the schoolboys and Micheal Sweeney, John Keaney and Padraig Griffin helped ferry the players to and from the games. It was not until later that the work of these dedicated men began to pay off.

By 1964 Kiltubrid was able to field a minor team. Despite the fact that they had excellent players in T. P. Keane, Brendan Flynn and Tony Murray, and had the assistance of three Gortletragh players, P. Kennedy, M. Doorigan and S. Colreavy, they made no impact against the minor teams of such clubs as Allen Gaels and Ballinamore. But each year there were more youngsters playing football in the parish and this could only augur well for the future.

There had been no Junior team in the parish since 1956 but in 1965 it was decided to enter a team for the Junior League and Championship once again. Eoin Rutledge, Micheal Sweeney, Anselm Reynolds and Padraig Griffin spearheaded this revival. Sadly though, this team was to follow exactly the same pattern as the three previous junior teams of 1948-'49, 1952-'53 and 1955-'56: it too survived only two years. This junior team did win some of their games in both 1965 and 1966, but their



Joe Mooney presenting the cup to Brendan Harris.

success was limited. There were too few young men in the parish to base a junior team on and many of those who were willing to play had little experience of competitive football. Padraig Griffin, the team captain, was a gifted player though and he played with Leitrim juniors in 1966. The following men all played with Kiltubrid juniors in the years 1965-'66: F. McKeon, F. Murray, S. McGlynn, C. Gilbride, P. Griffin, E. Doyle, R. Doyle, G. McGlynn, K. Kelly, C. Foley, J. O'Connell, T. Shanley, T. J. Keaney, J. Keaney, P. McWeeney, E. Flynn, J. Bohan, D. O'Connell, B. M. Gallogly, T. P. Keane, A. Reynolds, M. Duignan, M. Keating. The wonder is not that this club lasted only two

years, but that it was formed at all. The fact that it did survive for two years against all the odds is a tribute to the never-say-die attitude of G.A.A. enthusiasts in the parish. Significantly it was from this group of players too that the leaders of the new Kiltubrid G.A.A. club were to come when it was re-formed thirteen years later. This team and these men were a vital link in Kiltubrid's G.A.A. football story.

By 1967 Kiltubrid was without a junior team once more. But there was hope. The previous year there had been a good under-14 team in the parish. They reached the semi-final of the Championship only to be beaten by Ballinamore on the score of 3-5 to 1-2. The Kiltubrid team which played in that semi-final was: F. Dwyer, S. Cassells, P. Shanley, T. J. McKiernan, R. O'Neill, N. Murphy, S. Keating, L. Kelly, T. Murray, D. Farrell, L. McCaffrey, P. Reynolds, S. Tighe, S. McManus, M. Shanley. All these players were available to play under-16 in 1967 together with players like M. Tighe, N. Gilmartin, P. Farrell, E. Leddy and T. J. Mulvey. So it was no surprise when Kiltubrid won their way through to the final of the under-16 competition in 1967. Due to a dispute the final was not played until Easter Monday 1968 and Dromahaire were Kiltubrid's opponents. Anselm Reynolds had trained the Kiltubrid team for the final. The day was windy and cold but the game itself was full of drama. Dromahaire, playing with the wind, totally dominated the first half and were leading 1-6 to 0-0 at the



Kiltubrid Band c. 1960. Back row, l. to r.: J.J. McGirl, J.J. Farrell, S. Mulvey, P.J. McGlynn. Front row: P. Healy, B. McGlynn, E. Doyle.

First Kiltubrid Band, 1964: T. McKeon, M. Keating, J.J. McGirl, J.J. Farrell, P. Flynn, F. Beirne, S. McKeon, T. Mulvey, S. McDermott, J. Lee, J.J. McWeeney, J. Redehan.





Kevin Kelly — Full back for Kiltubrid in the 60's.

break. M. Tighe and N. Murphy were moved to midfield for the second half and Kiltubrid gradually whittled away Dromahaire's lead. There were only three minutes left when Micheal Tighe edged Kiltubrid ahead for the first time in the game. Dromahaire had a chance to level the game from a free just on full-time but failed. Kiltubrid had won by 1-7 to 1-6 and achieved what had seemed impossible at half-time. But perhaps most important of all a Kiltubrid team had won a championship for the first time since 1929. Just at a time when football seemed dead in the parish the under-16 team won a championship. It was the kiss of life for the G.A.A. in Kiltubrid. The team which defeated Dromahaire in the final was: T. J. Mulvey, L. Kelly, P. Shanley, E. Leddy, S.

Keating, N. Murphy, M. J. McKiernan, P. Farrell, N. Gilmartin, D. Farrell, F. Dwyer, R. O'Neill, M. Tighe (capt.), T. Murray, S. McManus. The substitutes were L. McCaffrey for R. O'Neill, T. J. McKiernan, M. Dwyer, S. Tighe, P. Mulvey, M. Shanley.

Kiltubrid had a strong under-16 team for the 1968 Championship too because most of the victorious team from the previous year were under age. And once they had beaten Ballinamore it was obvious that they would be difficult to beat. They reached the final of the 1968 competition too and Manorhamilton were their opponents. The final was played in Manorhamilton on 1 November. Kiltubrid won easily on the score of 1-6 to 0-3. Seamus McManus was the top scorer for Kiltubrid. The Kiltubrid team lined out as follows: E. Leddy, L. Kelly, P. Shanley, T. Flynn, L. McCaffrey, N. Murphy, M. J. McKiernan, T. Murray, J. Ellis, M. Dwyer, S. Tighe, F. Dwyer (capt.), D. Farrell, S. McManus, M. Shanley. This second victory in the under-16 competition underlined the fact that there was a good nucleus of young players in the parish and that the football fortunes of the parish seemed to be on the mend.

Strangely, Kiltubrid failed to win the minor championship in 1969 or 1970 despite the fact that they dominated the under-16 competition for the two previous years. There were two reasons for this failure: Firstly, by 1970, seven members of the victorious under-16 teams had emigrated to England and many of the others were living

and working in Dublin. And, secondly, there was no G.A.A. club in the parish to organise a minor team, and individuals like Anselm Reynolds and Micheal Sweeney were already overworked with the juvenile teams. Thus the future of the G.A.A. in the parish looked bleak at the end of the sixties despite the two successes at under-16 level.

Fenagh, a neighbouring parish with a great footballing tradition, had won the Junior League in 1966 and the Junior Championship the following year. But after these victories they lost some of their best players and were, by 1969, looking for replacements for these. A few Kiltubrid players joined the Fenagh team that year and by August 1971 when Eslin beat Fenagh in the Junior Championship final, there were seven Kiltubrid men on the Fenagh team. The Fenagh team beaten in that final was: *K. Murray (K.), L. Kelly (K.), P. Flynn, B. Heeran, H. Murray (K.), P. Gaffney, N. Murphy, J. E. Wrynn (capt.), P. Farrell (K.), F. Dwyer (K.), M. Tighe (K.), S. Tighe (K.), M. Dowd, H. Maguire, J. Ellis. This pattern of Kiltubrid providing about half the players for the Fenagh team was to continue for the next seven years.

By 1972 this Fenagh team began to make an impact. They won the Junior League that year and the following year they won the League and Championship. The team which defeated Aughawillan in the 1973 Championship final was: K. Murray (K.), D. Monaghan, L. Kelly (K.), S. Leyden, F. Kelly (K.), S. Tighe (K.), P. Gaffney (capt.), P.

Farrell (K.), M. Dowd, P. Leyden, M. Tighe (K.), H. Murray (K.), T. Murray (K.), J. Ellis, J. Kerrigan.

In 1974 the Fenagh team competed at Intermediate level and defeated Cloone in the Championship final in what was one of the most dramatic and exciting games of football in the county that year. The final score in that game was 2-10 to 2-8. The Fenagh team which played in the final had changed somewhat from the previous year.

Fenagh — U-16 Champions, 1970. Back row (left to right): P. Leyden, F. Monaghan, P. Reynolds, P. Flynn, J. Farrell, O. Doherty, N. McManus, L. Doherty. Front row: P. Heaney, G. Keegan, S. Tighe, captain, R. Ellis, P.J. Doonan, M. Shanley, N. Murray.





Sheemore Gaels — Senior Champions, 1974. Back row (left to right): J. Murray, S. Tighe, F. Monaghan, P. Farrell, R. Ellis, P. Leyden, L. Kelly, P. Guckian. Front row: M. Craig, E. Guckian, S. Leyden, H. Murray, M. Martin (captain), M. Tighe, P. Mulhern.

It lined out as follows: R. Ellis, D. Monaghan, L. Kelly (K.), G. Guckian, F. Monaghan, S. Leyden, P. Gaffney, S. Tighe (K.), P. Farrell (K.), Capt. P. Leyden, M. Tighe (K.), T. Murray (K.), J. O'Neill, M. J. McKiernan (K.), H. Murray (K.).

In that same year Fenagh and Carrick-on-Shannon, two Intermediate clubs, amalgamated to enter a team called "Sheemore Gaels" in the senior Championship. They had done so the

previous year too but with little success. In 1974 they seemed to get the right blend and besides they were fortunate to have Fr. Tommy Greenan, an excellent coach and former county footballer, to train the team. The crucial game of the Championship was the semi-final against Ballinamore who were county champions for the two previous years. The youthful captain of Sheemore Gaels, Michael Martin, played a brilliant game and Sheemore Gaels won by

a single point, 1-6 to 0-8. Mohill were Sheemore Gael's opponents in the final. Mohill dominated the early stages of the game but found it difficult to score. A goal by Seamus Tighe with ten minutes remaining was the turning point of the game. Sheemore Gaels won on the score of 1-10 to 0-8. The Sheemore Gaels team was: R. Ellis, E. Guckian, J. Murray, L. Kelly (K.), F. Monaghan, P. Guckian, S. Leyden, S. Tighe (K.), P. Farrell (K.), P. Leyden, M. Martin, M. Craig, M. Tighe (K.), P. Mulhern, H. Murray (K.). Two other Kiltubrid men, M. J. McKiernan and F. Kelly, were substitutes on this team. This victory was a boost to football in Kiltubrid because not only had Sheemore Gaels worn the Kiltubrid colours but five of the victorious team were from the parish.

The records will show too that Kiltubrid won the Minor Championship in 1972 and 1973, but in truth the majority of the players were from Fenagh parish. Fenagh had won the Under-16 Championship in 1970, and unlike the Kiltubrid under-16 teams of 1967 and 1968, they came good at minor level too, except that they were named Kiltubrid at minor level. These minor teams were backboned by excellent footballers like Seamus Tighe and the Leyden brothers, Padraig and Sean. The Kiltubrid minor team which defeated Annaduff in the 1972 Championship final was: R. Ellis, P. Doonan, O. Doherty, L. Doherty, G. Murray (K.), F. Monaghan, P. Reynolds (K.), S. Tighe (K.), capt., G. Keegan, P. Leyden, P. Flynn (K.), S. Leyden, J. G. Wryne, E. Wryne, N. McManus. And Gerry Murray, playing at



Liscarbin National School, 1965. Back row (left to right): Mrs. Gannon, principal (R.I.P.), Eileen McManus, B. Guckian, M. Dolan, L. Mulvey, J. McManus, P. Cassells, M. Moran, S. Mulvey, Mrs. B. Mulvey, N.T. (R.I.P.). Middle row: M. Power, P. Guckian, M.T. Mahon, U. Meehan, L. Guckian, P. Cassells, L. Mahon, D. McManus, P. Scollan, C. Harvey, M. McGirl, T. Mahon, P. Duignan, F. Dolan, T.P. Dolan. Front row, seated: C. McGirl, C. Guckian, J. Doherty, C. Lynch, M. Mulvey, M.J. Meehan, S. Lynch, K. Harvey, P. Logan, D. Guckian.

centre half back, was the only Kiltubrid man on the minor team which defeated Garadice Gaels in the 1973 final.

The marriage between Kiltubrid and Fenagh was one that was drifted into in the late sixties without much thought. Yet those early years of the union were blissful and successful. There was an enthusiasm in the club and a strong bond of friendship between the players. But as the seventies progressed the successes were fewer, the glamour of the early years of the marriage had disappeared and the partners were

beginning to drift apart. The fact that Fenagh were defeated at the semi-final stage of the senior Championship in three consecutive years, 1975, '76 and '77, was frustrating. There was need for a new pitch, but little agreement as to where it should be sited. A parish in the throes of deciding where to situate a community centre could do without further dissension over a G.A.A. pitch. Besides, the Kiltubrid players on the Fenagh team were, at times, criticised by their fellow parishioners for bolstering up another parish team instead

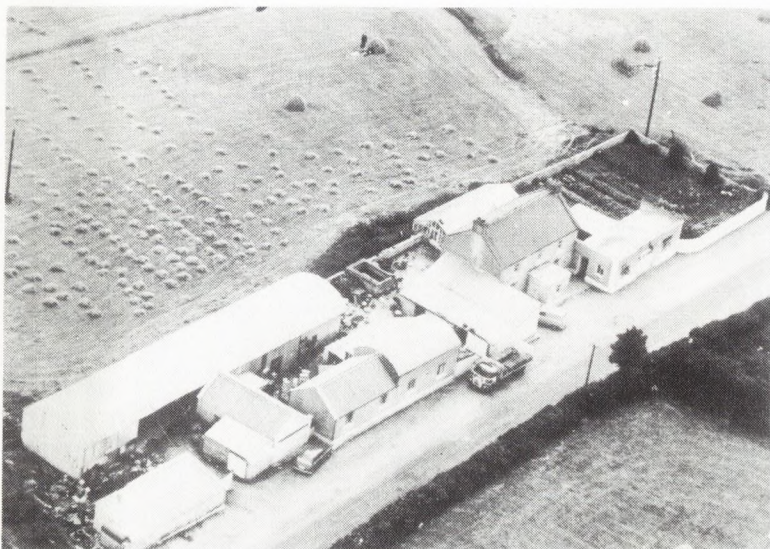
Fenagh — Intermediate Champions, 1974. Back row (left to right): S. Tighe, F. Monaghan, T. McHugh, J. O'Neill, S. Leyden, L. Kelly, R. Ellis, J. Ellis, M. Dowd, G. Guckian, B. Heeron, F. Kelly. Front row: B. Wrynne, D. Monaghan, M.J. McKiernan, P. Gaffney, P. Leyden, P. Farrell, Captain, H. Murray, J. Kerrigan, D. Farrell, T. Murray, N. Murphy, M. Tighe.





Fr. O'Foinn and Fr. McEvelly outside the new Church at Drumcong.
(by courtesy of the Leitrim Guardian)

I.C.A., early 60's. Front row, left to right: K. Horan (R.I.P.), M. Reynolds, Mrs. A. McGee (R.I.P.), Mrs. A. Reynolds (R.I.P. Back row: Mrs. A. Cox, Mrs. M.E. Moran, P. Reynolds, M. Doyle, C. Shanley, N. McGee.



'Drino' Mineral Water factory in the early 60's.

of playing for their own. For all these reasons the marriage between Fenagh and Kiltubrid was, by 1977, on shaky ground. But perhaps the real reason for the break-up which finally came was to be found within the parish of Kiltubrid itself.

The population of Kiltubrid in 1971 was approximately eight hundred, or one tenth of the estimated population in 1846. Never in the modern history of the parish had the population been so low. The population of the parish had been literally and truly decimated. The results were obvious. Kiltubrid was now a one-priest parish. The Vocational School was closed, so too was Letterfine creamery. St. Brigid's Pipe Band was disbanded. Rossy and Aughacashel National Schools were closed and the parish was speckled with moss-covered stones — stones that once gave shelter were now monuments to the many thousands who once lived in Kiltubrid. Morale was at a low ebb.

But if one looked beyond the parish in 1971 there were signs of a new prosperity. Ireland had joined the E.E.C. and there seemed to be an unlimited supply of money for development. There was now free education and free school transport. Consequently young people were staying at home longer even if there was no work. But soon there would be work too and gradually the lure of England and the United States was gone. Young people began to stay at home. There was, for the moment at least, a new prosperity in Ireland, though it was not

until the mid-seventies that this prosperity affected Kiltubrid. By then emigration had ceased and for the first time in one hundred and thirty years the population of the parish began to increase. A new Church was built at Drumcong and Rantogue Church was renovated. Soon a new primary school would be built at Drumcong and Liscarbin National School was converted into a social centre. But, most important of all, young people began to stay at home, build houses and get married. The parish was coming to life once more and that parish was demanding that they have their own G.A.A. club.

* * *



* (K.) indicates that the player is from Kiltubrid.

**Edmund Doyle, Cathal Gilbride, Padraig Griffin —
played with Kiltubrid in the 60's and now officials
of the club.**



A New Beginning

ON 21st April, 1889, an important meeting was held in Kiltubrid: that meeting marked the beginning of the GAA in the parish. On 30 January, 1978, an equally important meeting was held in Kiltubrid because that meeting marked a new beginning for the GAA in the parish. The new beginning was not as colourful as the first beginning, but there was a quiet determination that, unlike many previous clubs in the parish, the newly formed one would survive and succeed.

There were in 1978 a number of seasoned footballers in the parish who had won Junior, Intermediate and Senior championship medals with Fenagh and Sheemore Gaels, and obviously these players would form the nucleus of the new club. But much of the credit for the success of the club must go, not to these players, but to men like Edmund Doyle, Cathal Gilbride and Francis McKeon who, without any previous experience of running a club, set about building a GAA club from scratch. It was due to the persistence and hard work of men like these that the newly formed GAA club not only survived but blossomed into a vibrant and successful club.

Edmund Doyle was elected chairman of the new club, a position he has held since then with the exception of one year when Michael James McKiernan was chairman. Cathal Gilbride was elected vice-chairman but since then has proved to be a thorough and efficient treasurer. John McKeon was elected secretary and this position has been held since then by Rory O'Neill and Oliver Curran in turn. Francis McKeon was elected treasurer.

The club affiliated a team for the Junior League and championship in 1978 and they secured the use of John McGourty's field in Rossy for training and for playing their home matches. The club is indebted to him for the use of this very suitable playing field. Practices were held and, as the year progressed, it became obvious that Kiltubrid had a very useful team. John



Kiltubrid Ladies Football Team. Back row, left to right: T. Doherty, M. Flynn, F. Lee, F. Beirne, M. McGirl, E. Lynch, P. Guckian, A. Lynch. Front row: J. Redehan, P. Kellegher, V. Guckian, T. Redehan, A. Murray, G. Lynch.

Keaney, Hubert Murray and Sean Redehan looked after the U-12 and U-14 players. These young players were enthusiastic and showed much promise too. By the end of the first year in existence the club could look back with satisfaction, not that they had achieved very much on the field of play but that they had built a solid foundation and had taken the important decision to buy and develop their own GAA grounds. The GAA was firmly rooted in the parish once more.

1979 was an important year for the club too. There was tremendous support for the football teams. Many parishioners who had not attended football matches for years were now supporting their teams. And there were people playing football who had never hoped to play when the club was joined with Fenagh. But the new spirit within the parish was most obvious at the social functions organized by the club. The parishioners attended these functions en masse. And the

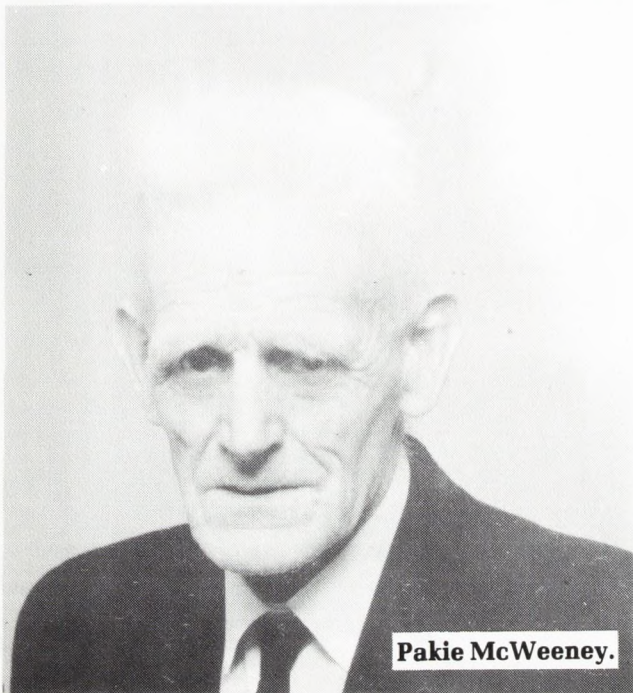
ladies of the parish were actively involved too. In many ways this involvement by the ladies of the parish is the secret of the club's success, because not only did they attend meetings and football matches but they worked hard organizing social events, fund raising activities, and looking after the under-age players. With the formation of a ladies football team in the parish in 1981 the involvement of the ladies in the club was even greater. Anne Murray was the chairperson of the new ladies committee. Geraldine Lynch was secretary and Marion O'Neill was treasurer. Eileen and Geraldine Lynch had been playing with St. Mary's club and their experience and enthusiasm was invaluable to the newly formed team. They were fortunate too that Peggy Guckian, an inter-county player, opted to play with Kiltubrid. The ladies teams may not have had any major successes as yet but their contribution to

the GAA in the parish has been immense.

The men-folk were not having great success on the field of play either. They had a good blend of experience and youth on their team. Players like Hubert Murray, Micheal and Seamus Tighe, Liam Kelly, Michael James Kiernan, Peter Farrell and Seamus Tighe were experienced players. They were joined by up-and-coming players like Gerard and Padraig Lynch, Joseph McGirl, Leo McCaffrey, Decaln Nealon, Patrick McWeeney, Tommy Flynn, Ciaran Lee and Cosmos and Damian Murray. Besides in 1979, Frankie Kelly, who had been playing with Drumalee club in Cavan, transferred back to Kiltubrid and proved to be a very useful centre-half back. Kiltubrid

reached the semi-final of the Junior championship in 1978, 1979 and 1980 but failed to get any farther. The semi-final defeat in 1980 was a severe blow. Carrigallen, playing a fast and intelligent type football, won the game convincingly and went on to win the final. But this defeat was the spur the team needed. They qualified for the semi-final of the league. This game, which was against Aughavas, was played in Ballinamore. It was an exciting high-scoring game, with Aughavas gaining the upper-hand in the final quarter. But the excitement proved too much for Papie Moran, one of Kiltubrid's most loyal supporters: he collapsed and died. The game was called off. The replay against Aughavas two weeks later was a draw and in the second replay Kiltubrid won convincingly by 2-7 to 1-4. Kiltubrid's opponents in the league final was Carrigallen who were the Junior champions of that year. Kiltubrid dominated most of the game but were only three points ahead with a few minutes remaining when Carrigallen scored a goal. The game ended in great excitement and the replay was fixed for 14 December.

The replay was a much different affair. Kiltubrid completely dominated the game, scoring 2-9 to Carrigallen's one score, a goal from the penalty spot in the first half. The long awaited breakthrough had come. Kiltubrid had won a Junior competition for the first time since 1929, and like then they achieved their victory at Carrigallen's



Pakie McWeeney.

expense. This victory was a morale booster to the club and it could not have come at a better time. The Kiltubrid team which played in the league final was: C. Murray, S. Redehan, L. Kelly, G. Lynch, P. Farrell, F. Kelly (Capt.), L. McCaffrey, S. Tighe, J. McGirl, M. Tighe, P. Lynch, D. Murray, D. Nealon, M. J. McKiernan, H. Murray.

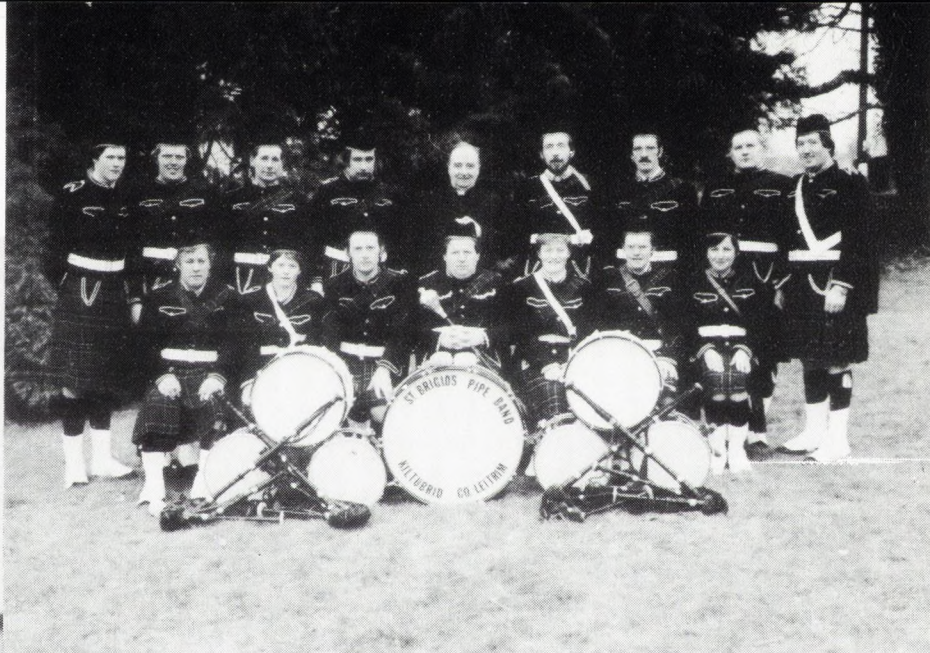
There are many who would attribute this league success, not to the players or the officials, but to Papie Moran! Because there seems little doubt but that Aughavas would have won the semi-final were it not for his

death which caused the game to be abandoned. He seemed to be using his influence in Heaven too because Kiltubrid remained unbeaten in all their league and championship games for the next twelve months. In the meantime they had won the Junior championship in a convincing manner and reached the league final once more. Their defeat in the league final by Drumkeerin ended their fifteen-game winning sequence. A Drumkeeran supporter must have got to Heaven too!

The Band playing at Drumcong.

Papie Moran.





Pipe Band, 1984. Back row: P. Carty, J. McWeeney, T.P. Carroll, J. McKeon, S. Lynch, Fr. Killian, F. McCabe, J.P. Fanning, P.J. Meehan. Front row: S. Wynne, M. Burke, C. Norris, B. Meehan, E. Lynch, M. Gilmartin, D. Moran.

The Old and the New, St. Brigids, Drumcong.



The winning of the 1981 Junior Championship was the high-point for the club that year. Only twice before, in 1919 and in 1929, had a Kiltubrid team won the Junior championship, and so to win it for a third time after a fifty two year wait was a little special. Kiltubrid had ended 1980 on a high note having won the Junior league. And with Padraig Griffin as coach they set their sights on the Junior championship in 1981. They defeated Boornacoola and Eslin in the early rounds and qualified to meet Drumkeerin in the championship final. Kiltubrid were in a confident and determined mood and, despite a shaky patch in the second half, they won by 1-10 to 1-6. Joseph McGirl scored eight of Kiltubrid's points and Seamus Tighe, his midfield partner, played a captain's part and scored the all-important goal just before half-time. Kiltubrid lined out as follows in the championship final: C. Murray, S. Redehan, L. Kelly, G. Lynch, L. McCaffrey, F. Kelly, P. Lynch, S. Tighe, J. McGirl, M. Tighe, P. Farrell, D. Murray, D. Nealon. M. J. McKiernan, H. Murray. Sub: P. McWeeney for P. Farrell. This was an important victory for the club and it ensured that Kiltubrid would be competing in senior football competitions for the first time since 1938.

There was progress in under-age football too. The U-12 and U-14 teams were able to match most teams in the county and in 1981 they won the U-12 (C) football league. It is only a matter of time before these young

players make an impact at senior level too. In 1929 Kiltubrid and Allen Gaels clubs joined together to enter a team for the minor championship. They called themselves St. Francis's and they were capably coached and managed by Tony McGowan. They won the minor championship, beating Mohill, St. Mary's and Manorhamilton en route. And they were only narrowly beaten by Tuam Star's in the final of a special Connaught inter-club competition. The Kiltubrid players T. Flynn, S. McGirl, D. Nealon, P. McWeeney and C. Lee were regulars on this team, though C. Lynch, G. Winters, D. Lynch and T. Redehan also played with them.

Opening of Drumcong N.S. C. Burns, Inspector; Fr. H. Fee, Bishop Cathal Daly.



**School Children,
Drumcong National School.**



Kiltubrid Junior Champions — 1981. Back row, left to right: J. Guckian, D. Monaghan, L. McCaffrey, F. Kelly, C. Lee, P. McWeeney, S. McManus, L. Kelly, M.J. McKieran, M. Tighe, S. Redehan. Front row: P. Farrell, O. Curran, D. Murray, G. Lynch, P. Lynch, S. Tighe, captain; P. McKiernan, mascot; H. Murray, D. Nealon, C. Murray, J. McGirl, S. McGirl.





Solo Run (courtesy of the Leitrim Guardian)

Kiltubrid G.A.A. club was achieving in other areas too. By mid-'81 they had bought a nine-acre site in the townland of Corglass near Annadale, to develop as a GAA pitch. T. P. Keane and George O'Toole had worked hard sorting out the details of the purchase. Immediately a park committee was formed and they organised fund-raising activities. Card games, ticket raffles, buffet dances, 'race-nights' and collections were organised, but perhaps the most novel idea of all was a sponsored solo-run from Dublin to Kiltubrid which was organised in 1982. This was a huge operation involving much planning and a large number of people. It was well organized with cars and mini-

buses linked by close-circuit radio. The event took place over two days with a stop over-night in Mullingar. Not only did the club raise £5,000 on this venture but the co-operative spirit it fostered was worth much more to the club. In 1983 the solo-run was repeated, this time raising £6,000. The development of the grounds and the building of the dressing-rooms will cost in the region of £65,000. The club hope to have this debt cleared by 1 July 1984 when the pitch will be officially opened. This new pitch will be a monument to the hard work of the club members and the generosity of so many, both inside and outside the parish.



The Park Committee

Left to right: Gerry Lynch, Edmund Doyle, Seamus Tighe, Dessie Foley, Michael McGill (Chairman), Oliver Curran, Michael James McKiernan, Cathal Gilbride.

Chairman's Address



During the past three years, the Parish of Kiltubrid has made considerable progress in the field of Gaelic Games. This year, the Centenary year, marks the opening of our new pitch which brings to birth the ideals of the Parish.

My thanks and appreciation go to all who have participated in the various areas of our project, to the Club officials and members who have been so loyal, to the trojan work of the Park Committee since its formation. Our Ladies Club too, played such an important part, providing the best in catering at all fund-raising functions. The Clergy of the Parish who have always been so encouraging and supportive, to all who facilitated the Committee by providing comfortable surroundings in which to hold our meetings. To all the people within and outside the Parish who have subscribed directly and indirectly to our many fund-raising events, and to the untiring and diligent fund-raisers who were always willing and available. To those who did the spade work on the Park under the guidance of their able directors. To Fr. Liam Kelly and his hardworking Book Committee who have highlighted the historic activities of the G.A.A. in this book.

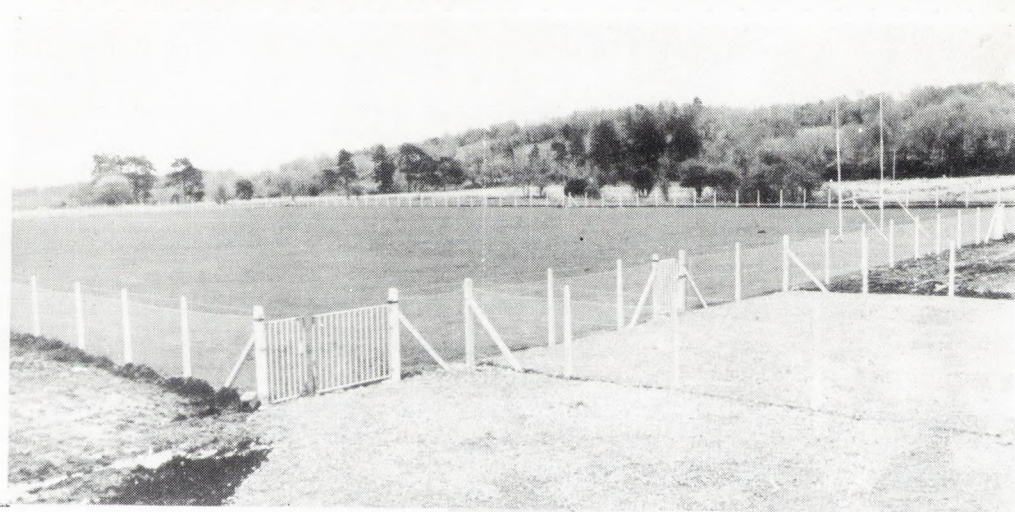
I hope that the Club will see as much success on the playing field as it has had with the provision of the Park and that its effects will herald greater things for the Parish in the future.

By the opening of the new pitch we hope to create an even better community spirit and in our achievement we hope to cater not only for our present youth but also for the future generations.

Go n-éirí an t-ádh linn.

Edmund Doyle.
CATHAOIRLEACH





Pairc Cill Tiobraid.

A Youth Employment scheme, under the guidance of Cathal Gilbride, started work on the grounds in August 1982. They, together with much voluntary labour, have now ensured that the development will be completed by mid 1984. The new pitch will be officially opened just over ninety-five years after those first practices were held on Beirne's rock in the Spring of 1889. Since then the footballers of Kiltubrid have been

wandering the parish in search of a field to practice their football and to play their games. Their wanderings have taken them to such places as Dooloughan, the lawn of Letterfine House, McDermott's rock, Donnelly's yard, Driney, Laheen, Lynch's field and Rossy. But now their wandering is over and who could blame them for imagining Pairc Cill Tiobraid as the Promised Land.

Reunion of Aughasne Young Irelands 1919 with new club members 1982.



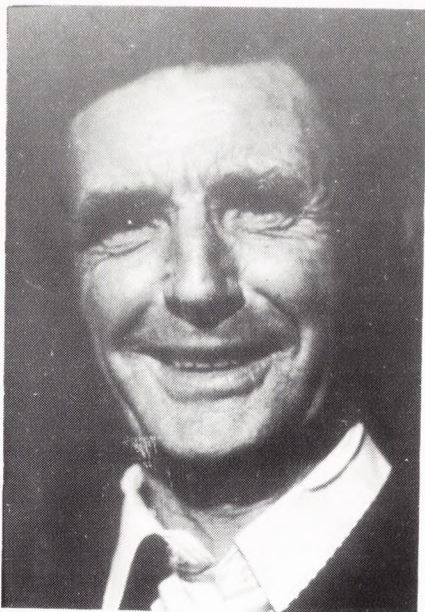
KÍLTUBRÍÐ





Annadale House, 1984.

Christy Moore, sometimes called the 'Bard of Liscarbin' has been writing and singing verses about local events for many years. He and Jim Kelly have composed many humorous verses which Christy would then sing at local concerts. This piece about the 'upper end' of the parish was written in the late fifties.



OUR PARISH

*The parish of Kiltubrid is ever so grand,
At its northern end Slieve-an-Iarainn does stand.*

*Deep in its bosom rich minerals lie
That has served our country in the days long gone by.*

*It carried the 'Pikemen' in the year '98
When our people decided to battle 'gainst fate,
And all through that epic of terror and strife
Around its huge boulders guerrillas were rife.*

*On top of this mountain is wee Lochan lake
Where anglers do gather some fine trout to take.*

*Tourists have come there from far oe'r the wa-
ve —*

At its natural beauty in silence they gaze.

*When our clergy were driven from valley and
plain*

*On this mountain sought refuge from sorrow
and pain.*

*An altar they carved from that old ancient
rock*

*And around them assembled God-fearing
flock.*

*From a point that's called Boley you can look
down*

*At the bustle of traffic in Drumshanbo town,
Or at Allen's bright waters where wild goose
might be —*

*The first lake of the Shannon in its rush for the
sea.*

*Our parish is ever the gem of the West,
Endowed with the gifts, that were meant for
the best.*

*A spot set aside for the faithful and true
That the hand of the tyrant could never
subdue.*

*St. Patrick himself on this soil often trod
When bravely expounding the glory of God.
By the banks of Liscarbin he rested a spell,
And left us a token — a clear sparkling well.*

*People have told me that they cannot stay,
That they are better in London or the U.S.A.
Let them preach like the prophets, but I never
will roam*

*From the parish of Kiltubrid my own native
home.*

Leland L. Duncan, an Englishman with a great love of Kiltubrid, collected folklore here in the late 1880's and had them published in an English Periodical called "Folklore" between the years 1893 and 1896. Here is an extract from his collection:

"I have collected a few more stories of the fairies and their doings. That of the "Football Players" seems to be a widespread tale in one form or another; here is the Kiltubrid version, by Barney Whelan of Driny:"

THE FOOTBALL PLAYERS

There was a man returning home one evening, when, as he was crossing a field, there met him a man on horseback. "Will you come with me for a couple of hours?", said he. "I will", says the first; "but how will I come back?" "Oh, I'll leave you back", said the man; so he up on the horse behind the stranger, and away with them.

"Now what I want you to do is this: we've got a football match on, and you must kick for us"

"Well, I will", says he; and on that they were in the football field and the game began, and Jack wasn't long before he kicked the ball before him and kicked a goal. There was great joy among the little people, and they all set off to the big house for refreshment. Then the man who had brought Jack came and said: "You must take no refreshment here, nor take any notice of anything". So he watched them in the hall, and they had great eating and drinking.

To his great surprise, the first girl that brought in a dish was a sister he had lost three years before, but she passed without noticing him, and disappeared. After a while the man who had brought him came, and they mounted his horse and soon were back at the field whence they came. Then before he went, the horseman asked Jack what could he do for him? "Well", said he, "I saw my sister that's been dead three years at that house, and I would like her back".

"It's a hard thing", said the man, "but I'll try and do it for you". So he went away, and in a little time returned with the girl and disappeared. There was much joy on the two of them, and they set off for home.

Early in the morning the old father was wakened by a lowing without, and he saw some cattle among his oats. So he out and hunted them, and back to bed, and he says to the wife: "There's Jack come in, and he's brought a wife with him at last".

They had great astonishment when the lad brought down his sister, and she wasn't a day older than when she died. She went out and called the cows in — for they had been sent with her — and there they are now.



From the collection of Leland L. Duncan:

JAMES DOGHERTY AND THE STILL

On the townland of Lisdrumacrone lived James Dogherty and Ody Mahon. These two had a whiskey-still between them, but it had been lent to friends in Keshcarrigan, and Dogherty and two others went to Kesh one night to bring it home. As they went on the road they heard the noise of horsemen following, and saw a troop of the "good people" coming along, with their little swords glittering in the moonlight. As they swept by they called out three times, "Good-night, James Dogherty!"

Dogherty and his companions were somewhat scared, but went on, and when they arrived at the green at Kesh there was the company drawn up in line. They wheeled round and rode past, saying again, "Good-night, James Dogherty!". James and his friends then got the still and went home safely. He used to put a pot of whiskey in the fort for the "good people", and they in return led the revenue men astray, so that the still was never discovered. They were doubtless safeguarding its home-coming on the night in question.

Ody Mahon managed later on to incur the displeasure of the little folk, by cutting down bushes in a part of his holding where they had their playing-place. Their revenge took the shape of pelting his house after dark with little clods of earth, pebbles, etc., and finally the family had to quit the place. (Told by Michael Lynch, formerly of Lisdrumacrone).

With many thanks to the following sponsors without whom this book could not have been produced.

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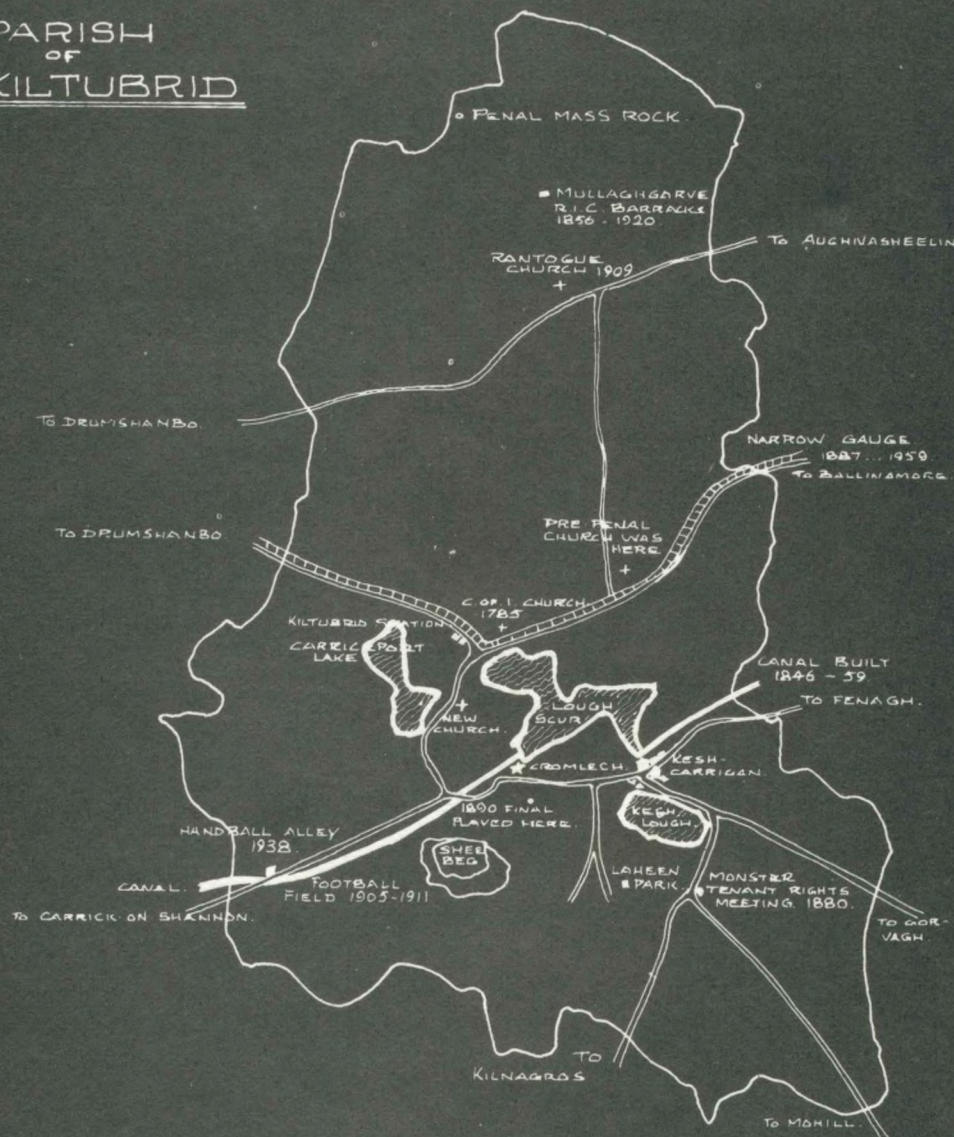




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