

No. 161—E. M. DOODY of Monegae

(By Seamus O'Ceallaigh)

Monegae boasts a connection with the G.A.A. dating back to its very early days, and down through the years that have passed since the parish produced many notable Gaelic figures, including the captain of the Limerick All-Ireland team of 1918, Willie Hough, who still gives outstanding service to the Association as long term Chancellor of the Munster Exchequer.

It is with feelings of deep personal sorrow I record the untimely passing, at the early age of forty-eight, of another great Monegae personality and Gael in Rev. Bro. E. M. Doody, of the Order of the Irish Christian Brothers.

Reared in the grand Gaelic tradition built more than seventy years ago, when William Hough (Willie's father) and Dan McEnery organised the old famed William O'Brien Hurling and Football Club on Monegae, the young Edward M. Doody was early interested in things Gaelic, and when, at the age of fifteen, he entered the Christian Brothers, he brought the Gaelic spirit of his native parish with him.

WONDERFUL WORK.

Anyone who has even a slight acquaintance with the wonderful work performed by the Christian Brothers for our native games will realise that the Monegae lad planned his Gaelic ideals in fertile and kindly soil when he entered the Christian Brothers—a soil and environment that brought forth the greatest in a truly great man.

Deeply interested in all aspects of the Irish revival, hurling was his first love, and for its propagation he worked unceasingly.

It would be impossible within the confines of an article of this nature to attempt a full portrayal of thirty-three years devoted service to a cause. For many years the hard work was mostly answered with disappointment, and it looked for a long period as if success was not to smile on his efforts.

A NOTABLE EVENT.

Perseverence, however, won out in the end. His transfer to Thurles some seven years ago was a notable event. He immediately set to work to build a champion hurling side, and the fruits of his labour can be quickly reckoned from the fact that in the period Tipperary has figured in every Minor All-Ireland Final except one—1951.

When the Premier County lads won the All-Ireland crown last September for the ninth time, they had eleven lads from Thurles C.B.S. on the team. And it had been something similar in the other years.

Early this year I made an effort to collect the full story of the Dr. Harty Cup competition. Brother Doody looked up the school records for me, and produced something that could hardly be matched by any other school in the country.

WON OVER 60 MEDALS.

Eight past pupils of Thurles C.B.S. have played on Irish teams; eighteen of them figured from time to time in Railway Cup finals; the number of All-Ireland medals they won exceeds the three score mark. Ten of the Tipperary lads who figured in the last great run of Premier County Senior Hurling success learned the art of the camán in Thurles C.B.S.—Pat Stakelum, John Doyle, Mickey Byrne, Sean and Paddy Kenny, Seamus Bannon, Ned and Tim Ryan, Jimmy Finn and Tommy Ryan.

The present Tipperary side is every bit as strong—if not stronger—in Thurles C.B.S. representation, and indications are that this position will continue for many a day.

Brother Doody's enthusiasm for the school games, and his great work in fostering them, was universally acknowledged. He was a tower of strength in Munster College Councils, and it can be said that Thurles C.B.S., under his guidance, made a wonderful contribution towards increasing the attractiveness and appeal of the Dr. Harty Cup ties.

DEEP INTEREST

Brother Doody's interest was, however, a lot deeper than Thurles C.B.S. or Tipperary Minors. They hit the high spots, mainly the result of the training and fine judgment of the enthusiast from Monegae. But away from the limelight and plaudits of the crowd he worked continuously for the success of the rural schools games, and was Vice-Chairman of the Mid-Tipperary Rural Schools' Board—a position to which he was unanimously re-elected a week before his death, at the Annual Convention, which paid tribute to his long and unselfish service in the cause of native games.

He helped to establish the Rural Schools' movement, but that was only part of his work for the G.A.A. He remained the back-bone of the Rural Schools' Committee; Thurles C.B.S., of which he was Superior, was regarded as headquarters, because the various schools of the division were always welcome there for their meetings; whilst the school field was also at their disposal for any games they wished to play there.

FORCE OF HIS DRIVE AND PERSONALITY.

Every sphere of G.A.A. activity in Tipperary experienced the force of Brother Doody's drive and personality, Chairman of the County Minor Hurling Selection Committee, and a member of the Junior Committee also, it was generally agreed that there were few men with his judgment in the picking and placing of teams.

And now, it is hard to realise that Brother Doody will walk no more amongst us. Cut away in the flower of life, his passing has left a void that will not easily be filled. Hurling has lost a real patron, the Irish Christian Brothers has lost one of its most notable figures, whilst the legion who were proud to call him friend will mourn for many a day the loss of one of the most pure souled Gaels it has been my good fortune to encounter.

It was at Christmas, time when the joybells chime,

The Maker called you away,
And now you rest with the sleepers' best
In the cradle of the Gael.

Loved friends at home and over the foam
Are grieving, but grief is vain,
For you're laid away in the sacred clay
To await the Resurrection Day.

Above your holy resting place
May the angels their vigil keep
Whilst upon thy grave, with reverent hand,
I'll lay this wreath of mine.