

## No. 194—DICK QUIN of Knockane

(By SEAMUS O'CEALLAIGH)

CLOSELY associated with one of the most glorious epochs of our country's history. Knockane is a pretty country district, picturesquely laid out in the Golden Vale and within a stone's throw of the charming eminence from which the historic Rock of Ballyneety looks out over the beautiful plain which stretches from Cashel to Limerick and from the lordly Galtees to Keeper Hill.

Part of Knockane forms the border line between Limerick and Tipperary, and the district abounds in a beautiful pasture country and is in close proximity to many localities which were noted for Gaelic activities in the early days of the Gaelic Athletic Association.

Around this district arose some of the famous athletes of Limerick and Tipperary, who brought honour to the county on many a home and foreign field.

Considering these fine historic associations it is no wonder that the spirit of the Gael surrounds the district of Knockane and though it cannot boast of a village, town or industrial centre to co-operative in its work, or rail facilities to give it importance in the world of commerce; yet, in this quiet country district the youthful generation never allowed the Gaelic football code lapse.

## STERLING GAELS AND GREAT ATHLETES.

After the foundation of the G.A.A. three teams flourished in the joint parishes included in the Knockane district. They were Knockane Football Club, Old Pallas Hurling Club, New Pallas Football Club.

Here within the confines were powerful combinations composed of sterling Gaels and great athletes. Here Willie Real and Paddy Ryan began their athletic careers, which culminated in world records, and here were fostered many other athletes whose names are recorded in the Gaelic athletic annals of our county.

The early contests took the form of tournaments and it was the usual practice to hold them on week days. It was 1887 — three years after the G.A.A. was formed—before championship competitions were established.

The earliest families associated with the development of the Association in Knockane were the Nashs, Bearys, Torpeys, Ryans, Hogans, and Hanleys.

Jim Nash was one of the star players in Limerick's great All-Ireland senior football success of 1896 with Con Fitzgerald, Larry Roche, Albie Quillinan, Jack

Murphy and Jim O'Riordan. He was the toast of Shannonside for many a long day.

## THE ONLY GOAL OF GREAT FINAL.

Jim led to the only goal of that great final, enabling Limerick to neutralise three fast opening minor flags by the Dublin Young Ireland lads. Nash then put Limerick ahead for the first time with a fine point — a lead they never relinquished.

The Pallas side of the parish gave to that memorable decider three resolute and hard kicking players in Denis Birrane, Malachy and Mick Ryan.

The second generation of footballers saw a joint parish club when Pallas and Knockane were united as Pallas Football Club, and signalled their period with some unforgettable displays against the famed Commercials—then in their glorious heyday.

The last match this combination played was in the County final of 1897, in which they were beaten by Commercials at the Markets Field the same day as Kiifnane beat Cappamore 4-9 to 4-8, for County hurling honours, and went on to take for Limerick its first hurling blue riband. The Pallas players, on that occasion were: J. Moloney, T. Ryan, James Ryan, T. Condon, M. Maher, T. Humphreys, M. O'Donnell, M. Moroney, E. Condon, L. Ryan, C. Harty, Jim and Johnny Nash, P. Ryan, W. Ryan, J. Maher, F. O'Mara.

## MEMORABLE INTRODUCTION TO LIMERICK FOOTBALL.

Knockane lined out as a separate entity the following season and included in their side the subject of our sketch — Dick Quin.

They had a memorable introduction to Limerick football—playing Hospital three times for the semi-final of the Senior Championships, winning well, 2-7 to 0-1, in the end, at the Markets Field. The Knockane team on that occasion were—Jim Nash, Captain; Dick Quin, P. Ryan, T. Ryan, P. Gorman, J. Dwyer, M. Ryan, C. Hanley, J. Hanley, J. Maher, M. Shinnors, T. Humphries, M. Moloney, J. Moloney, Johnny Nash, Tom Ryan, Thomas Ryan.

Knockane were later beaten by Commercials at Dromkeen, 2-6 to 0-4, the date, May 7th, 1899.

We find next mention of the Knockane lads on December 17th, 1899, at Galbally, where they were leading Knocklong Stars, 1-3 to 0-1, when the latter team left the field.

On May 6th, 1900, Knockane and Commercials figured in a terrific duel at Croom in the East Limerick senior football final, which ended with honours even — three points all. Tom Campion of Kilmallock refereed. The re-play was again fixed for Croom but Knockane would not go there and Commercials got a bloodless victory.

## KNOCKANE TEAM.

That Knockane team were—Dick Quin, Eamonn Mansfield, M. O'Donnell, Jim and Johnny Nash, J. Mahony, M. Shinnors, J. Ryan, T. Breen, P. Ryan, J. O'Dwyer, P. O'Dwyer, P. Gorman, J. Donovan, T. Humphries, John Moloney.

Jim Nash left for America in September, 1901, and that same year Dick Quin played for Oola, getting his place on the County team which lost to Kerry, at Tralee, in the opening round of the Munster Championship. In the Oola colours Dick was more successful, and he gained a County Senior Football Championship medal when he helped defeat Abbeyfeale in the County final played at the Markets Field on December 8th, 1901.

We find him back in the Knockane jersey the following season, and on March 1st, 1903, he figured in a game at Kilmallock against Commercials which had an abrupt ending. Aided by a strong breeze, Knockane were leading 1-4 to nil after 25 minutes play, when they were disallowed a goal and refused to continue. The referee, Denis Spencer Lyons of Croom, awarded the match to Commercials.

The annual meeting of the Knockane Club was held three weeks later and they appointed Dick Quin, captain of the senior team, with Johnny Nash his assistant. Pat Loby was elected Club Chairman, and M. O'Donnell the Secretary.

On April 19th, Dick gave a great display for Limerick against the Nils of Cork at Tipperary in the semi-final of the Munster Senior Football Championship which Nils won 1-9 to 1-6.

Knockane succeeded in getting a re-play of their match with Commercials and it took place at the Markets Field in conjunction with the County Senior Hurling final, in which Young Irelands beat Monegay. After a thrilling struggle Commercials gained the verdict, 2-2 to 1-4.

## ANOTHER RE-PLAY.

The Knockane lads were again dissatisfied and established their claim to another re-play — a remarkable one because it took place outside the County—in Clonmel, and under the auspices of the Munster Council. Commercials won in a canter on this occasion—1-10 to 0-1.

Dick was a member of the Limerick team which beat Waterford in the opening round of the Munster Championship at Tipperary on April 16th, 1905, but lost to Clare at the Markets Field in the semi-final, 0-8 to 0-6.

Limerick had some compensation for their Championship defeat when they won the Munster Senior Football Cup, defeating the Lees (Cork), 0-5 to 0-3, at Tralee on September 17th, 1905. Dick Quin and Jack Moloney represented the Knockane Club on that fine Limerick selection.

Dick Quin was the ideal captain—a splendid leader of men, and he got the most out of his team — good sports all, who thought nothing of walking to venues within a dozen miles and enjoyed the trips on the old horse drawn wagonettes to the farther centres.

A fine footballer himself, Dick was never selfish in his play and believed in the value of team spirit in the winning of games. He instilled this into his clubmates—practiced what he preached — and the result was a seventeen that stood loyal and firm before any opposition.

He gave much to Knockane and Limerick football and deserves a place in our memory dearest.