

dominating mid-field win by two points.

Patrickswell we met bank al Timmy O'Neill, a prominent Bord na nÓg official, he was in confident mood at the result. In fact, he me that they had made liminary arrangements for ig victory bonfire.

Centre-field will be vital," told me, but the Kilkenny flank is suspect. Jimacy has not fully recovered m the injury, while young m McCormack has not the time experience. "If Limek exploit this wing, the Mcrthy is bound for the "Well" included the genial Timmy.

Donal Godfrey, a member of South Liberties half-set m in company with Jimmy ood, a former goalie with erties, were discussing the m's prospects. They both reed that the defence is suset but were hopeful of a perick win.

During my vacation in Tra- re I discovered that most rferford people favoured kenny to win. However, mus Power, trainer of the sterford team, thinks t Limerick will retain their own. "I said the team that ould beat Waterford would n the All-Ireland," he told , and I have seen nothing e to change my mind.

John Maher, who travelled San Francisco with the ervice team and runs the onside Lounge in Dramore, d that the party made a misse when leaving the City the Golden Gates "that we ll be back," and they intend it doing that. "Have no wor- s," he told me. "It's Limek's title."

Donal Ring, the well-known ll band leader from Cork, ough sorry to see Cork t of the race anticipated a at final and thinks Limek will just about win.



opinion of this trio at Paddy O'Donoghue, an onoghue.



(l. to r.): Val Gillane, gret, and Tom Nash, do.



all from Ballinagarde, vin.

Worried about the ticket situation but not the outcome of the final are Ballybrown Club officials Teddy Hedderman, Jim Byrnes and Peter Carroll.

# THE OFFALYMAN WHO STARS FOR LIMERICK

Profile of Joe McKenna by Charlie Mulqueen

He is 23 years of age . . . 6 ft. 3 ins. tall . . . he is a native of Shinnone, Co. Offaly, and was educated at St. Flannan's College, Ennis. He walks with a slow, almost lazy gait, in a manner similar to the way he appears to stroll through the most tempestuous of Championship battles. But, underneath that calm, cool exterior, beats the heart of a man dedicated to the cause of Limerick hurling — and most immediately, Sunday's All-Ireland final against Kilkenny at Croke Park.

By now you will have earned prizes for realising that I write of no other than Joe McKenna, who will fill the No. 10 shirt in Sunday's big match at national headquarters.

Joe McKenna's story is a strange one, and all the more so, as the number of Offaly-men to win All-Ireland hurling medals can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Indeed, Joe knows of only one other native of Offaly who holds hurling's greatest prize, and that is his uncle, Paul, who figured in the successful Tipperary team of 1930. Another close relation, first cousin, Mackey McKenna, won four All-Irelands with Tipp, in the sixties, but he is a native of Borrisokane.

Joe himself was born, bred and reared in Shinnone, where his parents still run a popular public house. And McKenna's of Shinnone was a lively spot one night last January when the son of the house, accompanied by half of his team-mates, bore the McCarthy Cup in triumph through the doorway. Needless to say, the festivities went on long into the night. Nobody was more pleased than Joe's folks when Limerick won the All-Ireland last season; they were present to cheer on their son and his adopted county, and with again be in the milling throng on Sunday.

## Cerdt

Indeed, Joe's family, and Shinnone itself, can take a fair share of the credit for his present-day eminence in the game, for ever since he was a youngster, Joe has played hurling. Shinnone, and the remainder of South Offaly, are hurling mad, unlike their fellow county men in the northern parts, where football is supreme, and in recent times, very successful, too.

He first played the game at Shinnone National School and then moved on to St. Flannan's College in Ennis, where he won a Dean Ryan Cup medal and figured, without success, in the Dr. Harty Cup team for three years, playing frequently against Pat Hartigan and other members of the present Limerick squad.

Around this time, he won an Offaly junior hurling championship medal with Shinnone, and went on to represent Offaly in all grades, but alas, without any material success. On leaving college, Joe came to Limerick to work with the Denis Coakley firm of grain and fertilizer importers, and now he is a representative of the company with North Kerry, Limerick, Galway, Clare and Tipperary as his area.

He threw in his lot with South Liberties and won a county championship medal with them in 1972. It was this success, and a number of fine displays with the club and his close association with members of the Limerick team, that made him declare for Limerick at the start of last season, "only after considerable thought, for I had enjoyed playing with Offaly."

McKenna found the higher standard in Limerick a big help to him and also the better facilities, but he still took time to settle down with his new team-mates, and his championship debut against Clare at Thurles wasn't exactly a roaring success.



Offalyman Joe McKenna will be striving for his second All-Ireland medal with Limerick.

He was dropped for the Munster final against Tipperary, but remained on the panel. He was also sidelined for the semi-final against London, but all the time kept plugging away, and he got his lucky break when the selectors took their big gamble of switching Eamonn Cregan to centre-back for the All-Ireland final and bringing in big Joe at top of the left. The move had its critics, but not for long; not only did Cregan play the proverbial "blinder," but McKenna's height and deceptive speed proved too much for even Fan Larkin.

"I was surprised and delighted to get on in the first place," Joe told me. "And then I had a good start in the match. The half-backs and mid-fielders were on top and we got the right kind of service."

Even when he was moved out to the "40" to take on Pat Henderson, Joe wasn't worried. He had marked the great Kilkennyman many times previously, and the end result of McKenna's performance that memorable day was a major contribution to the Limerick success. Joe told me that the only part of the proceedings that upset him were the pre-match ceremonies that dragged on and on. "We were very relaxed before the game. I knew I was being thrown into an All-Ireland final, but the other players were of fantastic assistance and we all felt good," he says.

"The last five minutes I will never forget," McKenna told me. "I knew we had it won and it was great to be at the field at that stage. Still, I thought the final whistle would never sound."

## The fans

I think we all know how he felt . . . and in all his po after the game, Joe has an abiding memory of the reaction of the Limerick fans. "There were tears," he says, "and I was only then that I realised how aware of how much they meant to them. The people have always loved me as one of their own and this means an awful lot to me."

A successful . . . tipperary followed and . . . Ireland with McKenna's established member of the team. How does he see today's game?

"I think we will be more mature than we were back after the Leinster final. I don't agree that strength Kilkenny would be beaten us last year. I predict that."

Let's hope he is right and Joe, himself could be his very man to ensure that his dream comes true.

That is as it should be. Sport plays a very important part in our lives, especially for the young generation.

Last year's victory gave hurling a much new fillip in Limerick that will be felt for many a year to come.

It is a fine manly game when played in the right spirit, and has an art and craft unique in the world of sport.

Kilkenny have a great sporting tradition for playing . . . game. They upheld that tradition in an uncertain manner last year, but they met a resolute Limerick, who would not hear of defeat, and carried the day in what proved to be an epic final.

This year could be a repeat but whatever the odds, a fine clean game can be forecast.

Limerick take with them the best wishes of their bid to win a second successive All-Ireland for the first time.

PODS AND ENDS . . . BY AN MANGAIRE SUGAR

## C'MAHON RIDDLE SOLVED

AMONG the many poems and songs written by Michael Scannlan, "The Poet Laureate of Fenianism" was one called "Castlemahon".

That Michael Scannlan should write a poem about Castlemahon was not surprising for himself was born in Castlemahon, in the year 1833. But when he was still in his early years his parents emigrated to the United States, taking their son with them, and Michael never again saw Castlemahon or the land of his birth.

This is the first verse of the poem on Castlemahon: "Oh for an hour mid the red-blossomed clover, and my day dreams restored in their freshness to me; to the green fields and the wide valleys over, with a footstep so light and a spirit so free.

Where the green ivied ruins fling out their dark shadows, like a sigh from the soul for the days that are gone; and the Deel ripples softly along the green meadows, far away in the village of Castlemahon.

Nothing immediately noticeable in reading this verse is the rhyming between the last and the last line: "gone" and "mahon" — not rhyme. I had often

thought of Castlemahon, and one evening I was surprised when I heard a man at a party of Co. Limerick say that the place was Mahoonagh. I was to discover subsequently that many people used the older form of the name, Mahoonagh, in preference to Castlemahon.

In my notes last week on the name Padarmore I said I would have something to say about another Co. Limerick name this week. The name in question, I need hardly remark, is Castlemahon. Mahoonagh. And once I had turned to Dinneen's, I found of an Cumann Lógaire, for my information, the Nollag 1965 number.

Dinneen lists more than 50 variants of the name, variants being mainly variants of spelling, or attempts to render the original Irish name phonetically in English.

Various documents from the 13th century, such as the Book of Limerick, and the Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland, we find the name under such guises as Mahtavenny, Moytanagh, Mahtavenny. In 1418 it was

written Moytawnagh; and in 1482 it was written Moytawnagh. In the Flants of E. 1578 we find the name Moytawnagh. Seven years later it appears in an entry "Toghe Tawnagh, or Mahonagh". The "Toghe" in this case is the Irish word "tú" meaning a Gaelic territorial division.

The "toghe of Tamhnagh" referred to in other 16th century documents. The 16th century "Muhmheach" refers to "Muhmheach Tamhnagh" and in "Dioghluim Dana" there is mention of somebody "lived in Muigh Tamhach". E. 1578 there is mention "tr awaynagh" (Trian, Tamhach).

The writer in Dinneen believes that the word "tamhach" comes from "tamh" meaning the stump of a tree. "Tamhach" then would mean a place abounding in stumps of trees; that is, most likely, a place where trees had been cut to make the ground ready for tillage or pasture.

The "Tamhnach" would therefore mean the "tath" of the "tamh" stumps; Mu (modern Ma) Tamhnach would mean "the plain of tree stumps"; and Trian Tamhach would mean the "third" of the tree stumps. "Trian" and "Ma", being feminine not "cause the 'T' of Tamhnach be aspirated, which gives it a 'H' sound. And so Tamhach would be pronounced something like 'M' Hoon-oh', a pronunciation which is, to a large extent, preserved in the modern name Mahoonagh.

## Castle

The introduction of the word 'Castle' into the name of comparatively recent origin. In the Ordnance Survey Name Books of the 1840s it is stated that the name of the village is 'Cast mahon', but the form Mahoonagh is also given. In the 18th century belief that the 'Mah' in Castlemahon came from the personal name Mahon, the Irish form used by the police was 'Caisteann Ma ghannha'. As a result of researches An Coimisin Le ainmneacha (The Placename Commission) has now declared the correct Irish form to be 'Caisteann Maighne Trian', which you might translate as 'the castle of the plain of the tree stumps'.

So much for the names — the place that Michael Scannlan remembered in exile —

Each night in my sleep I watch the moonbeams a flinging Their light o'er the river the bridge and the mill I can hear the clear tones the village maids sing I catch every note and I feel every thrill. Then a demon leaps out with a wild cry of danger And the river, the bridge and the moonbeams the stranger Faraway from the village Castlemahon.

## Dual Tavern

### Two Mile Motor Inn

Ennis Road, Limerick.

### Entertainment every night

★ WATCH OUT FOR THE BIG STARS