THE "QUIET MAN" OF MONEGAE WILL BE HONoured

"The quiet man" was how a 19-year-old Limerick boy described Donal Sheehan during his short sojourn in Limerick. Shortly before his ill-fated journey to Kerry and a tragic death at Ballykissane Pier on Good Friday, 1916. Without realising it at the time, this well-known Limerick citizen, presented a vivid and monumental picture of this West Limerick patriot, who was born in 1896 at Ballintogan, and only a few miles west of Newcastle West. From his earliest boyhood until his death at the age of 30 years, Donal exhibited a quiet and unobtrusive but genuine personality that was to remain one of his most notable characteristics throughout his short life.

WORTHY TRIBUTE

West Limerick, happily, has not forgotten Donal's contribution to the Easter Rising. A representative committee in his native Monegare has completed arrangements for the erection of a commemorative plaque in the local Parish Church, where he was baptised. The simple but none the less impressive memorial will be unveiled as part of the Easter Week celebrations. It will be a touching tribute to the memory of a young man, whose life was so quickly cut short.

FATEFUL JOURNEY

Donal had a room at the top of the Hall house. And, if memory serves Paddy correctly, he was "tallish and sandy-haired." One thing Paddy has no doubt about is Donal was "a very quiet man." borrowed his father's name, and as a child Paddy was very fond of him. It was Mr. Gentry, a friend of the Hall family who sent Donal to live with them in his native parish. Paddy is to pay a tribute that is long overdue. The commemorative plaque to be erected at Monegare Parish Church will bear the simple but significant inscription in Irish and English: "Pray for the soul of Donal Sheehan of Ballintubrid, Kinmagey, place of Oshea na hOireann, who was killed in action during the Easter Rising, 1916. Erected by his friends, Easter, 1963."

The members of the Memorial Committee are: Chairman, Mr. Wm. B. Dowling; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. M. Cregan; Hon. Secretary, Mr. T. J. Healy; Committee: Messrs. J. Cregan, J. Harrold, J. McCarthy, John Mulcahy, P. Mulcahy, and Miss Ida Cregan.

Other Limerick men who took an active part in the Rising were: Tom Clarke (Freeman of Limerick), Con Colbert (Athlone), Nog Daly (executed); Jim and Matt Finnegan, Killineen; Tom Collins, Arraghane; Monegare; Patrick Mulcahy, Rathenill (son of D. Mulcahy, Monegare); Pat and Jim McNamara, Knokeaboula, Loughill; Laura and Nora Daly, Limerick; Eamon Dore, Glen (now of Limerick); Garrett McAuliffe, Newcastle West.

DONAL SHEEHAN

Assembly Hall: Paddy Hall's last recollection of the quiet man was when he saw him leave one evening. It was the last he saw of Donal who, with three comrades, including Tom McFerran, a Limerick man, set out on the fateful journey that was to lead them to a watery grave at Ballykissane Pier. McFerran was the sole survivor of the four.

NO WIRELESS!

Briefly, the facts leading up to the tragedy were that, after being detained on the quay, Donal Sheehan and the three other men were sent by the Military Council to Caherciveen. Their mission was to seize wireless equipment from the School of Wireless, conducted at the time in Caherciveen by a Mr. Fitzpatrick. The objective was to bring the equipment to Tralee Bay and try to get into contact with the German arms ships in the "And". In this way it was hoped to give directions to the commander of the vessel for a berthing at Fenit Pier to unload the eagerly awaited shipment of arms.

Ironically, it was discovered later that the "And" was not in fact equipped with wireless, so that the drowning tragedy was in which the three men lost their lives did not materially affect the subsequent course of 1916 history, and the final disaster that befell the arms ship. Contrary to the view expressed in some quarters, Donal and his three comrades had nothing to do with the sinking of Caithness, as nobody was aware of his home-coming at the time.

"The Catholic Bulletin" at the time reported that when Donal Sheehan's body was recovered from the Leane River, no one in Killorglin identified it, with the result that he was reburied in the local churchyard and his funeral was attended by the whole countryside. In view of the fate that befell so many of his comrades during the fateful weeks that followed, it seems reasonable to assume that the "quiet man" from Ballintubrid would not have wished it otherwise.

FRIENDS REMEMBER

And now, fifty years later, his native parish is to pay a tribute that is long overdue. The commemorative plaque to be erected at Monegare Parish Church will bear the simple but significant inscription in Irish and English: "Pray for the soul of Donal Sheehan of Ballintubrid, Kinmagey, place of Oshea na hOireann, who was killed in action during the Easter Rising, 1916. Erected by his friends, Easter, 1963."

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by

DAN MULCAHY