

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Dónal McAnallen with Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	13 th April 2010
Location	Interviewee's home, near Dungannon, Co. Tyrone
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Charles C. O'Neill
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1916 Home County: Tyrone
Education	Primary: Drimarone NS, Co. Donegal
Family	Siblings: 4 brothers & 6 sisters
Club(s)	Annaghmore [Armagh]; Collegeland [Armagh]; Robert Emmet's Clonmore [Armagh]
Occupation	Small Farmer; Musician; Plasterer in Birmingham; Tractor Driver for Ministry of Agriculture; ICI Chemicals Worker
Parents' Occupation	Teacher [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

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Date of Report	15 th June 2012
Period Covered	1916 – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Tyrone, Armagh, Donegal, Dublin, Great Britain, England, Americas, USA
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Playing, Training, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, GAA Abroad, Identity, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Career, Challenges, Violence, Northern Ireland, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Professionalism, Socialising, Economy/ Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Charlie recalls his involvement with the GAA in Donegal, Tyrone, and Armagh. He discusses his earliest memories of listening to matches on the radio and describes playing football for a range of clubs, including Clonmore, The Moy, Annaghmore, and Collegeland. He considers the split between soccer and Gaelic along religious lines in Northern Ireland. In addition, Charlie reflects on such topics as media coverage of the GAA, his sporting heroes, the impact of emigration on club football, violence in the sport, and rule changes over the years.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:23 Recalls playing for The Moy Tír na nÓg GAA Club, Tyrone. Born in Derrymagone, on Armagh side of border, in 1916. Living in Donegal for a time as a child. Mentions Edward O'Neill, his father. His parents both teachers in Drimnaherk School. His father's interest in the GAA.</p> <p>05:24 No organised sports in Drimarone, Donegal when he lived there in late 1920s. Protestants playing soccer in Armagh. Reading in newspapers about Donegal football team. Driving a car aged 12. Mentions a teacher called Mulhern.</p> <p>08:00 Describes soccer matches on Armagh side of border. Mentions the Coyne's playing football. Football team starting in Clonmore, Armagh. Moving to Derrymagone. Playing for The Moy, Annaghmore, Clonmore, and Collegeland GAA clubs. Playing in different positions.</p> <p>10:02 Playing football in Clintyclay. Recalls playing for Collegeland first, later Annaghmore senior team. Playing</p>

	<p>fiddle on dance nights. Playing fiddle on television.</p> <p>12:08 Describes balls used. Travelling in car to matches. Mentions Andy Maybury. Transforming his car into a sprayer for his orchards.</p> <p>14:26 Discusses playing for different teams in different counties. Recalls no controversy about playing for different teams. Mentions his brother Joe O'Neill, captain of Strabane team. Winning 1945 Strabane championship. Charlie recalls playing for Strabane. Joe playing for Donegal in 1941 Ulster championship. Vagueness about rules.</p> <p>17:16 Reflects on watching matches. Mentions Mickey Taggart. Describes training with skipping rope in Donegal. No time to practise between games, busy spraying orchards.</p> <p>20:20 Mentions Columba McDyer, Donegal player from Killybegs, played with Glenties. Also mentions Red Jack Gallagher.</p> <p>21:04 Recalls playing the fiddle in various places – Brantry, Benburb. Dances. Four-hand reel, six-hand reel, set.</p> <p>22:08 Mentions Armagh player Alf Murray. Watching him play. Travelling to Clones to watch matches. By car or bus. Travelling to Croke Park. His son Peter playing on the Tyrone county team, playing in Croke Park.</p> <p>24:22 Explains why he didn't enjoy playing for The Moy. His views on Gaelic players who played soccer. His views on Gaelic players who were also Hibernians.</p> <p>25:41 Recalls his sons Charlie, Pat, and Peter playing for Collegeland and The Moy. Their skill at running.</p> <p>26:25 Discussion about author Seamus McManus. Mentions Jimmy McGinn.</p> <p>27:21 Discussion about camán, early hurling. Playing handball in Letterbarrow, Donegal.</p> <p>29:01 Reflects on emigration in Donegal. People moving to England, America. Negative impact on area. Mentions Michael McGroarty.</p> <p>30:28 Lack of football in schools. Living in Birmingham in 1960s. Working as an engineer. Playing fiddle in Birmingham for Irish dancers. Living in Irish community. Attending Gaelic games.</p> <p>34:33 Describes listening to matches on radio. Commentary</p>
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	<p>in Irish. Radio in car. Mentions Georgie O'Brien.</p> <p>36:15 Explains why Donegal were unsuccessful when he was younger. No teams in Frosses, Inver, Ardara. Weak clubs. Mentions the Letterbarrow postman and Aidan Buchanan.</p> <p>38:10 Discussion about lax rules about playing soccer and Gaelic football. Comparison of pitches now and in the past. Describes playing in Coyne's field in Clonmore. Also mentions the Quinns and Gillespie. Cost of football boots.</p> <p>40:28 Description of violence at matches. Boxing with his brother Tony. Few spectators at matches. Mentions Mickey Taggart emigrating to America. Charlie working for the Ministry of Agriculture.</p> <p>42:14 Reflects on women attending matches. Playing for many years.</p> <p>43:35 Recalls club committee in Clonmore. Mentions Fr. McKnight's role in the GAA. Separation of Gaelic games and soccer.</p> <p>45:01 Mentions his GAA heroes: Mickey Taggart, Jim McCullough. More relaxed rules about sending off years ago. Mentions Jimmy O'Brien's involvement in the GAA. Also mentions Iggy Jones, John Vallely, Jim Vallely. Skill of Vallelys in athletics.</p> <p>49:08 Discussion about individuals getting paid to play football. Mentions soccer played in Johnny McKinley's field. Religious divisions: Protestants playing soccer, Catholics playing Gaelic games. Derrymagone a Protestant area. Orange Order.</p> <p>51:01 Description of media coverage of Gaelic games. Mentions <i>Irish News</i>, <i>Armagh Observer</i>, <i>Dungannon Observer</i>.</p> <p>51:46 Recalls clubs he played against when playing for The Moy: Dungannon, Coalisland. Mentions Benburb Sunday.</p> <p>52:42 Reflects on watching the Vallely brothers, their skill. Also mentions the Laverys, the Coyne's.</p> <p>53:25 Discussion about hand-passing, soloing. Recalls losses in his playing career, no successes. Teacher coaching teams.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p>

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	<input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	Played from the 1930s to the mid-1940s.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	N/A
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 00:55:05
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: _____Arlene Crampsie_____

Date: _____15/06/12_____