

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	5 th August 2010
Location	Interviewee's home, Dundalk, Co. Louth
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Tommy Carroll (Tommy's wife Kathleen is also present for parts)
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1928 Home County: Louth
Education	Primary: Point Road PS, Dundalk, Co. Louth Secondary: CBS, Dundalk, Co. Louth
Family	Siblings: 2 brothers Current Family if Different: Married to Kathleen with 2 daughters and 1 son
Club(s)	Dundalk Young Ireland's; Sean O'Mahony's, Dowdallshill
Occupation	Clarke Shoes Superintendent of New Forest Factory
Parents' Occupation	Seaman; Great Northern Railway Worker [Father]; Stock Exchange [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Chairman of FÁS, St Joseph's Sick Fund Chairman

REFERENCE NO. LH/1/12

Date of Report	28 th June 2012
Period Covered	1887 – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Louth
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration,, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Violence, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Ban on Security Forces, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy/ Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Tommy discusses his many GAA experiences over the years and passes on stories he was told by the previous generation. He originally played for the Seán O'Mahony's club in Louth before joining Young Irelands. Having represented his county at senior level he went on to become a county board delegate and was also a referee for some years. Tommy has many stories to tell of fractious encounters on and off the field in decades gone by, of Republican elements within Louth GAA circles, and of the sights and sounds on big match days in Dublin. He recalls attending the 'Thunder and Lightning' final in 1939 as World War II broke out, and he was a member of Louth's 1957 All-Ireland winning panel. Tommy also reveals that his father was at Croke Park on Bloody Sunday and recalls what he had been told about that fateful day when he was growing up.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:20 Born on Point Road in Dundalk. Married in 1952. Three children.</p> <p>01:15 Earliest GAA memory. Opening of Cusack Stand as Laois played Kerry. Tommy Murphy the star for Laois. What Croke Park was like.</p> <p>02:05 Father's GAA involvement. Encouraging him in his own playing days. Playing for the Seán O'Mahonys, a club that</p>

	<p>disbanded in 1948.</p> <p>03:40 Joining Dundalk Young Irelands in 1956. Different roles he fulfilled. Nickname people had for the club. Why that was. Clan na Gael a rival club.</p> <p>04:40 Club played Limerick Commercials in the first All-Ireland final, 1887. Grandfather, Michael, on that team. Club also played first game in Louth, against Glen Emmets, then known as Tullyallen, 21 a-side.</p> <p>05:45 Grandfather met an untimely death. Father's footballing career at club and county level. Violence at games when he was playing.</p> <p>06:30 O'Rahillys a strongly Republican team. Wearing green and gold meant they were republican teams. Paddy McMahon heavily involved with them.</p> <p>07:30 Stories his father told him. Fight at train station after a game and resulting suspensions.</p> <p>08:25 Mother's GAA involvement. His wife rarely attending games. Daughter's involvement and administrative work as secretary.</p> <p>09:35 Playing football as a child. Going to Christian Brothers school. Competing in MacRory Cup. Representing Louth.</p> <p>10:15 Becoming a referee. Involved in a MacRory Cup final featuring St Macartan's College, Monaghan. Clergy member insulting him after the match.</p> <p>11:00 Quality of pitches when he was playing. Lack of facilities. What they wore. Lack of respect for referees. How things have changed for players and referees</p> <p>14:20 What training was like when he was young. Where club games were played. Many clubs using the Athletic Grounds in Dundalk – soccer, rugby too. Other purposes the ground was used for. Facilities there. Young Irelands able to train there. Why that was. Sold to Clarke's factory. Later training at the Marist grounds.</p> <p>17:00 McCrudden Cup final featuring St John's of Belfast and Crossmaglen Rangers. Crowd getting restless on the sideline. Trying to protect the referee. How the McCrudden Cup worked. Kilmacud Crokes of Dublin playing in it. Why it is no longer played.</p> <p>19:00 Where Seán O'Mahonys played. Micheál O'Halloran involved in purchase of grounds. Why he didn't go back to</p>
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	<p>them.</p> <p>20:05 Seán O'Mahonys coming back into existence in the late 1930s. John O'Brien a county player with the club.</p> <p>21:00 Securing a ground for Young Irelands. Fr Mulligan involved. Talked to urban council and bought land in the upper marshes. Carl McCartan too. How much they paid for the land. Working to make it suitable for purpose. Na Piarasaigh club were already based up there. Problems with barb wire.</p> <p>24.15 Discussion of a bar. Going to talk to Newtown Blues about their bar.</p> <p>25:00 Travelling to games when he was younger. Modes of transport. Going to Cooley for games. Accident he had and getting treatment. Cycling to Castlebellingham. Having a bus to strip in.</p> <p>26:40 Seán O'Mahonys playing in Louth village. Talking to Tommy Murphy.</p> <p>27:15 How he travelled to Croke Park. What that was like. Scarcity of cars.</p> <p>28:15 World War II and restrictions that that entailed. Much hardship in everyday life.</p> <p>30:00 Crowds at games in Croke Park. Special experience for supporters.</p> <p>32:40 Being at the 'Thunder and Lightning final' in 1939.</p> <p>32:55 Father at Croke Park on Bloody Sunday. British troops disrupting a Louth minor match his father was at. How his father described Bloody Sunday.</p> <p>35:05 Coverage of games in newspapers. Irish Press, Independent.</p> <p>36:10 People selling colours on big match days. What supporters wore apart from jerseys. People along the canal performing tricks for money. What people's hats were made of. Problems with the material. Fruit sellers.</p> <p>38:00 Incidents regarding crowd control when he was stewarding at Croke Park. 'Teddy boys' causing trouble in the stadium.</p> <p>40:20 Giving a man a ticket he had found for the All-Ireland final. Trouble that resulted from that. How the issue was</p>
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	<p>resolved.</p> <p>41:15 What seats were best in Croke Park. Atmosphere at big games. Excitement generated by Down teams of the 1960s.</p> <p>42:55 History of Jones Road. How that was developed.</p> <p>43:10 What he did in Dublin after games. Going into a first class train carriage on one occasion. Inspector approaching.</p> <p>44:00 Taking Great Scottish Railway to games in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>44:25 The Troubles and people reluctant to travel north of the border. Soldiers at a game between Antrim and Mayo in Dungannon. Paramilitaries watching soldiers from a distance.</p> <p>44:20 Dundalk known as 'El Paso'. Reason for that. Republican tradition in the area.</p> <p>45:55 Peter Duffy a Sinn Féin councillor and member of Seán O'Mahonys. People he knew visiting and taking part in games.</p> <p>46:55 Na Piarasigh had a lot of players from north of the border. Fr Duffy involved with that club.</p> <p>47:55 Illegal players using false names in games. Times he played illegally. What happened to players who were caught.</p> <p>49:00 Friendship with Stephen White of Castletowncooley, who played in Galway when he was in college and returned to play with Cooley. White joining their club.</p> <p>50:00 People coming to the house for meetings. His brother Paddy disrupting meetings.</p> <p>52:00 Popularity of soccer in Dundalk. Stephen White caught attending a match by the vigilance committee. Peter McKeivitt's father appealing a case after he was caught. What happened. Type of players that were targeted.</p> <p>53:30 Soccer and rugby teams playing in the Athletic Grounds.</p> <p>53:45 Relationship with soccer clubs in the area. Dual players.</p> <p>54:20 Refereeing in street leagues. Being confronted by a man he sent off. Progression of his refereeing career.</p> <p>55:40 His experience of refereeing. Worst place he refereed in was Donaghmoyne in Monaghan. Reason for that. Garda</p>
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REFERENCE NO. LH/1/12

	<p>Liam Maguire asking him to fill in as referee.</p> <p>57:10 Abuse at local games.</p> <p>57:30 Refereeing county games.</p> <p>57:35 Kevin Gaynor asking him to referee a ladies game.</p> <p>58:00 Refereeing a hurling match in Knockbridge.</p> <p>58:30 Hurling and camogie in Louth. Gardaí interested in hurling. Fr Johnson to the fore in hurling scene.</p> <p>59:50 Team not showing up for a camogie minor final.</p> <p>01:00:15 Knockbridge, Mattock Rangers, St Fechins, Naomh Moninne all have camogie teams.</p> <p>01:00:40 Administrative positions he has held.</p> <p>01:02:05 Jim Cunningham a top footballer.</p> <p>01:02:20 Involvement with county board. Going to meetings. Frequency of meetings. Hunterstown Rovers delegate speaking up at a meeting. Characters on the county board, such as Peadar Carney. What he brought to the table. Facilities at meeting venues.</p> <p>01:05:15 Women at administrative meetings. Some not allowed to attend conventions. Gradual shift in mindset.</p> <p>01:06:45 Ladies football at the club. Problems with that. Teams in Knockbridge and Kilterley. His daughter Madeline playing indoor football.</p> <p>01:07:55 Scór in the area.</p> <p>01:08:25 Challenges unique to town clubs.</p> <p>01:10:05 Referees committee. What they dealt with. Disquiet of what referees were assigned to what games.</p> <p>01:11:05 Role of volunteers. Certain people within the Association being paid for their work.</p> <p>01:12:00 Rule changes. The hand pass and his opinion on that.</p> <p>01:12:45 Qualifier system at senior inter-county level and his views on that.</p> <p>01:14:15 PSNI team playing in Croke Park. Gaelic games and culture in Northern Ireland. Irish language. Jarlath Burns of</p>
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REFERENCE NO. LH/1/12

	<p>Armagh a good Irish speaker.</p> <p>01:15:15 Politics at administrative level.</p> <p>01:16:20 Sacrifices he made. Sacrifices his wife Kathleen made. Her role in the GAA included knitting stockings and washing jerseys. Role of GAA in family life.</p> <p>01:18:00 Wife Kathleen's GAA experiences. Recalls her Dad and brother playing football and watching Tommy playing.</p> <p>01:19:00 Admiration for Cavan player Victor Sherlock. His attributes. How he came into some money.</p> <p>01:19:45 Playing a game in Moortown, Tyrone.</p> <p>01:20:20 Louth's 1957 All-Ireland win. Memories of that season. Playing Carlow, Wexford, Kildare, Dublin, Tyrone. Tyrone player Jackie Taggart taking a crucial penalty.</p> <p>01:22:50 Disappointments. Son Seán a talented player. What happened to his GAA career.</p> <p>01:23:35 What the GAA means to him.</p> <p>01:24:25 Being on the famous Louth team of 1957 panel. How he got on the panel. Seán Óg Flood the goalkeeper and a friend of his. Jim Quigley was the manager. Training leading up to All-Ireland final, collective training in Omeath.</p> <p>01:25:50 Build-up to the final. Colours in the town. Taking to the pitch on the big day. How he felt about not playing. Garda Dan Neill well known around Louth as a good player. Age profile of squad. 50-year celebration in Ardee. Night out at the Four Seasons in Carlingford.</p> <p>01:29:10 Jim Quigley omitted from subsequent trip to the USA. Why that was. Reaction in the county. Where the team stayed in Dublin before the final.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>
<p>Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Tommy played from Under 14 level until he was 40 and recalls winning something every year including championships, Cardinal O'Donnell Cup, McCrudden Cup in</p>

REFERENCE NO. LH/1/12

	its first year, and he played on the team that won the 1957 Leinster Championship and the 1957 All-Ireland.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Tommy was involved in administration from 1959 when he started as club chairman (5 years), he has held a range of roles since including Chairman of the Field Committee, Trustee of the Club and Delegate to the County Board. He retired from administration in 1996.
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:30:57
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Arlene Crampsie _____

Date: 28/06/12 _____