

GAA Oral History Project
Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	11 th Feb 2011
Location	Jimmy's home, Armagh City.
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Jimmy Carlisle
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1931 Home County: Armagh
Education	Primary: CBS Armagh Secondary: CBS Armagh
Family	Siblings: 1 sister Current Family if Different: Kathleen (wife), 3 sons and 3 daughters
Club(s)	Pearse Óg's GAA; Armagh Harps GAA
Occupation	Shoe-maker and then production manager in a wholesale shoe company.
Parents' Occupation	British Army [Father]; School meals lady in local convent [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Sinn Féin
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Co. Armagh Golf Club

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Date of Report	23 rd July 2012
Period Covered	1930s - 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Armagh, Tyrone, Antrim, Down, Monaghan, Roscommon, Wicklow, Mayo, Galway, Cork, Sligo, Dublin, Wexford, England, Great Britain
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Involvement in GAA Abroad, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Culture, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Outsiders' Perspectives, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Relationship with the Association, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Relationships, Economy/Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Jimmy discusses his involvement in both football and hurling in Armagh and Ulster. He describes his involvement with Armagh Harps GFC and Cúchulainn Hurling Club and recalls playing both sports for his county in the 1950s. Jimmy also reflects on the various administration positions he has held, including training teams at club and county level and chairing Cúchulainns, the Armagh county board, and the Ulster Hurling Board. In addition, he considers the various rule changes within the GAA in his lifetime, the impact of The Troubles on the GAA in Armagh, the importance of getting young people involved in Gaelic games, and the current state of hurling in the county and province.</p> <p>00:19 Describes being born in 1931 in Armagh city. Ponders his family connection to the GAA: his uncle Joe playing county football for Armagh in the 30s and 40s.</p> <p>01:27 Describes Armagh city in his childhood, dominance of football. County team training in Thruns. Recalls watching Tyrone, Cavan, Monaghan. Mentions players Tony Tighe, Simon Duignan, Joe Stoppard, the Reillys.</p> <p>02:28 Recalls his earliest GAA memory: the athletic field being built around the Gaelic field. Camogie, hurling, football played there, also children playing. Also using Christian Brothers' field.</p> <p>04:00 Reflects on playing football as a child in school.</p>

	<p>Mentions Brother Sullivan running a league, prize a box of apples. Attending CBS in Armagh. Mentions Brother Lynch's encouragement of youth. Starting youth club with table tennis. Brother Lynch's involvement in football in school. Mentions fellow students who went on to play for Armagh: Jack Bratton, Dessie Bratton, John Oliver.</p> <p>06:13 Mentions his GAA hero Art O'Hagan. Discusses progressing to play minor football for Armagh Harps GFC. Winning football county championship medal and minor hurling medal in 1952. Recalls the first time he saw hurling played as a teenager. Mentions PJ Toner starting hurling in Armagh City, introducing it to Bessbrook, Portadown, Keady and starting Armagh league. Also mentions Brother Ahern, who started hurling in secondary school. Also mentions Brother Woods training them after school. No hurls of their own.</p> <p>09:07 Describes his involvement with the Armagh Harps. Mentions John McCusker. Winning minor championship in 1948. Mentions Jack Bratton, Joe Cunningham. Beaten in the All-Ireland final by Kerry in 1953. Recalls the importance of GAA in his life. Training 6 nights a week.</p> <p>10:32 Reflects on playing football for the county 4 times. Progressing to play minor and senior hurling for the county. Reaching All-Ireland junior final, beaten by Roscommon. Subsequently starting juvenile hurling in town and county, training senior hurlers.</p> <p>11:41 Success of Harps in the 1950s during his involvement. Winning multiple championships. Describes night tournaments in Omagh, Belfast, Crossmaglen, Keady. Prizes: gold watches, suit-lengths, medals. No meals after match: sandwich and bun. Recalls travelling around England by bus with Harps. Travelling to London, Galway, Mayo to play football. Mentions Dessie Mone driving bus.</p> <p>14:05 Reflects on friendships with Jack and Dessie Bratton, Eddie O'Neill. Describes Harps in 1950s. Poor state of Gaelic field. Inadequate facilities.</p> <p>15:38 Discusses influence of key figures in Harps: John McCusker, Sean Harte, Patsy Devlin. Fundraising with bingo.</p> <p>16:47 Mentions Keady as Harps' biggest rival. Also rivalry with Pearse Ógs.</p> <p>18:33 Describes training. Playing tournaments was training. Some sprints before county final. Competition to get on</p>
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	<p>county panel. Also playing hurling with Cúchulainn Hurling Club, playing in Antrim senior league. Reasons for playing in Antrim league.</p> <p>20:14 Outlines hurling tradition in Armagh in the 50s and 60s. Mentions Christian Brothers Past Pupils Union (CPPU). Keady, The Rocks, Portadown. Link between Christian Brothers and Gaelic games. Part of a wider ethos about Irish identity. Link between national anthem and Irishness.</p> <p>22:03 Considers feelings of people in Northern Ireland related to Irish identity.</p> <p>22:23 Explains county football set-up. Being driven in car or taxi to matches. Own boots, togs, socks, borrowed jerseys. In hurling, had to have own hurl. Not much training as a team. Naturally fit.</p> <p>23:44 Describes reaching All-Ireland hurling final with Roscommon. Winning Ulster junior final, playing Wicklow in semi-final. Captain of team. Scoring 8 points.</p> <p>25:00 Recalls pride in leading team out in Croke Park. Nerves. Describes his various positions. Not attending meal afterwards, going home on bus with his wife. Disappointment. End of his county career. Playing with Cúchulainns before retiring and training Cúchulainn teams and county teams, also county chairman, club chairman, Ulster Hurling Board chairman.</p> <p>26:30 Emphasises the importance of skill in hurling. His approach to coaching. Skill of Kilkenny and Tipperary. Jimmy starting coaching initiative in Armagh schools. Equipment in schools. Mentions Jim and Enda Quirke involved in coaching. Also mentions Des Ferguson from Kilkenny. Training boys in Gormanstown College. Outlines schedule in college. Mass, hurling, swimming pool, rosary, watching Meath footballers training under Sean Boylan in college. Also mentions Fr. Fiachra, head of college. Mentions Donie Neylon, Ned Power and himself attending Fr. Fiachra's ordination to the GAA. Also mentions Fr. Coyle, Fr. McDonnell. Role of clergy in clubs. Presidents, attending socials.</p> <p>31:05 Reflects on challenges of encouraging hurling in a football county. Hard work, efforts to persuade others. Explains the appeal of hurling for him. Natural talent.</p> <p>32:26 Describes how he got involved in the administrative side of hurling. Sudden death of county chairman, Jimmy took over in 70s. Involvement until 90s. His perspective as a</p>
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	<p>former footballer and hurler. Mentions Gene Duffy, Peadar Murray. Difficulty of introducing hurling into football clubs. Only Keady, Middletown, and Derrynoose clubs in Armagh playing both.</p> <p>35:10 Considers reasons for resistance to hurling in Armagh: finance, time. Discusses support at hurling matches. Explains his appeals at South Armagh football board meeting and county convention to promote hurling. His campaign for hurling. Current progress of Armagh, winning Nickey Rackard Cup in 2010. Hurling widespread in schools, increasing in strength. Current county chairman Paul Dillon interested in hurling and football.</p> <p>38:34 Ponders current state of Armagh hurling. Importance of young people enjoying hurling. Also importance of keeping people involved, encouraging them.</p> <p>39:57 Reflects on relationship between hurling and camogie. Coaching camogie team.</p> <p>40:44 Discusses his time as chair of Ulster Hurling Board. Strength of Antrim, also mentions Down. Mentions strength of Loughgiel, Ballycastle. Keady reaching Ulster club final. Success of Armagh minors.</p> <p>43:01 Challenges of promoting hurling at provincial level. Not respected in Ulster. Importance of recognising that GAA comprises hurling, camogie, handball, football. Mentions Danny Murphy Ulster secretary. Change in how hurling is viewed now. Mentions Stephen McDonnell, captain of football team, Paul McCormack, captain of hurling team.</p> <p>44:37 Recalls annual tradition of Cúchulainns visiting Clarecastle, staying in West County hotel. Mentions Michael Slattery of Clarecastle. Enduring friendships in the GAA.</p> <p>46:43 Reflects on the difficulties of involvement with the GAA during The Troubles. British Army view of GAA members as terrorists. Jimmy's house raided many times, his son Joseph taken to Ballykelly. Surveillance of GAA members. UDR checkpoints, having to explain what hurls were for.</p> <p>49:29 Link between nationalists and the GAA. Mentions soccer. Importance of the GAA during The Troubles. Mentions Brother Ennis.</p> <p>51:30 Ponders rule changes in the GAA over the years. His agreement with lifting of the ban on foreign games and dances. His views on rule changes by committees that change every 3 years. His present agreement with the</p>
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	<p>opening of Croke Park, despite initial opposition. Reasons for his change of mind. More open-minded attitudes in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>54:21 Discusses his involvement with the GAA at a national level. The rise of Down, Derry, Armagh, Tyrone football, their recognition on the national stage. Mentions Ulster footballers of the 50s John O'Neill, Paddy Doherty. Praises Tyrone team. His luck in seeing Armagh winning an All-Ireland final.</p> <p>56:42 Describes his pride in representing his county in terms of playing and administration. Knowing when to retire and allow the younger generation to take over. His desire to boost the GAA in Armagh.</p> <p>58:39 Reflects on being on the national development board for hurling, embarrassment about being from Ulster. Mentions Pat Daly in Croke Park.</p> <p>59:53 Mentions his affiliation with Down, Antrim, Monaghan, Tyrone. Favourite team to watch: the current Kilkenny team. Favourite hurler: Christy Ring. Watching Ring play. Also mentions Frank Murphy in Cork, Fr. Troy. Recalls playing Railway Cup, playing against Eddie Keher, Wexford, Dublin.</p> <p>01:01:50 Describes his proudest roles: training Cúchulainns, being club chairman, training Armagh county teams, being Armagh county chairman.</p> <p>01:02:10 Reflects on disappointments in the GAA: Sligo winning an All-Ireland Under-16 hurling title, rumoured overage team.</p> <p>01:03:35 Considers how PJ Toner motivated him by reviving hurling. Praises Toner. Also mentions Seán Harte, John McCusker.</p> <p>01:04:59 Discusses the honour of being an ambassador. Reminding clubs of what Armagh GAA has achieved. Quality of new county facilities. Importance of getting children involved in GAA clubs. Camaraderie, creating new opportunities, helping community.</p>
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<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 type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input 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>Played football with Armagh Harps and won Armagh Minor Championship in 1948. Then played football with Pearse Ógs for one year. Returned to Armagh Harps and won four Armagh County Championships in the 1950s starting in 1952. Played hurling with Cú Chulainns Hurling Club in Armagh from the age of 16 – 34. Won 8/9 county championships with them. Played hurling on an Ulster Railway Cup team when he was 19. Played minor and senior hurling with Armagh in the 1950s – 60s. Played hurling and football for Lincoln in England in the 1960s.</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Trained juvenile, minor and senior county hurling teams in Armagh for years. Held the following roles: Chairman of Cú Chulainns hurling club for years; Chairman of the Armagh County Hurling Board (1970s-1980s); Chairman of Ulster Hurling Board (1970s-1980s). Spent 3 years as the Ulster Representative on the Íar Coiste Iomána; 3 years on the National Hurling Development Committee; Refereed for years including refereeing an Ulster club hurling final.</p>
<p>Format</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
<p>Duration</p>	<p>Length of Interview: 01:06:56</p>
<p>Language</p>	<p>English</p>

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To be filled in by Interviewer:

I hereby assign the copyright of the content of the above to the GAA Oral History Project on the understanding that the content will not be used in a derogatory manner. I understand that I am giving the GAA Oral History Project the right to use and make available to the public the content of this interview.

Signed: Regina Fitzpatrick

Date: 23rd July 2012