

# NED TREACY – PATRIOT AND HURLER

By Harry Greensmith

The following article appeared in *The Dawn* in 1987. Ned Treacy's family lived in the house in Holycross, which was subsequently the home of Thomas Sheahan and family. The house is presently the home of Eamon Sheahan and his family.

**N**ed Treacy from Holycross, who died in 1935, was one of Ireland's bravest and greatest sons.

Back in the early years of the last century, Ned developed a love of the camán, and he came to prominence in the Fedamore colours. He soon gained recognition by the county mentors and figured in many a thrilling hurling battle involving Limerick.

He became known as *The Unbeatable Ned Treacy O' The Puck*, a tribute to his qualities on the field of play.

He played in the never to be forgotten Munster Championship game against Cork in 1910 in Tralee, and in the All-Ireland final against Wexford, which Limerick lost.

An All-Ireland medal again bypassed him in 1911, when the All-Ireland final fixed for Cork Athletic Grounds had to be postponed owing to weather conditions, and Limerick refused to play at Thurles, for which venue the game was re-fixed. Kilkenny, as a result, got the only bloodless verdict ever recorded in a hurling final, but Ned had the pleasure later of playing a big part in the defeat of the Noresiders at Croke Park in a great game for the Cardinal's Medals, regarded by many as the virtual All-Ireland.

With Fedamore and Limerick, Ned hurled with boundless energy and enthusiasm, at the same time throwing all his weight and influence behind every movement associated with things Gaelic and national.

When the call went out, after the 1918 general elections, for men to take up arms for Ireland, Ned answered the call. He dropped the camán for the rifle to join with other brave men in the fight for freedom.

He became a Battalion Staff Officer in the East Limerick Brigade IRA. He distinguished himself against the Crown forces, amassing a wealth of wondrous and daring exploits to his name.

He displayed great gallantry on the occasion of the attack on Kilmallock RIC Barracks in May 1920, regarded as one of the fiercest in the War of Independence. In 1920, he was interned in Ballykinlar Camp. He was held there until the Truce.

One of the many whose services for a free Ireland shortened their span in the life; Ned is reputed to have attacked, single-handed, a lorry of troops, put them to flight and burned the lorry. The troops rallied later and discovered there was only one attacker, but Ned escaped by leaping from a bridge to the riverbed, twenty feet beneath. This incident was believed to be the origin of the spinal trouble, which afterwards caused his untimely death.

So passed away in the prime of life one of Ireland's best – champion hurler, national top notcher too at hurling long puck and gallant soldier of his native land. Ned sleeps his last long sleep in the little churchyard at historic Lough Gur, mourned by all as a good comrade, fond friend, decent neighbour, true Gael and patriot.