

*ST. PATRICK STREET*

ST. PATRICK'S BOYS SCHOOL IN 1893 SHOWING OLD CHURCH (used from 1880) and  
NEW EXTENSION (added on in 1893)

### *The Turn of the Century*

The schools continued to receive favourable reports from the inspectors. The report for 1894 reveals that Boys, Girls and Infants all received special praise for some aspect of their work and interestingly also reveals that a co-educational experiment was being carried out. This was the new Junior Mixed Department. The inspectors considered that the boys were receiving a "refining effect" from it.

One young boy entering the Infants' School about this time was Thomas Woodcock of nearby Belvoir Street. A quarter of a century later, he would win his country's highest honour for bravery and then be tragically killed in action in the last year of the First World War.

A few years after him, a young Mary Penman, born in the year of the Golden Jubilee of the Parish, would start her school-days at St. Patrick's. She would live to see the Centenary and the 150th Anniversary of the Parish and her great-great-grand daughter attend the present St. Patrick's Infant School which stands on the site of the first school which she herself attended.

The experiment in coeducation of boys and girls do not seem to have lasted long. No information has come to light as to why it was discontinued. Maybe further enquiry will reveal the reason. Whatever it was, the education provided at St. Patrick's continued to satisfy the government inspectors. In 1894, they had reported that they considered the teaching in the boys school to be energetic and successful. This continued to be the style of teaching as is borne out from the rhyme below made up by pupils about the teaching style of Mr. James Doran, who was a legendary headteacher of the Boys' school at this time. In spite of their disrespectful nickname for him it is obvious that they held him in great respect and affection.

#### "DONKEY" DORAN

"Donkey" Doran is a good man,  
He teaches the scholars as best he can  
In Reading, Writing and 'Rithmetic  
But he never forgets to use his stick!

And when he does he makes them dance.  
Out of England and into France,  
Out of France and into Spain,  
Over the hills and back again.



GROUP VIII of St. Patrick's Boys' School in the early years of this century.



St. Patrick's girls in 1910. The second girl in holding the number is Miss Frances Gleeson later a teacher for many years at St. Patrick's Girls' School and later at the Junior Mixed School.

## *To the End of the First World War*

A new probationer who joined Mr. Doran's staff in May 1904, was a very young Mr. Francis Regan. Forty - eight years later, he would retire as the headmaster of the Boys' school. Over at the Girls' school, an even younger Miss Julia Egan was spending her schooldays under the guidance of Miss Mary Mead and her staff. She was also to become a headteacher at St. Patrick's and like Mr. Regan, she was a very talented musician.

In 1907, further improvements were needed at the old school on Rupert Street. New cloakrooms and toilets were added and this new outlay may well have caused further delay in the building of the new high altar in the church. This school which had stood since 1856 was still to serve the parish for another twenty-one years.

In August 1908, tragedy struck the parish, and more than one pupil of St. Patrick's lost a father or a brother or perhaps both as twenty-one men of St. Patrick's lost their lives in the disaster at the Maypole pit. The grim details of that disaster and the names of the victims appear elsewhere in this work. Here let us just consider the effect it must have had on the schools. There was no special counselling then. The burden of consoling the bereaved children would have fallen to the priests and especially in the case of school children, to the teachers.

Six years later, the First World War began. Young teachers and ex - pupils went off to serve their country. One ex-pupil would win the Victoria Cross, but he and other brave men of the parish would not return.



A Class doing P.E. ("DRILL" as it was called) in the Boys' School yard in 1915.



A class of St. Patrick's Boys in 1918. With them are Mr. Connor, successor to Mr. Doran and Mr. Regan who succeeded Mr. Connor.

## 1922

When the natural elation which followed the end of the war died down, there was not much cheer in St. Patrick's. Beginning in 1921, a severe economic depression set in. A lot of the colour went out of people's lives. The Whit Walks, the event of the year, had been briefly revived in 1920, but were now cancelled again due to the depression. Things were pretty grey.

Into this general greyness, St. Patrick's School was now about to inject a sharp splash of colour which brightened up the lives of the parishioners in no mean fashion.

Seventeen years before, the famous split in the code of Rugby Football had occurred. This resulted in the birth of the new code of Rugby League. The new game took a grip on the imagination of the folk of Wigan, which it holds to the present day.

Schools in the Wigan area took up the game with eagerness and nowhere was the interest greater than at St. Patrick's. Success however was not immediate but with the coming of Mr. John Mc Guire to St. Patrick's, all that was about to change. The "Pats" were on the march, a march that would bring about crowd scenes never before witnessed in schoolboy sport. It was

eventually to bring the name of St. Patrick's, Wigan, to national attention and lead to them making an appearance on the silver screen of the movies.

The run of success began in 1922. First the team won the Wood Cup, the knockout trophy. The major prize however was the Salter Shield for the schoolboy champions of Wigan. Such was the strength of the Wigan Schoolboy Rugby League, that it was split into a Northern Section and a Southern Section. The winners of the two sections would meet in the grand final at Central Park.

St. Patrick's were the unbeaten leaders of the Northern section and Scot Lane, the unbeaten leaders of the South. Something was going to have to give!

On Wednesday, 3rd May, 1922, they did battle at Central Park before a respectable crowd of 5,000 and at the end both sides were still unbeaten after a scoreless draw. The Wigan Examiner described it as an exciting game and the spectators must have thought so for on the following Monday they turned out in numbers that most of today's Super League outfits would envy. 10,000 was the official attendance but by halftime, this had swollen to 15,000. For a long time, it remained scoreless, but



The "PATS" of 1922, photographed at Central Park before the replayed Salter Shield final  
**BACK ROW:** Harry Dumican; Frank Jolley; Tom Lythgoe; John Burgess; "Curly" McGarrigan  
**FRONT ROW:** Billy Pey; Albert Wade; John Turner; Joe Holland; John Shepherd; Jack McCann;  
 Jim McHugh; Billy Kirk.

it was the "Pats" who broke the deadlock, a try by Shepherd, which was converted by Kirk.

The "Examiner" concludes its report with the statement that the team arrived home to "scenes of remarkable enthusiasm". They were indeed. A dense crowd was still gathered in front of Central Park an hour after the game when the team emerged. The team had to walk behind a taxi to reach their charabanc. Crowds lined the streets and the British Legion band preceded the team up Greenough Street. The crowd fell in behind the coach and marched with pride to Scholes, and though strains of "Wearin' o the Green" were not to be heard on Whit Monday that year, they were belted forth with great gusto now. Eyewitnesses have stated how there was singing and dancing in the streets as the team arrived home.

They repeated their success the following season and could well have inspired a very young Mr. Joseph Egan of St. Patrick's who was to achieve a fair slice of rugby glory on his own account. The best, however, was yet to come.

This was the year of the General Strike. Once again was a grim year economically, and once again the Whit Walk was cancelled. All of this was forgotten when on May 12th, St. Patrick's achieved their greatest triumph in rugby.

The national newspaper, the "Daily Dispatch" organised a knock-out competition for schoolboy rugby league teams. The competition was for a trophy called the Daily Dispatch Shield. It was organised on an area basis for the preliminary rounds. The winners of the areas then went into the first round proper.

In Wigan, the "Pats" had swept all before them in the qualifying rounds and had won the Wood Cup again. Now they were to demonstrate their prowess on the national stage.

In the first round proper, St. Pats were drawn at home to Grecian Street Central from Salford. Grecian Street came to Wigan with a fearsome reputation.



The "PATS" of 1926. First ever winners of the DAILY DISPATCH SHIELD  
 Standing: B. Gallagher, Dumican, Walsh, Lythgoe, Bennet, Pey, Kearns, Brown, Richardson  
 Sitting; Moran, T. Gallagher, Wade (capt.), Gibson, Boylan, McQuaid.

They had only conceded ten points in four seasons! They were now to concede a lot more than that in one match. The "Pats" turned on the style and Grecian Street were blown away along with their reputation as the "Pats" ran out winners by fifty points to nil.

The semi - final was a sterner task. This time, the "Pats" were drawn away against St. Helen's Higher Grade, so a strong dose of Wigan - Saints rivalry was present. A very hard - fought game ended in a draw, two tries each. The match was watched by 3000 people.

This was eclipsed the Wednesday following, when 12,000 people of all ages poured into Central Park for the replay. The "Pats" defeated the old enemy by three points to nil and were in the final!

The "Wigan Examiner" report of this historic final is reproduced in full on page 45.

Here are just the bare facts. On Wednesday, May 12th, 1926, before a crowd of 16,000 people at Central Park, St. Patrick's Wigan, defeated St. Bede's, Widnes, by 6 - 0 (Tries by Boylan and Gallagher) to become the first ever winners of the Daily Dispatch Shield. The jubilation and pride were intense. The pride remains to this day. The whole sequence of events from 1922 - 1926 established a lasting reputation for St. Patrick's as a production centre for good players (Joe Egan for one). The match was considered to be so important that the match was filmed and shown at the Princes Cinema all the following week. It is not known what happened to that film but if only it could be recovered ..? In any event let us always remember that it was the efforts of our school's rugby team that raised and sustained the morale of the parish in those difficult years.

# PRINCE'S

**Telephone** **358.**  
**Wallgate** **Wigan**

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**ALL WEEK! ALL WEEK! ALL WEEK!**

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COMMENCING MONDAY, MAY 17th, 1926,

**CONSTANCE TALMADGE & RONALD COLMAN**

## HER SISTER FROM PARIS

A New Intriguing and Riquent Comedy. The story of a much abused wife, and her bewitching sister.

**CONSTANCE TALMADGE**  
PLAYS TWINS, AN OLD FASHIONED HOUSEWIFE AND DANCER.

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ALSO, SPECIAL FILM OF THE FOOTBALL MATCH BETWEEN

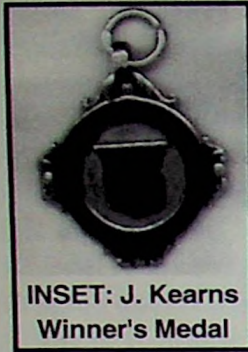
**ST. PATRICK'S, Wigan v. ST. BEDE'S, Widnes.**

FOR THE "DAILY DISPATCH" SHIELD.  
TAKEN SPECIALLY FOR THE PRINCE'S CINEMA

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**Latest and Best MUSIC by the Orchestra.**

Advert for the Princes Cinema, Wigan Examiner, Saturday, May 16th 1926.



INSET: J. Kearns  
Winner's Medal

## SCHOOLBOY CHAMPIONS

### Brilliant Win by St. Patrick's

### 16,000 People See Final

#### THE GAME

Mr. Holbrook of Warrington had charge of the game and St. Patrick's were not long in forcing St. Bede's to defend, Lythgoe and Walsh being prominent. After two minutes play, the Widnes passing broke down and **BOYLAN** dribbled cleverly for the line. He got the ball over and dived on it for a capital try, which provoked tremendous cheering. The shot at goal was unsuccessful. Offside against St. Patrick's resulted in play being contested in the St. Patrick's quarters, but relief came quickly through Lythgoe, who broke through smartly and kicked, and although Heyes replied with a good punt, Walsh found touch in the visitors' half, where another sustained attack caused Widnes many anxious moments. Against their more weighty opponents, St. Pat's forwards performed great work, heeling out repeatedly and splendid passing provided a capital opportunity, and Boylan made a desperate effort but was tackled. Further handling left B. Gallagher in possession but instead of passing to his wingman, he made for the line himself and was pushed into touch. McCue smartly relieved the pressure and a forward dribble compelled St. Patrick's to defend. They quickly eased the situation, and the forwards helped in a dribble which again carried play into the Widnes 25, where from a free kick near the line, the ball was sent dead. Following this, Walsh was pushed into touch near the corner flag, whilst B. Gallagher was well tackled after a strong run. Holling made a brilliant save when St. Pat's looked like adding to their lead. A further attack saw the ball go against the rail as a St. Pat's forward made

a dive for it. Lavery made a strong effort on the right wing to get clear, but the tackling was too keen for him and he came to grief. At half time the score was

St. Patrick's.....	3pts
St. Bede's.....	Nil

Despite the fact that they had to face the wind and rain, St. Patrick's were the first on the attack after the interval, and B. Gallagher held out rather too long when there was a chance of scoring. St. Bede's changed the venue and had a free kick close in. The ball was kicked forward, and there was a desperate rush for the line which the home defenders did well to check. Then Lavery got hold near the posts and seemed likely to score, when he was tackled in good style, and a threatening situation was saved. Gradually St. Patrick's got clear of the danger zone, and Boylan, Lythgoe and Kearns set up an attack which aroused the crowd to a high pitch of enthusiasm. For several minutes play hung around the St. Bede's line and only some determined tackling subdued the onslaught.

Time after time it looked odds on St. Pats scoring, but it was twenty-two minutes after the resumption before **B. GALLAGHER** settled the issue with a neat try after some accurate passing. Although Widnes made another effort to score and rushed the ball over the line, Richardson saved and St. Patrick's continued the pressure until the final whistle ....

ST. PATRICK'S.....	6 pts.
ST. BEDE'S.....	Nil.

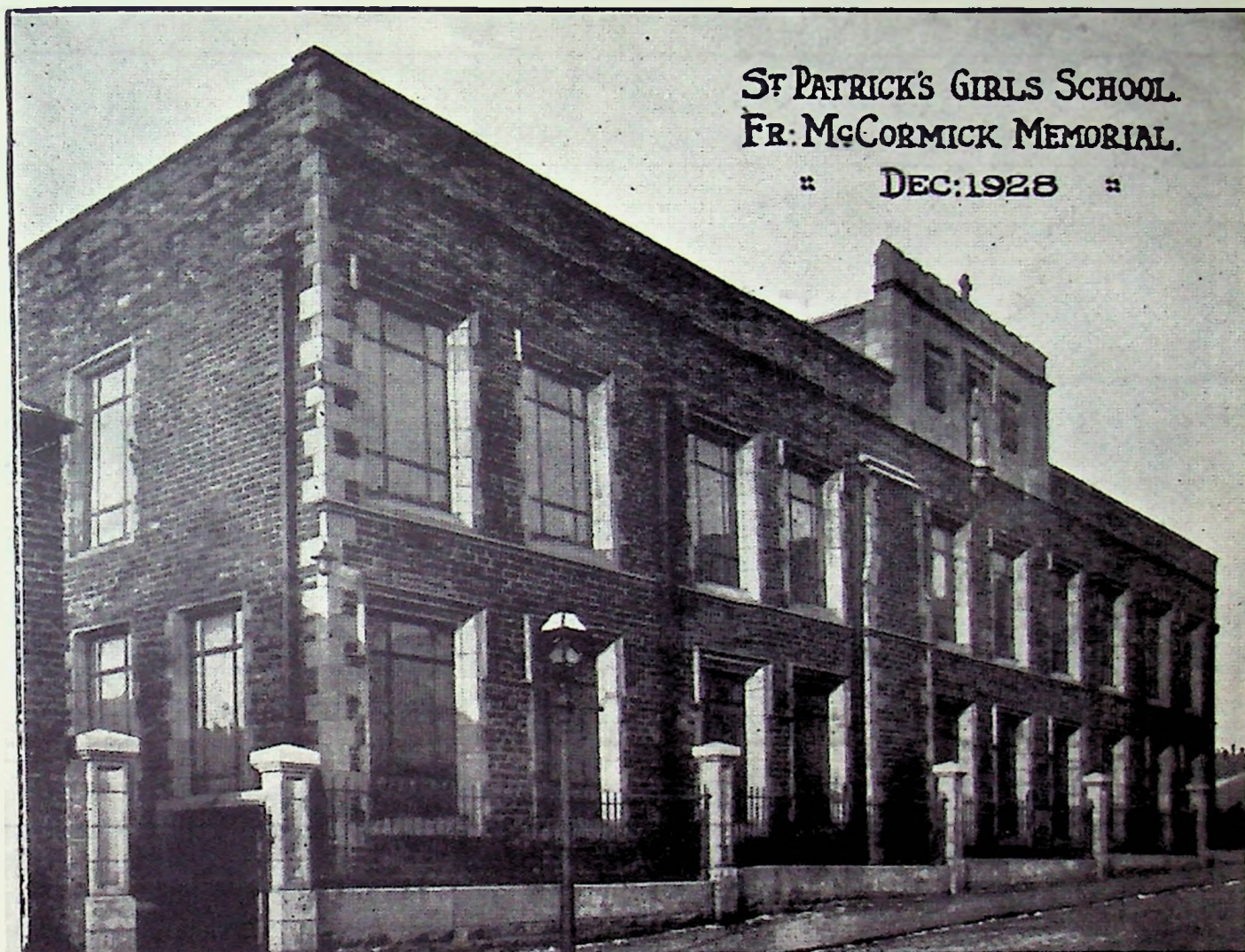
## 1928

During the course of 1927, the school building on Rupert Street which had stood since 1856, was demolished to make way for a new "state of the art" girls school which would stand on the same site.

While the demolishing and re-building were in progress, the junior girls were accommodated in the Boys' School and the senior girls were sent to St. John's.

school. This is believed by some, to have had important consequences later.

Father McCormick's memory was still strong and the new school was dedicated as a memorial to him. It was his third memorial\*. It was opened on the 2nd of December, 1928, by Archbishop Richard Downey. The occasion was one of great celebration and



The new St. Patrick's Girls' School opened 2nd. December 1928 by Archbishop Downey.

They went unsupervised with only the advice to "walk in pairs" to serve for their protection! Several of those young ladies are still very much alive and kicking today and if asked will tell you what an adventure they thought it was.

Though the old school was knocked down, some portion of the exterior wall was left standing and a lot of the bricks from the demolished building were used to build the new

rejoicing and the streets were decorated with banners and bunting.

Its best remembered and most talked about feature was its roof playground for the senior girls. It was much admired and though it did not last as long as its predecessor, it stood or nearly half a century. The present Infant school stands on approximately the same site.

\* The other two being McCormick Street and the memorial cross in Wigan cemetery. Only the last remains, though McCormack Drive (incorrectly spelt ) has replaced McCormick Street.



## *The Thirties*

Although St. Patrick's rugby team never won the Daily Dispatch Shield again, they continued to be a powerful force in schoolboy rugby, most notably under the coaching of Mr. David Lawson in the late thirties and early forties. On the educational front, things continued routinely until the Second World War.



A V-E day party in St. Patrick's. The old school canteen which stood on Stewart Street is shown in the background.

## *The Forties*

One of the things which did arrive in this period was the provision of school dinners. A canteen to accommodate the pupils of St. Patrick's was built on Stewart Street which ran parallel to John Street. Another building which arrived on the scene in the post-war years was the "prefab" down on Clarington Grove. It stood approximately where St. Patrick's Amateur R.L.F.C.'s training area is now.

In 1943, Miss Julia Egan began her long tenure as head of the Junior Boys and in 1946, Mr. John McDermott began his long association with St. Patrick's.

## *1956*

All through its life, St. Patrick's school had been what was termed "an all-age Elementary School" where Infants, Juniors and Seniors were given an elementary education. Only a few were selected for secondary education at eleven - plus, to go to grammar schools.

The 1944 Education act pledged "Secondary Education for all" and as a result of this, more Secondary Modern schools were built where pupils could go at eleven to receive a secondary education. By 1956, St. Patrick's boys were transferring to the new St. John Fisher school though it would be some time before the senior girls followed them.

This brought about a change in character for St. Patrick's School. The Boy's School became a Junior Mixed School and for the first time since 1928, girls were accommodated in it. The lower floor of the Girl's School became the



**St. Patrick's Staff 1956. Standing: Miss Leneghan, Miss Gleeson, Miss Veasey, Miss Doherty, Miss Lythgoe. Seated: Miss Green, Miss Underwood, Mr McDermott, Mrs. Rynn, Miss Brown.**

Mixed Infants Department. The upper floor continued to house the senior girls until 1966.

at last. The statue of St. Patrick from it was saved and now surmounts the parish club.

## **1970**

In 1969, work began on the construction of a new Junior School. This was moved into in October 1970, and the old Boys' School building which had served the parish so well for so long was demolished

## **1976**

In 1975, the former Girl's School building on Rupert Street, which was now the Infant School, was found to be unsafe. Some opinions hold that the fault developed where the outside wall of the 1856 school



**Mr. John McDermott with the first mixed class at St. Patrick's in this century.**



The old Boy's School building (the original 1847 church) shortly before its demolition. The statue of St. Patrick was preserved and now stands on a column outside the Parish centre.

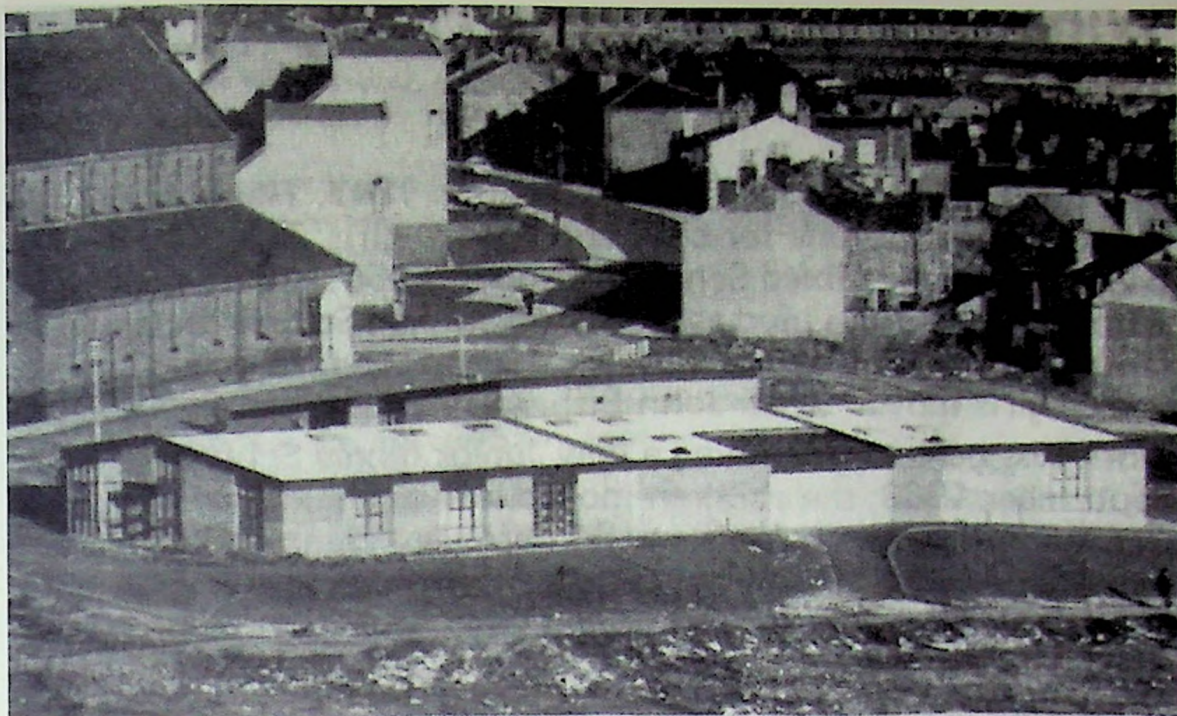
had been incorporated as part of the 1928 building. Be that as it may, new premises had to be built. Not for the first time, our neighbours at St. Catherine's came to our assistance and the infants were accommodated there until the present Infants' building was ready. The children occupied the present building in September 1976.

### *1997*

The story of St. Patrick's school is continuing. It recently came through an OFSTED inspection with flying colours. As we approach a new century, it seems that St. Patrick's school can look forward with confidence to the future.



St. Patrick's Junior School Building shortly after its opening in 1970.



**St. Patrick's Infants building shortly after erection in 1978**

It is not possible to list all the teachers who have given their devoted service to St. Patrick's School in the 150 years it has existed. What follows is a representative roll of honour.

***Headteachers (Girls)***

Miss Catherine Cowley	Sister Mary Sebastian
Miss Mary McArdle	Sister Lucy
Miss Mary Mead	

***Headteachers (Boys)***

Mr. James Doran	Mr. Francis Regan
Mr. William Connor	Mr. John McDermott

***Headteachers (Infants & Juniors)***

Sister Margaret (Infants)	Sister Teresa (Infants)
Miss Julia Egan (Boys)	Sister Mary Andrew (Girls)

***Headteachers (Since becoming Junior Mixed School)***

Mr. John McDermott	Mrs. Sheila Curran
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***Teachers***

Miss Anne Foy, Miss Kate Lawlor, Miss Anne Orpe, Miss Mary McMahon, Miss Kate Nightingale, Miss Charlotte Sullivan, Miss Georgina Coggan, Miss Frances Ranson, Miss Elizabeth Berry, Miss Gertrude Purcell, Miss Bertha Hathersall, Miss Agnes Sommer, Miss Paula Sommer, Miss Madeleine Pozzi, Miss Alice Livesey, Mr. Austin Halsall, Mr. John McGuire, Mr. John Miller, Mr William Blackledge, Mr. David Lawson, Mr. Eric Critchley, Mr. John Clayton, Mr. Bill Kelly, Miss Mary Brown, Miss Mears, Miss Bridget Ansboro, Miss Greenwood,

Miss Nellie Doherty, Miss Mamie Dickinson, Miss Mary Mallin, Miss Alice Leneghan, Miss Frances Gleeson, Mrs Mary Rynn, Miss Nellie Underwood, Miss Madge Veasey, Miss Agnes Moore, Mr. T. Andrews, Miss E. Conolly, Mrs. J. Eccleston, Miss. Ellen Rourke, Mr. D. Norkus, Miss W. Lythgoe.

**..... and the present staff of St. Patrick's**

***Headteacher:*** Mrs. P. Bigland

***Deputy:*** Mr. C. Banham

***Teachers:*** Mrs. G. Settle  
Mrs. S. Bruen  
Mrs. Tighe  
Mrs. Gray  
Mrs. Malley  
Mrs. Nash  
Mrs. Severn  
Mr. Stott  
Mrs. Lamb  
Mrs. Powell  
Mrs. Warren  
Miss. R Willis

***Non - teaching Staff :***

Mrs. Worthington  
Mrs. Mulligan  
Mrs. Toohey  
Mrs. Stridgeon  
Mrs. Regan

# St. Patrick's School Across the Years



LEFT: A group of St. Patrick's Girls in the early years of this century.



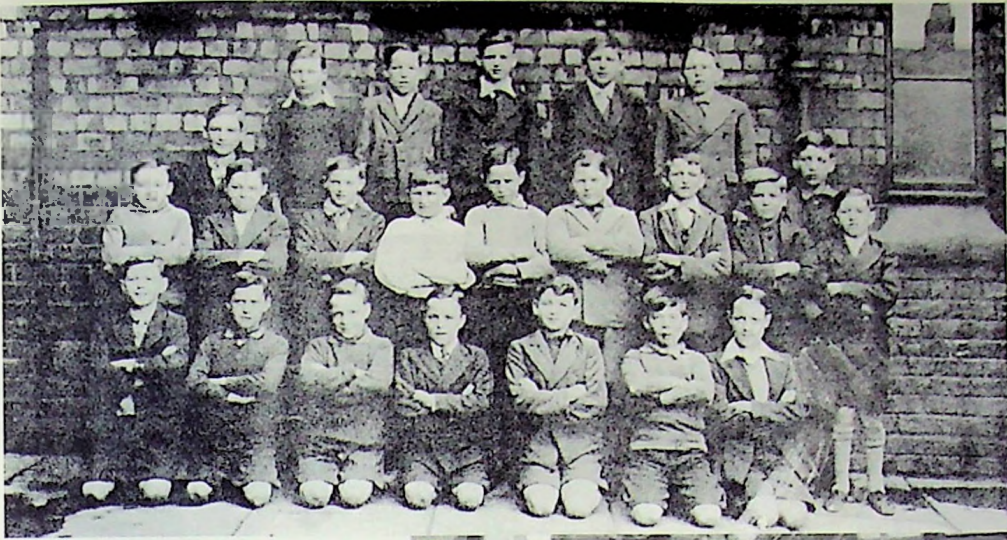
RIGHT: Another group from around the same period.



LEFT: St. Patrick's Girls in 1918. Styles haven't changed much from a decade earlier.



The Junior Ball at the Baths in 1928: The second girl in from the right of the picture is Miss Madge Veasey who later taught for many years at St. Patrick's. The girl between Miss Veasey and the girl with the pipe is Phil O'Donnell, May Queen in 1929.



**LEFT:** A Class Of St. Patrick's boys in 1939.



More of the same in 1948.



**LEFT:** A girls class of 1947.



**BELOW:** Irish dancing on the roof of the girls school for the benefit of a visiting Italian lady around 1949.



**LEFT:** Miss Dickinson's "babies" of 1953.

**RIGHT:** Most of this class of 1958 were born in 1947, the year of the parish centenary.



**LEFT:** The same applies to this group as well.

**RIGHT:** The prize winners of 1963.





**ABOVE LEFT:** Boys were not the only ones to achieve sporting glory. Here is the girls swimming team with the Championship Shield from 1963. This was their sixth win in succession.



**ABOVE RIGHT:** Father Lappin sees double with these twins from the prize winners of 1963.



**CENTRE:** The pupils of St. Patrick's 1969.



**LEFT:** Typical scene from the old School Playground.



## Three Great School Teams



**LEFT:** Mr. Lawson's team of 1938-39  
Winners of the Salter Shield.

**RIGHT:** Mr. McDermott's 1947 intermediate team. His "first and best". They never conceded a try in winning the league championship and the Sullivan Cup.



**LEFT:** Mr. Rynn's team of 1964-65  
Winners of three trophies in that season.

# And To-day

Children of St. Patrick's School act out scenes from the parish history



**1**

LEAVING IRELAND.

**2**

FIRST MASS  
IN  
ST. PATRICK'S.



**3**

DISASTER AT  
THE MAYPOLE  
PIT.

## Parish Social Life Across the Years

The social life of the parish has always been a rich one, but in past days, it was one of variety too. Of all the various guilds and societies that once flourished in the parish, only two now remain. These are the Catholic Men's Society (C. M. S.) and the Ladies' Sodality.

### *The C. M. S. (1863 - 1997)*

On Sunday, December 12th, 1909, nine hundred men marched in procession around the streets of St. Patrick's parish. According to the account given in the Wigan Observer (18th December, 1909), they were celebrating the Silver Jubilee of St. Patrick's C.Y.M.S.

This is puzzling. A Silver Jubilee in 1909 would mean that St. Patrick's C. Y. M. S. was founded in 1884 but there is indisputable evidence that St. Patrick's C.Y.M.S. was founded some twenty-one years earlier in 1863.

The evidence comes once again from the Wigan Observer (2nd December 1864) which tells us that the members of St. Patrick's C.Y.M.S. gathered at the Wigan Arms Inn, Hardybutts, to celebrate their *first anniversary*.

Father McCormick was in the chair and other names given are Father Bradshaw, Mr. Oldfield, the landlord, and Mr. Joseph Roper, president of St. Patrick's C.Y.M.S. The Observer tells us that they enjoyed "an excellent repast" and spent the evening agreeably in "toasts, songs and recitations".

Other references to the C.Y.M.S. occur before 1884. In late 1879, they organised a presentation to Frs. McGrath and Ryan, which is again reported at length in the Observer. It is possible that for some unknown reason, the St. Patrick's C.Y.M.S. dissolved around this time and was reformed by Canon Sommer when he arrived in 1884. Certainly,

the proceedings at the Silver Jubilee of 1909 were very much dedicated to his memory (he had died suddenly in February while on holiday in his native Germany). A large portrait of him was unveiled as part of the celebrations.

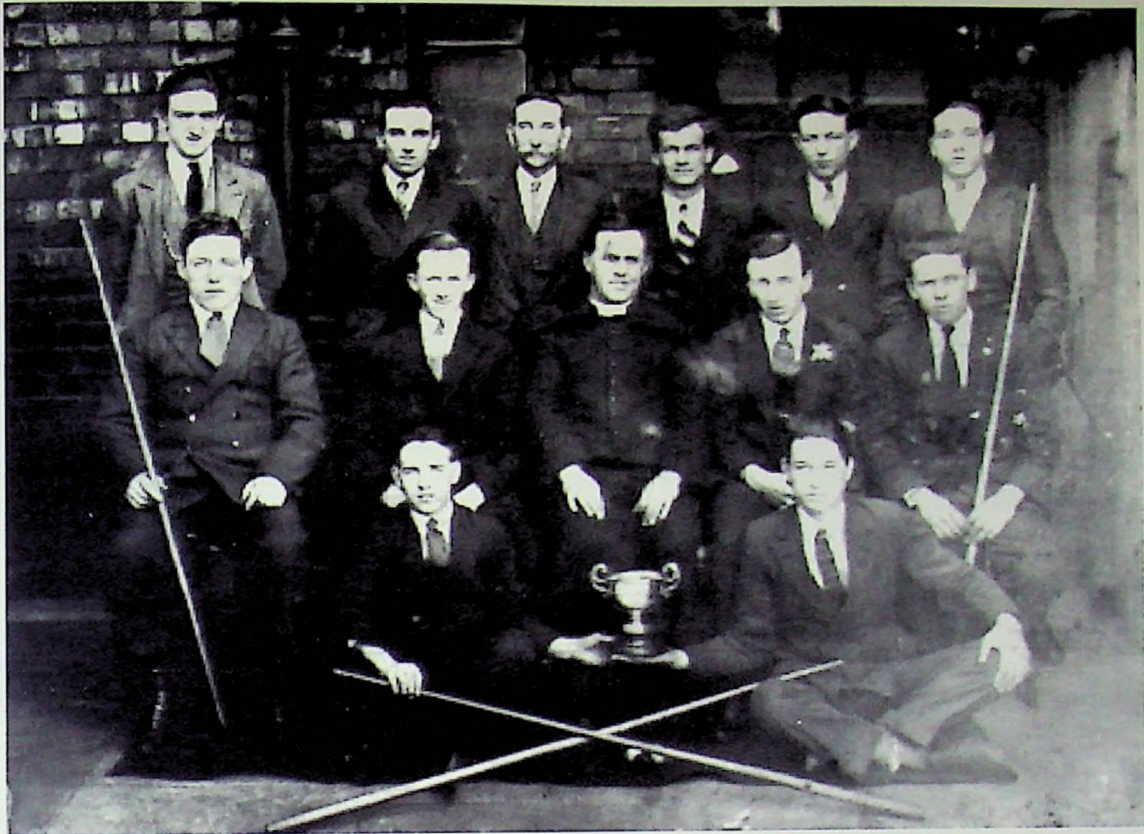
The Silver Jubilee of 1909 was a quite spectacular affair. Apart from the procession already mentioned, the famous St. Sylvester Boys' Choir of Liverpool sang at Benediction before the evening celebrations.

Not all events were on this scale of course. An account of the summer outing of 1908 is given on another page and present members of the C. M. S. will recognise features in common with more recent "trips".

The society had it's sporting triumphs too, winning the Cathedral Cup for snooker in 1930. No photograph of this famous victory has emerged but two years earlier, the snooker team had won the Benson Cup and a photograph of the victorious team is shown on page 58.

The photo is taken in the yard of the boys school. This highlights the problem the society faced for many years. They had no premises of their own. They were forced to use the boys' school and their snooker tables doubled up as the school stage!

All this changed shortly after the end of the Second World War, when the members of the society showed some splendid enterprise in obtaining an army Nissen hut (from Burtonwood so witnesses say) and transported it in pieces over one weekend to Wigan. It was re-erected to stand on the waste ground off Bradshawgate and at last the society had its own place. It is sad that no photos of this building have emerged to be included in this book. It served the parish until the middle of the 1950's when the first phase



The St. Patrick's C. Y. M. S. Snooker team of 1928 with the Benson Cup.



The Statue of St. Patrick from the 1847 church stands proudly on the corner of the present parish club.

of the present club was built. Other phases were added over the years, the last one being the bowling green in 1994. Now the club is the parish social centre and not simply the "men's club" and along the way, the C.Y.M.S. has become the C.M.S. but good company and conviviality still remain the rule.

The account of the outing to Croston in 1908 by horse - drawn char-a-banc is a clear example that this was always so. The only surprising thing in the Observer's report, is the omission of any visits to the bar of the Grapes Hotel. It seems safe to assume that a few took place.



## ST. PATRICK'S YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY.

On Saturday, about 30 members of this society journeyed by char-a-banc to Croston, the occasion being their annual picnic. The weather was all that could be desired, the country scenery en-route being much admired. Leaving the schools in Hardybutts about two o' clock, they journeyed by Wigan Lane to Standish, Wrightington, Heskin and Eccleston, arriving at their destination, the Grapes Hotel, Croston about four o'clock. A move was at once made to the bowling green, a handicap, which had previously been arranged, being brought off. At the close of the first round, the party sat down to an excellent repast, provided by the host and hostess (Mr. and Mrs. Jones) in excellent style. The meal over, the party again assembled on the bowling green and concluded the handicap. At the post prandial proceedings, Councillor T. Clarke occupied the Chair and was ably supported in the vice - chair by Mr. J. Blackledge. Mr. Clarke congratulated the members on having such a successful outing, pointing out that it was occasions of that description that went far to cement the bonds of friendship and brotherly love amongst the members of their Young Men's Societies. Mr. Clarke then presented the prizes to the successful competitors Messrs. P. Matthews and F. J. Pagett. A vote of thanks was proposed to the chairman by Mr. F. J. Pagett, the mover of the resolution, eulogising the stirring qualities of Mr. Clarke for his past services and his presence on that occasion. This was seconded by Mr. J. Blackledge, and carried with acclamation. A vote of thanks was also passed to Mr. F. J. Pagett for his services as secretary. The host and hostess were also thanked for their splendid catering, after which "Faith of our Fathers" was sung. The party then entered the char-a-banc for the return journey. Wigan being safely reached about 10-45 p.m. Appended are the scores of the bowling handicap.

## The Bowling Handicap

### 1st round

J. Taylor 1b.9 ..... J. Hague s.7  
 T. Leyland 2b.9 ..... J. Derbyshire 1b.0  
 P. Matthews s.9 ..... J.Simons s.0  
 J. Blackledge 1b.9 ..... T.Clark s.5  
 I. Glover s.9 ..... W. Tickle s.0  
 G. Baldwin s.9 ..... T. Heaton s.3  
 P. Sharkey 2b.9 ..... J. Molloy 1b.3  
 J. Geraghty 2b.9 ..... D. Kane s.5  
 S. Wilkinson 3b.9 ..... O. Kearns 2b.6  
 J. Sinclair s.9 ..... J. Cain s.4  
 J. Wilkinson 2b.9 ..... S. Green s.1  
 F. J. Pagett 1b.9 ..... T. Cain s.2

### 2nd round

P. Matthews 9 ..... T. Leyland 6  
 J. Sinclair 9 ..... J. Taylor 5  
 F. J. Pagett 9 ..... P. Sharkey 6  
 J. Wilkinson 9 ..... G. Baldwin 3  
 I. Glover 9 ..... J. Geraghty 4  
 S. Wilkinson 9 ..... J. Blackledge 3

### 3rd round

I. Glover 9 ..... J. Wilkinson 7  
 P. Matthews 9 ..... J. Sinclair 6  
 F. J. Pagett 9 ..... S. Wilkinson 5

### Semi - final

F. J. Pagett 9 ..... I. Glover 6  
 P. Matthews ..... bye

### FINAL

P. Matthews 9 ..... F. J. Pagett 6

## *The Youth Club*

In 1941, the Government sponsored a nation-wide Youth Club movement and subsequently, a Youth Club was established at St. Patrick's.

It flourished from the late forties until the mid - sixties. It had premises on Scholefield Lane but later met in the hall in the Boys' School. It had successes in both artistic and sporting events and the present St. Patrick's Amateur R. L. Club grew out of the Youth Club teams.

They finally achieved first place in 1954 with "Sister Gold". John Connell of St. Patrick's took the individual Best Actor award for his part as the miser in this play.

In 1955, they did it again, only the third group to win twice in succession. The play was "By Which We Live", set in a Chinese Communist concentration camp and once again the Best Actor award was won by a St. Patrick's actor. This time it was Michael



St. Patrick's Youth Club Concert Party of 1948.

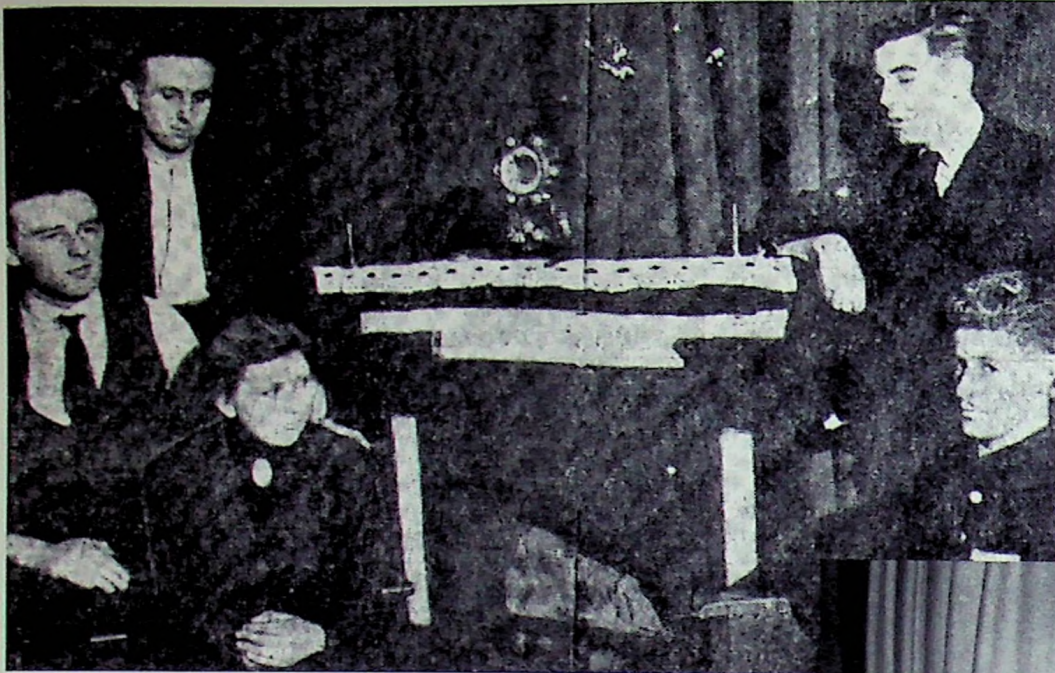
Its success in the theatrical field started with the concert party of 1948, pictured above. In the early 1950's, the Youth Club achieved great success in the Wigan Youth Drama Festival. In 1952, with "The Monkey's Paw", they came second. Margaret Higham would have been awarded the "best actress" award but was just over the maximum age. This may have cost St. Patrick's first place in the festival.

Molloy, who won it for his portrayal of a ruthless Communist officer. Both of these winning plays were directed by Ken Parry, who after achieving local fame as an actor and producer, went on to become a professional actor and has made several television appearances.

Success on the sports field was also a feature of the Youth Club. As one would expect, the Youth Club Rugby team was a strong one and more will be said of this later. Surprisingly though, in view of the fact that it was not



# The Youth Club's Drama Triumphs



**LEFT:** The cast of the "Monkey's Paw" John Connell and John Loughnane on the right.

**RIGHT:** Michael Molloy receives his award for best acting performance in "By Which We Live" Youth Drama Festival 1955.



**LEFT:** The Cast of "By Which We Live" Youth Drama Festival 1955.

played at the school, St. Patrick's Soccer team achieved a fair degree of success also.

It should be pointed out that although they became merged with the Youth Club, the sports teams did actually exist before it. In 1928, two years after St. Patrick's School Rugby team won the Daily Dispatch Shield, St. Patrick's Youth Soccer team became the Catholic Champions of Lancashire defeating Mill Hill of Blackburn 3 - 1 at Ewood Park of all places! The trophy was awarded by the Catholic paper the "Universe" and was known as the Catholic Universe Cup.

The team photograph was featured in the "Wigan Observer" but is of too poor a quality to reproduce. For the record, the team was :- N. Blackledge; P. Moran; C. Joyce (capt.); F. McGuire; B. Hunt; H. Hurst, T. Walsh; J. Collier; T. Winstanley; F. Ashall, A. Gavaghan.

They never achieved that kind of success again, but in 1953, they shared the Wigan Sunday School Championship with Norley Hall. The play-off final between the two sides resulted in a 3 - 3 draw and each side held the trophy for six months.



**St. Patrick's Youth Club Soccer team 1953 - Joint League Champions**  
**L to R. standing: Fr. Lappin; unknown; J. Taylor; T. Tait; J. Jolley; A. Prior; J. Anderton;**  
**P. Griffin; unknown; Mr. Ashcroft. MIDDLE: T. Chippendale; unknown; F. Fielding; L. Jones;**  
**L. Ashcroft; FRONT: J. Johnson; E. Cowser.**

The match did not begin well for the "Pats" as Blackburn scored first, but before half - time, the "Pats" equalised through Ashall. Blackburn were unlucky to lose their goalkeeper just before the interval and the match swung the "Pats" way. Goals by Ashall and Walsh in the second half ensured the victory.

In addition to this triumph, the " Pats " soccer team were that year, the Wigan Youth champions having lost only one game out of thirty and winning 25. They scored 108 goals and only conceded 18.

The successful St. Patrick's team is shown above with Father Lappin and team officials.

Another Youth Club Soccer team of the year 1951 is shown on page 66 but none of them were to feature in the championship side.

It is worth remembering that once upon a time it was not only Rugby that St. Patrick's had a sporting talent for.

However, Rugby was very much to the fore as well and the Youth team's history also predates the Youth Club.

The first St. Patrick's Youth Rugby team was formed in 1910, so the Wigan Observer informs us, at a meeting at "St. Patrick's Gymnasium off Darlington Street" in the first week in July. One is bound to wonder what happened to "St. Patrick's Gymnasium", but no evidence has come to light.

The team was to be called "St. Patrick's Athletic Rugby Club" and we are told that negotiations for a suitable ground would be commenced at once and that financial assistance had been promised.

one of it's most successful pre-Youth Club seasons, winning the Laing Cup the Counsell Cup and the Woolmer Cup. This victorious team is pictured below. It was the second year running that the Woolmer Cup had come to St. Patrick's. It would be impossible to list all the successful Rugby youth teams that emerged from St. Patrick's Youth Club over the years, but mention should perhaps be made of the team of the middle fifties, who were unbeaten in three years.

Fr. Nelighan of St. Patrick's arranged a "friendly" with St. Austin's of St. Helen's who had been unbeaten in their own league for two years. Famous names like



L to R. BACK; M. Clossic, J. McDonnell, J. O'Shea, J. Lowe, J. Connor, J. Tinsley, C. Aspinall, M. Moran, Unknown, S. Lyons, F. Moran; MIDDLE: T. Moran, B. Coyle, T. Toohey, W. Lowe, J. McGurrin, F. Keenan, Mr. D. Lawson. FRONT; J. Clinton, E. Eccleston, J. Phillips (?).

Just in case any reader has ancestors among the founders, here are the members of the committee:- Chairman, Mr. J. J. Hodkinson; Vice - Chairman, Mr. J. Cafferty; Treasurer, Mr. H. Higham; Secretary, Mr. J. Swift; Asst. Sec., Mr. P. McLaughlin; Committee, Messrs. J. Dogson, P. Qualey, J. Hughes, T. Boylan, S. Lythgoe, H. McVeagh, J. Quinn, J. Moran and T. Rynn.

It has not emerged when the "Athletic" was dropped from the name nor do the early exploits seem to have been particularly spectacular but in 1943, the the team had

Alex. Murphy and Austin Rhodes played for St. Austin's while ex-St. Mary's Jackie Edwards played for the "Pats".

True to the "friendly" spirit between Wigan and St. Helens, five or six players from both sides were soon sent off and the brawl reached such a pitch that the match had to be abandoned. St. Austin's were leading at the time 10 - 8 but they hadn't scored a try while the "Pats" had scored two and consensus has it that the "Pats" won the sendings-off by three to two. Better call it a draw!

*Peaceful Co - existence was possible in the 1950's*  
 (not between Wigan and St Helens but between Soccer and Rugby)



**ABOVE:** The St. Patrick's Youth Club Intermediate rugby team that won the "Evening Post" Shield on April 26th 1955.  
 Back Row L to R: Connolly; Loughnane; King; Conway; Topping; John Gleeson.  
 Front row L to R: Sudell; Gaskell; Joe Gleeson; Aspey; Howe; Burke.

**BELOW:** A St. Patrick's Youth Club Intermediate Soccer team of the early fifties.  
 Back row L to R: Mr. J. Molloy; J. Toole; B. Pitcher; unknown; J. Aspey; J. Devine; F. McMullen;  
 Mr. Frank Connolly (a future Mayor of Wigan).  
 Middle row L to R: ?. Makin; Fr. Lappin; R. Kearsley (capt.); A. Stephens.  
 Front seated: M. Clossic; J. Lathom.



## The Operatic Society

St. Patrick's Operatic Society flourished briefly in the 1930's. Their most well-known and documented production was in December 1932 when they staged "Florodora" at St. John's Hall. One of the curates, Father McLaughlin, was the producer and Mr. Frank Regan, the headmaster, was the musical director. The president of the society was Cllr. D. Rourke.

The cast included many well - known parishioners, some of whom are still with us to-day. All of them are

shown on the photograph below. The committee also features well-known names:-

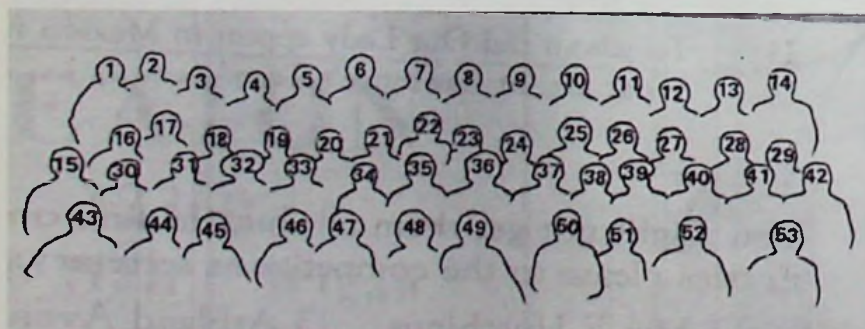
- E. Gleeson .....Chairman
- J. Baldwin .....Treasurer
- W. Holland .....Secretary

Members included Miss Julia Egan, Mrs. W. Conlin, Mrs. A. Jolley and Messrs. C. Heaton, H. O'Hara, W. Blackledge, J. Darbyshire, W. Tickle and J. Yates.

Extracts from the programme are shown on the next page.



The cast of "FLORODORA" - St. Patrick's Operatic Society - December 1932.



### KEY TO NAMES

- 1 John Brown
- 2 Deacon Livesey
- 3 Jimmy Hart
- 4 Owen Sweeney
- 5 Simon Hough
- 6 J. Gallagher
- 7 Teddy Leary
- 8 Billy Pey
- 9 Edward Oliver
- 10 Jack Baldwin
- 11 Joe Baldwin

- 12 Cyril Heaton
- 13 Alphonsus Judge
- 14 Jimmy Yates
- 15 Peter Oliver
- 16 Clare Jenkinson
- 17 Bridget Halligan
- 18 Mary McHugh
- 19 Mary Brown
- 20 Rose Sweeney
- 21 Renee Flint
- 22 Janey Bennett

- 34 Nellie Gleeson
- 35 Danny Rourke (PRES)
- 36 Fr. Murray (P.P)
- 37 Winnie Darbyshire
- 38 Teresa Winstanley
- 39 Jack Fairhurst
- 40 Fr. Coghlan
- 41 Billy Blackledge
- 42 Fr. McLaughlin (PROD)
- 53 Joe Darbyshire

- 23 Theresa Doherty
- 24 Nellie Burley
- 25 Belle O' Donnell
- 26 Evelyn Rooney
- 27 Bertha Rooney
- 28 Margaret Winstanley
- 29 Hilda Gregory
- 30 Winnie Holland
- 31 Fr. O'Brien
- 32 Jimmy Naylor
- 33 Eddie Gleeson

- 44 Billy Moylett
- 45 Kathleen Gorman
- 46 Margaret Kelly
- 47 Nellie Ansboro
- 48 May Holland
- 49 Winnie Britton
- 50 Martin Hough
- 51 Hilda Taylor
- 52 John Halpin
- 53 Frank Gallagher



COUNCILLOR D. ROURKE  
(President)



MR. FRANK REGAN  
(Musical Director)



FATHER McLAUGHLIN  
(Producer)

ST. PATRICK'S A.O.S.  
PRESENT  
**Florodora**  
A MUSICAL COMEDY  
By kind permission of R. LORRAINE HILL, Esq.,  
Music by LESLIE STUART,  
IN  
ST. JOHN'S HALL,  
DICCUNSON STREET,  
For SIX NIGHTS, December 5—10, 1932.  
Price: THREEPENCE.  
KINDLY REFRAIN FROM SMOKING.  
REFRESHMENTS (Tea, Coffee and Biscuits) may be  
ordered from Lady Attendants.

PROGRAMME COVER

## Dramatis Personæ.

Cyrus W. Gilfain .....	MR. EDWARD GLEESON Proprietor of Island and Perfume of Florodora)
Frank Abercoed .....	MR. PETER OLIVER (Manager of Island for Gilfain)
Leandro (Overseer of Farms) .....	MR. JAMES NAYLOR
Capt. Arthur Donogal .....	MR. JOHN FAIRHURST (1th Royal Life Guards—Lady Holyrood's Brother)
Tennyson Sims .....	} Gilfain's Clerks {
Ernest Pym .....	
Max Apfelbaum .....	
Reginald Langdale .....	
Paul Crogan .....	
John Scott .....	MR. FRANK GALLAGHER
Anthony Tweedlepunch .....	MR. MARTIN HOUGH (A Showman, Phrenologist, Hypnotist, and Palmist)
Lady Holyrood .....	MRS. WINIFRED CONLIN
Dolores .....	MRS. NELLIE GLEESON
Valleda .....	MISS NELLIE BURLEY
Joe .....	} Florodorean Girls {
Juanita .....	
Violante .....	
Calista .....	
Angela Gilfain .....	
Daisy Chain .....	} Friends of Angela {
Mamie Rowe .....	
Lucy Ling .....	
Cynthia Belmont .....	
Lottie Chalmers .....	
Clara Fitzlarence .....	MISS MAY HOLLAND

Chorus:—Misses W. Britton, R. Flint, N. Amboro, M. Brown, H. Gregory, K. Gorman, M. Kelly, M. Mellugh, R. Sweeney, Messrs. J. Hart, J. Gallagher, Hough, T. Hegarty, T. Leary, W. Livesey, W. Moylett, W. O. Sweeney, J. Brown.

CAST LIST FOR " FLORODORA "

## Patrons.

Miss Amboro	J. Holland, Esq.
Mrs. M. Ashall	D. Lawson, Esq.
J. Baldwin, Esq.	Miss W. Lythgoe
W. Blackledge, Esq.	J. Maguire, Esq.
Miss Brennan	Mrs. J. Maloney
P. Britton, Esq.	W. Martlow, Esq.
M. Brown, Esq.	E. McEvoy, Esq.
Misses M. & T. Brown	Miss M. McLaugh
Mrs. Conway	J. McLoughlin, Esq.
C. Conroy, Esq.	Miss Mehers
W. Fitzlarence, Esq.	Mrs. F. Milner
Miss N. Doherty	W. Norton & Sons Ltd.
Miss G. Doherty	J. P. Parrett, Esq.
T. Durkin, Esq.	T. Pey, Esq. D.B.E.
Mrs. M. Egan	W. Riley, Esq.
P. Gilhooly, Esq.	F. Robinson, Esq.
H. Gleeson, Esq.	H. Smith, Esq.
J. Gleeson, Esq.	G. Watson, Esq.
Mrs. Greenwood	W. Wilkinnan, Esq.
H. Higham, Esq.	

LIST OF PATRONS

## Orchestra.

Under the direction of Mr. F. Regan.

Misses Austin (Leader), Forshaw, Egan; Messrs. E. Dickinson, F. Livesey, F. Livesey, junr., W. Bullock, C. Scott, T. Armstrong, Brocklebank.

MEMBERS OF THE ORCHESTRA

## *St. Patrick's Players.*

Though the Operatic Society did not survive, it was far from being the last of the artistic efforts of the parish. In the late forties, a drama group called St. Patrick's Players was formed and it soon acquired a reputation for excellent dramatic performances.

At first, their productions were performed in the old school hall in the boys' school, but they soon found that they needed larger premises. In succeeding years, they put on plays in St. Mary's hall, St. John's Hall and Hope Street Hall.

Father Carney is still alive and well at the young age of 87, and was a guest at the 150th Jubilee Mass in December. His play was staged at St. John's Hall, Dicconson Street.

In January, 1952, the society put on "Without the Prince" at St. Mary's Hall, Standishgate. The "Observer" hailed this as an "Outstanding Performance". The paper was not as impressed with the performance later that year of the ambitious "Shop at Sly Corner", though it praised the efforts of the cast. (Who cares what critics say anyway!). This play was also staged at St. Mary's.



**St. Patrick's Players in their first production "CAESAR'S FRIEND" 1948.**

Their first production was "Caesar's Friend" set in the Holy Land in the time of Our Lord. This was staged at St. Patrick's in May 1948. It was followed by "Murder in the Sacristy" in October 1949, again staged at St. Patrick's.

In April of the following year, they staged the world premiere of "The Keeper of the Keys" which was written by Father Godfrey Carney, a former curate at St. Patrick's.

1953 saw another change of venue "Peg o' My Heart" was performed at Hope Street Congregational Hall, in January of that year. This play was very well received by audiences and press reviewers alike. It was followed by J. B. Priestley's popular comedy "When We Are Married" at the same venue.

Other productions followed in the 1950's but no pictures of them have surfaced.

# St. Patrick's Players present.....



LEFT: "CAESAR'S FRIEND" May 1949

Left to right; Vera Jones (MARY);  
Martin Harrington (JUDAS);  
Arthur Yates (the DECURION ); Bert Rhudd  
(SENTRY ); seated: Ken Gaskell as  
SIMON PETER and Ruth Higham  
as ZILLAH (a blind girl).

RIGHT: "MURDER IN THE SACRISTY"  
October 1949

L to R: Margaret Lawson,  
Margaret Higham, Jim Burns,  
Bernadette Downes,  
Patrick McLoughlin, Maureen Johnston.



LEFT: "THE KEEPER OF THE KEYS"  
April 1950 - World Premiere

L to R: Michael Mannion, John Jordan,  
John Kerwin, Jim Burns, Margaret Lawson,  
Bernadette Downes, Ruth Higham.



LEFT & ABOVE: "WITHOUT THE PRINCE"  
January 1952

Above: Standing: James Molloy, Ruth Higham  
Seated: Michael Mannion; Margaret Higham.  
Left: L to R, Hugh Molloy, Mary Murphy,  
Bernadette Downes; Frank Heaton; Bernard  
Toole.



## *The Ladies' Sodality*

They are often referred to as the "Mothers" and many of them are, but their true title is that above. It is not possible in their case to give as detailed a history as that of the C.M.S., but they have been with us a long time.

You will find them at the heart of much of the hard and unsung work that goes on in the parish and over

the years, the like the C. M. S. have raised thousands of pounds for parish funds.

They have always known how to have a good time though, and we can have a look at some of their occasions across the years. No dates are given, but then, you know how ladies are about their ages.



ABOVE: The ladies of St. Patricks enjoy their annual dinner.

BELOW: An outing to the seaside?





**LEFT:** The ladies relax on holiday in Ireland Father Joseph Burns can be seen in the background.



**ABOVE:** a presentation to Mayoress Mrs. Connolly. Fr. Coughlan beside her. Mrs. Connolly was a seamstress of note, making many a crowning or walking day outfit to seemingly impossible deadlines.

**BELOW:** Ladies concert party in the hall of the old Boys' School.



**RIGHT:** The ladies "Black & White" minstrel troupe.



**LEFT:** Before another concert this time in the parish club. This one seems to have had a continental flavour.

