

PART THREE

1933 - 1948.

1933-34.

The adamant refusal of the N.A.C.A. to limit its authority to The Irish Free State, when the N.I.A.A.A. had been accorded international status, caused the Northern Clubs one by one to resign from the Ulster Branch of the Association. It is not to be assumed, however, that the change over was smoothly completed in every case. Some Clubs were divided, and splinter groups organised. In the case of our own Club the change over, which took place at a special General Meeting on the 5th January, 1934, caused one section of the Club to remain in the N.A.C.A. where they took the name of Downhill Harriers, the other section - the majority - decided to affiliate to the N.I.A.A.A.

The Northern Junior Championship was decided at Newtownards. Sixteen teams competed and fifteen finished the course. Ballydrain, an up-and-coming young club gained the team championship with 109 points, (2) N. Staffs, 190 points, (3) East Antrim, 191 points. Willowfield were 12th with 432 points. The scoring six were (41) W. McCrory, (53) G. Cole, (70) J. Martin, (74) R. Walker, (88) S. Agnew, (106) D. Jebb. Individual champion, P. Blair of East Antrim.

The Northern Ireland Senior Championship was held on 17th February, 1934, at Ashfield. Eleven teams competed. East Antrim won the Team championship with 53 points to Ballydrain's 111 points and the N. Staff's 132 points. Willowfield were fifth with 174 points. J. Glenholmes (East Antrim) was the individual winner. The Willowfield scoring six were (20) S. Penny, (22) H. Ralph, (29) R. Watters, (32) A. Parker, (33) J. Martin, (38) L. Firth.

In the Fawcett Shield, held at Massereene Park, Antrim, the Club tied for third place with Ulsterville. The race which is a handicap event, was won by Larne Harriers with 14 points, to North Belfast's 24 points and Ulsterville's and Willowfield's 28 points. W. McCune (Willowfield) finished seventh in the race and was selected to represent N. Ireland in the forthcoming International race.

The Novice race - The Whitehead Road Race - was won by Albertville with 91 points to Duncairn's 154 points, and West Down's 160 points. Willowfield were fourth with 167 points. The individual winner was J. McCormick, Ulsterville. The Willowfield team were (11) S. Agnew, (14) J. Martin, (26) A. Parker, (32) W. McGrory, (34) D. Jebb, (50) R. Walker.

Just at the beginning of the flat Season, a great tragedy befell the Club. I refer to the death of the Club's beloved trainer, Mr. W. F. McMahon. The Hon. Secretary of the Club, Mr. R. Watters, in presenting his Annual Report for the 1933-54

said, "I can safely say that there was not a man who was more respected and cared for among all our members than "Big Bill". In his death Willowfield have suffered a great loss and we must all put our hearts into the Club to compensate it for this loss To see Willowfield at the top of the tree was his life's work" I cannot, as I take note of the great achievements of the 1926-1933 years, do other than agree with the sentiment expressed in the Secretary's Report "that to see Willowfield at the top of the tree" was Mr. McMahon's life work. Under his careful tuition and encouragement novices were made into champions, and Club Teams, time and time again, swept the boards. For a full decade the Club felt the impact of his death.

At the Summer Track Championships B. Shillington was second in the Hop, Step and Jump and represented Northern Ireland at the Empire Games in Australia.

1934-35.

The Club was still in the doldrums where winning championships was concerned in 1934-35.

The first event of this season was an inter-club race, The Malcolm Cup Race. Fourteen Teams competed, and thirteen completed the course. The Club had a very weak team and finished twelfth with 370 points. The team race was annexed by Ulsterville with 106 points, Duncairn "A" 137 points, and

N. Staffs, 160 points. The individual winner was J. McClughan, (Ulsterville).

Eighteen teams contested a Novice event on the last Saturday in December. The Club gained fourth place in this event. The winning team was N. Staffs "A" with 88 points, Ballydrain "A" 40 points and Lisnagarvey 40 points, Willowfield, 114 points. J. Scott in ninth place was the first Willowfield representative.

The second outing for our Junior team in 1934-35 was the Northern Junior at Andersonstown in January. A record entry of eighteen teams, including three regimental teams, took the field. Ulsterville won the team championship with 135 points, (2) N. Staffs, 141 points, (3) East Antrim, 141 points. Perhaps I should explain the procedure when teams tie, because it will arise again. When the teams' aggregate points are equal, the first man home between the two teams concerned gains the higher placing for his team, e.g. N. Staffs had their first man home before East Antrim had their first representative home, hence N. Staffs are placed second in the team championship. Willowfield improved on last year's performance, gaining 8th place. The team placings were, (41) J. Scott, (46) J. Martin, (47) D. Jebb, (48) G. Cole, (52) W. McCrory and (54) A. Parker.

The Senior team, however, was stronger than the Junior team. In the Fawcett Shield at Antrim in February, seventeen teams contested for the trophy, and the Club gained third place.

East Antrim won the race with 71 points to Trinity's 106 points and the Club's 108 points. The scoring six were on this occasion, (18) J. B. Andrews, (22) J. Martin, (23) R. Worrall, (34) J. Martin, (47) D. Jebb.

Ten teams contested together for the Northern Ireland Senior title in March, 1935, at the Maze Race Course. East Antrim won the championship with 38 points to Ulsterville's 93 points and the Club's 149 points. A. Workman (East Antrim) was the individual champion, the Willowfield scoring six were, (5) W. McCune, (18) J. B. Andrews, (22) R. Worrall, (30) R. Watters, (33) S. Penny and (40) J. Martin. W. McCune gained another international jersey this season.

The Novice race at Whitehead rounded off the season in April. Fifteen teams started, and the winners were City of Derry, (2) East Antrim, (3) Duncairn, (4) Willowfield. D. Cannavan, Ballydrain was the individual winner. The Willowfield team were (13) J. Martin, (20) W. McCrory, (22) J. Lee, (45) C. Howe, (46) C. Thackway, (87) J. Newberry.

In the Northern Ireland Four mile flat championship, W. McCune finished second to A. Workman, East Antrim, and B. Shillington (Willowfield) was second in the High Jump, Long Jump, and the Hop, Step and Jump.

1935-36.

The East Antrim club organised a new inter-club competition

in the 1935-36 season. A five mile race for junior runners, called the McConnell Shield Race. The inaugural race was held at Ballyclare in November, 1935. Twelve teams competed and ten completed the course. Willowfield finished in 6th place. East Antrim won the event with 51 points to Lisnagarvey's 130 points and N. Belfast's 133 points. The Willowfield scoring six were (25) G. Cole, (30) R. Walker, (31) W. Girvan, (34) W. Ball, (57) W. Moore and (59) S. Elborn. The individual winner was R. Frew (East Antrim).

In the Malcolm Cup race at Lurgan, the Club slipped back to 8th position. East Antrim gained their second race that season with a win of 51 points to N. Belfast's 125 points and West Down's 172 points. Eleven teams competed for the honours. The Willowfield scoring six were (18) S. Elborn, (36) G. Cole, (55) S. Thompson, (56) E. Howe, (57) W. Ball and (73) W. Finlay.

A Novice race at Dundonald on the last Saturday in December attracted an entry of sixteen teams. D. Cull, South Lurgan, was the individual winner, and South Lurgan finished first in the team event with 42 points to Willowfield "A" 61 points and Ballydrain's 78 points. The South Lurgan team, however, were disqualified for an alleged breach of the rules, and the race was awarded to the second Club, Willowfield. The Club's scoring four were (5) R. Walker, (10) S. Elborn, (17) W. Ball and (18) E. Howe.

Harmoney Hill, Lambeg, was the venue for the N. Ireland

Junior Championship this season. Fifteen teams and 180 athletes battled for the individual and team honours. East Antrim again demonstrated that they were the Junior team of the year and won both the individual and team championships. R. Frew of the East Antrim club gained his third successive win in Junior races this season - The McConnell Shield, The Malcolm Cup, and now the Junior Championship. North Belfast were placed second with 122 points and Duncairn Nomads third with 132 points. Willowfield, still fighting, were in 10th place. The scoring six were, (27) W. Elborn, (49) G. Cole, (59) E. Howe, (68) R. Walker, (82) C. Thackway, (97) W. Moore.

In February, the Fawcett Shield was run at Antrim. West Down won this handicap race, with Trinity second and East Antrim third. The Club finished in 9th place. A. Workman was the individual winner, and J. B. Andrews finished in 8th place.

The Northern Ireland Senior Championship was run at Comber. Seven teams contended for the title. A. Workman was the individual champion for the second successive year, and his club annexed the team championship with 36 points to Ballydrain's 117 points and Duncairn Nomads' 131 points. Willowfield finished in the humble seventh place. Reporting the race the Ireland's Saturday Night said, inter alia, "Cole of Willowfield, once more spurned the use of running shoes and ran throughout bare-foot" . A bit of the Tipperary man about Cole ! The scoring six for the Club were (4) W. McCune, (30) G. Cole,

(32) S. Penny, (33) S. Elborn, (39) W. Robinson, (45) R. Walker. W. McCune was selected to run for the Northern Ireland International Cross-Country team.

In April the Novice race was run off at Whitehead. Duncairn won the team race with 85 points to West Down's 115 points and the City of Derry's 148 points. The Willowfield team occupied fourth place with 161 points. J. D. Ruddy, Duncairn, was the first runner to finish the course. The Willowfield scoring six were, (12) S. Elborn, (13) R. Walker, (15) S. Thompson, (28) C. Thackway, (32) W. Girvan and (61) W. Finlay.

At the Northern Ireland Flat and Field Championships this season B. Shillington was placed first in the High Jump and the Hop, Step and Jump.

1936-37

The season under review saw no appreciable change in the Club's fortunes. In all of the Junior events its place was near the bottom of the list.

In November 13 teams competed in the McConnell Shield race at Ballyclare. West Down captured the team race with 111 points to Duncairn Nomads, 141 points and East Antrim's 165 points. D. Cannavan, Ballydrain, was the individual winner. Willowfield were 7th in the race and the scoring six were (17) S. Thompson, (20) G. Cole, (21) A. Glover, (29) W. Ball, (55) T. M. Orr and (57) J. McCormick.

West Down won the Malcolm Cup at Lurgan in December with 90 points to Duncairn's 115 points and Duncairn Nomads' 127 points. Willowfield were 9th with 295 points. Ten teams completed the course. D. Cannavan, Ballydrain, was the individual winner. The Willowfield team were (18) G. Cole, (25) S. Thompson, (31) W. Ball, (62) J. Walker, (71) J. Greer and (88) G. Boyle.

The Northern Ireland Junior Championship race was held at Ballyarnett, Londonderry. Nine teams took the field. West Down, as expected, won the team race with 59 points to Duncairn Nomads' 141 points and Welsh Regiment's 95 points. Willowfield were in sixth position with 217 points. D. Cannavan, Ballydrain, equalled R. Frew's record of winning the three junior races this year. The Willowfield team were (20) G. Cole, (23) W. Ball, (29) A. Glover, (40) T. M. Orr, (43) G. McCoy and (61)

Sixteen teams ran in the Fawcett Shield race in February. Ulsterville won the team race, with Duncairn Nomads second, Trinity third, and Willowfield fifth. A. Workman was the individual winner. The Willowfield team were (3) W. McCune, (7) J. B. Andrews, (29) G. Cole, (35) S. Thompson, (54) J. Greer, and (61) W. Ball.

The Northern Ireland Senior Championship was also decided at the Steeple, Antrim, in March. Eleven teams competed and eight finished the course. East Antrim took premier place in the team race, Ballydrain were second with 92 points and West Down third, with 119 points. Willowfield were fourth with

171 points. D. Cannavan proved himself the athlete of the year by carrying off the Senior Individual Title. The Willowfield team were (3) W. McCune, (5) J. B. Andrews, (21) S. Thompson, (31) A. Glover, (52) T. M. Orr and (59) J. Greer. The Ireland's Saturday Night, reporting the race, said, "J. B. Andrews ran his best race." Both W. McCune and J. B. Andrews represented Northern Ireland in the International Cross Country race in Brussels this season. The finishing places of the first three North Irish men in the race were (27) D. Cannavan, (29) W. McCune, (32) J. B. Andrews.

The Club's run of bad luck changed in one race at least this season. Out of a field of 12 clubs in the Novice race at Whitehead on 30th March, the Club emerged victorious with 79 points to the City of Derry's 126 points and West Down's 149 points. A. Clauson, Ulsterville, was the individual winner. The Willowfield team were (3) B. Coulter, (4) S. Thompson, (10) T. M. Orr, (12) A. Glover, (23) W. Ball and (27) J. Greer.

In the Northern Ireland Track and Field Championships, B. Shillington won the Hop, Step and Jump, and the High Jump. J. W. Carr gained second place in the 100 metres race.

1937-38.

The Club commenced this season with the comforting thought that at least they had the makings of a good junior team, as the result of the Whitehead road race had suggested, but 1937-38

was not to be Willowfield's year.

The McConnell Shield race at Ballyolare found the team in the usual place of sixth position. Eleven teams competed, and ten finished the course. Duncairn won the team race with 50 points to Ballydrain's 95 points and Duncairn Nomads' 144 points. The Willowfield combination was sixth. W. A. Young, (Ulsterville) was the individual winner. The Willowfield placings were (9) B. Coulter, (12) A. Glover, (21) G. Cole, (38) W. Ball, (52) J. Greer and (63) G. Boyle.

In the Malcolm Cup race the Club advanced one place. Nine teams competed and eight finished the course. Duncairn annexed the team race with 65 points to Duncairn Nomad's 71 points and Ballydrain's 91 points. Willowfield were fifth with 217 points. W. A. Young, (Ulsterville) was the individual winner. The Willowfield placings were (5) B. Coulter, (25) G. Cole, (41) T. M. Orr, (46) S. McMillan, (48) W. Ball and (52) G. Boyle.

The Northern Ireland Junior Championship was held at Rifle Park, Banbridge in January, 1938. Thirteen teams strove for the championship, and eleven of them finished the course. Duncairn captured the Team championship with 68 points to Duncairn Nomads' 83 points and Ballydrain's 106 points. The Willowfield finishing place was tenth with 402 points. The placings were, (52) G. Cole, (54) J. Greer, (68) W. Ball, (80) N. Bennett, (81) A. Glover, (87) D. Davidson. The individual winner was J. Marshall, Ballydrain.

Eight teams contested the Fawcett Shield race at Antrim in February. Trinity gained first place, North Belfast second and Ballydrain third. Willowfield were eighth. J. B. Andrews finished in fourth place.

In the Senior Championship, the Club again demonstrated that its Senior Team, while not very powerful, was still ahead of the Junior Team. Nine clubs faced the starter at the Maze Race Course, and eight of them completed the course. East Antrim won the team championship with 83 points, to Ballydrain's 99 points and West Down's 134 points. Willowfield were fourth with 137 points. D. Cannavan, Ballydrain, was the individual champion for the second successive year. The Willowfield placings were (2) W. McCune, (3) J. B. Andrews, (24) B. Coulter, (25) R. Worrall, (37) S. Penny, (46) W. Robinson.

There was a big entry in the Youths' Championship decided before the main event. East Antrim won the team championship with 30 points to Duncairn Nomads' 39 points, and Ulsterville's 64 points. Willowfield finished eighth with 154 points. The team was (7) T. Davidson, (39) A. Thompson, (51) W. Elborn, (57) W. Rainey.

W. McCune and J. B. Andrews were selected to run for Northern Ireland in the International race this season and finished in 20th and 42nd place respectively.

Thirteen teams finished in the Novice race at Whitehead, and the Club - last season's holders - occupied 12th place

this year. The race was won by West Down, 77 points, City of Derry second, 149 points and East Antrim, third, 168 points. Willowfield had 355 points. B. Gilbert, North Belfast, was the individual winner. The Willowfield team was (36) N. Bennett, (49) D. Davidson, (62) J. McCormick, (66) J. Shuffelbottom, (70) C. Thackway and (72) W. McKenzie.

In the Northern Ireland Track and Field Championships, B. Shillington was second in the High Jump, and won the Hop, Step and Jump.

1938-39.

The fact that in four years the Club had won only two competitions, and that both were Novice races was giving the Club Officials disturbing thoughts and Messrs. J. B. Andrews, G. Cole and J. Cully, with the help of the other officials, set themselves with renewed vigour to the task of training a Junior Team worthy of the name of Willowfield Temperance Harriers. I think the first signs that our Junior Team was in the process of being shaped into a championship team was in this cross-country season.

Lead by B. Coulter, who finished first in the McConnell Shield race at Ballyclare in December, the Club finished in fifth place in the team race. Duncairn Nomads won the race with 61 points to East Antrim's 90 points, and Ballydrain's 115 points. The Willowfield aggregate points were 238. The team placings were as follows (1) B. Coulter, (30) A. Rooney

(40) T. M. Orr, (54) G. Cole, (56) J. Gillespie and (57) W. D. Baillie.

In the Malcolm Cup the club held on to its fifth position, although B. Coulter disappointed and only finished in 13th place. Duncairn Nomads improved on their McConnell Shield running and gained first place with 45 points to Ulsterville's 156 points and Ballydrain's 173 points. The Willowfield total was 219 points. The scoring six were (13) B. Coulter, (17) A. Rooney, (35) T. M. Orr, (45) J. Gillespie, (50) W. McKenzie and (59) G. Cole.

Magowan's Fields, Bloomfield, was the venue for the N. I. Junior Championship. Eleven teams completed on the old championship course. Willowfield, running on what could be called home ground, were very disappointing, although B. Coulter set his other club mates a good example finishing in third place. Duncairn Nomads won the team championship with 43 points to East Antrim's 124 points and Ulsterville's 127 points. W. C. McCooke, East Antrim won the individual honours after a hard tussle with B. Coulter, who led to the half-way mark. The Willowfield team placings were, (3) B. Coulter, (50) W. Ball, (59) J. Gillespie, (60) G. Boyle, (77) W. Bell and (81) C. Thackway.

In the Fawcett Shield race a new system of handicapping was devised - that of a time allowance. South Lurgan won the race, Duncairn Nomads "B" were second and Albertville third. Willowfield were 12th, giving away an impossible time allowance of 4½ minutes to the limit clubs, and receiving ½ minute from East

Antrim, the Senior Champions. W. McCune finished in 9th place, and J. B. Andrews was 34th.

The Senior Championship held at Mallusk was a personal triumph for W. McCune who ran the best race of his career to oust the title from the reigning champion, D. Cannavan. He was well supported by our other stalwart J. B. Andrews, who finished in 7th place. The rest of the team, with the exception of W. Robinson, were junior runners and they finished as follows - (57) T. M. Orr, (44) J. Gillespie, (49) W. Robinson and (55) W. Ball. East Antrim won the team championship with 49 points to Ballydrain's 105 points and West Down's 126 points. Willowfield were sixth with 193 points. W. McCune and J. B. Andrews were chosen to run in the International Cross-Country Race this season.

In April the Cross-Country season was wound up with the Whitehead Road Race. Thirteen teams competed. Ulsterville won the team race with 124 points to Ballydrain's 129 points and Duncairn's 141 points. J. Waterwood, Ulsterville, was the individual winner. The Willowfield combination was 8th with 274 points. The team was as follows - (11) J. Gillespie, (22) C. Thackway, (49) W. McKenzie, (52) W. J. Finlay, (66) S. Johnston and (74)

1939-40.

The Second World War was a month old when the new Cross-

Country Season opened in October, 1939. When war was declared in 1914 the majority of Northern Harrier Clubs disbanded for the duration of hostilities. In 1939, however, the majority of clubs decided to function during the combat years as far as this was possible. The governing body adopted the same viewpoint, thus both the military athletes and our young war workers were able to indulge in their favourite pastime of Cross-Country running. The good healthy sport that they enjoyed contributed in no small way to the well-being and morale of the British nation in the strenuous 1939-45 war years.

The outstanding event of this first war season for Willowfield members, past and present, was the opening of the W. F. McMahon Memorial Hall, the Club Headquarters in Hyndford Street, Bloomfield. Extensive alterations were carried out and a new red brick front was erected to the existing building.

A large number of Club members, together with friends and relations of the late club trainer, assembled to pay tribute to his memory. The Opening Ceremony took place on Saturday afternoon, the 10th February, 1940. The Hall was opened by Mr. D. McKeag (Joint President of the Club) with a special souvenir key. Mr. G. H. Thompson (Joint President of the Club) presided and Miss S. McMahon (sister of the late W. F. McMahon) unveiled the Memorial stone which was draped with the club flag. The Memorial stone which is situated above the main entrance to the

Hall, reads as follows "W. F. McMahon Memorial Hall, 1959."

The McConnell Shield attracted an entry of seven teams in December of this year. Our junior team finished this first race of the season in exactly the same place as last year - fifth. South Lurgan won the team race with 69 points to East Antrim's 86 points and Ballydrain's 98 points. The Willowfield total was 186 points. G. Craig, South Lurgan, was the individual winner. The Willowfield scoring six were, (17) J. Gillespie, (19) T. M. Orr, (25) D. Davidson, (30) C. Thackway, (45) W. Ball and (50) W. McKenzie.

In the Malcolm Cup race a week later South Lurgan repeated their success. Willowfield dropped one position to finish in 6th place. (1) South Lurgan, 73 points, (2) Ballydrain, 96 points, (3) Ulsterville, 123 points. The "Willows" aggregate of points was 169. The individual winner was G. Craig. The Club's placings were, (11) G. Cole, (12) T. M. Orr, (16) C. Thackway, (31) W. Ball, (49) H. Haggan, and (50) J. Greer.

A Schoolboys' Mile Race held in conjunction with the Malcolm Cup was won by S. Ferguson, North Belfast, J. Stewart, South Lurgan was second and T. Simms, Willowfield was third.

The Junior Championship Race carried an addition to its title, the Northern Ireland Junior Championship (War Emergency) this year. Magowan's Fields was the venue, and seven teams, including the R.U.C. faced the starter. East Antrim ousted the fancied South Lurgan team from first place, gaining their

victory with 76 points to South Lurgan's 84 points. Ulsterville filled third place with 125 points. Willowfield's placing was fifth with 148 points. B. Coulter just managed to secure the Club's Junior Championship Cup by one place from G. Cole. The placings were as follows, (7) B. Coulter, (8) G. Cole, (12) T. M. Orr, (26) C. Thackway and H. Haggan and W. J. Finlay. D. McCalmont, East Antrim, was the Junior Champion.

Only five teams contested the Senior Championship at Magowan's Fields. East Antrim won the team honours with 29 points to South Lurgan's 128 points, and Ulsterville's 136 points. Willowfield were fourth with 143 points. W. C. McCooke, East Antrim, was the individual winner. The Willowfield team was (7) J. B. Andrews, (19) T. M. Orr, (25) C. Thackway, (27) W. Robinson, (32) R. Richardson and (33) J. Greer.

The Whitehead Road Race - eight teams competed and six finished the course. City of Derry gained first place with 78 points to Duncairn's 88 points and Ballydrain's 117 points. A. Jellie, Ballydrain, was the individual winner. The Willowfield combination finished in fourth place with 126 points. The placings were as follows, (4) C. Thackway, (6) J. Gillespie, (15) W. D. Baillie, (28) H. Haggan, (30) W. J. Finlay and (43) R. Richardson. The Club, however, was disqualified for non-compliance with registration rules.

The Whitehead Road Race was the usual concluding event on the Cross-Country Calendar, but as the result of negotiations

between the N.I.A.A.A. and the A.A.E.U., in April an Inter-state contest was held between clubs from Eire and Ulster. The six Eire clubs which travelled North for the race were members of the Amateur Athletic Union of Eire, which was founded in 1937, by sportsmen in Dublin and district who wanted to see the Southern Clubs and athletes on International footing again. Unlike the N.A.C.A. they were prepared to acknowledge that their authority was confined to the 26 counties. Relationships between the two bodies, the N.I.A.A.A. and the A.A.U.E. have always been cordial, and this first combined race was to cement the friendships already existing among the various officials and runners alike, and was the herald of even bigger things to come.

With reference to the actual race which was decided over the Magowan's Fields course, eight Northern teams and six Eire teams competed. In the Inter-state race, Northern Ireland were first with 150 points to Eire's 155 points. In the team race, O'Callaghan's Mills were first with 64 points, finishing their team between the 8th and 14th position. East Antrim were second with 81 points, having the individual winner W. C. McCooke on their team. Ballydrain gained third place with 138 points. Willowfield were ninth with 310 points. The team placings were (5) J. B. Andrews, (31) J. Gillespie, (44) T. M. Orr, (55) C. Thackway, (81) W. Robinson and (88) W. J. Cull.

In the N.I.A.A.A. Track and Field Championships at Dunmore

At the Kilbride Sports Meeting in July, W. D. Baillie gained 2nd place in the Northern Ireland Four Miles Flat Championship, the winner was R. Towndrow of Ulsterville. Baillie was third in the Three Miles Flat Championship.

1940-41.

In the McConnell Shield race in December, it was becoming evident that a Junior success for the Club was near at hand, for the Club finished in third place. Ten teams competed and nine finished the five mile race. J. Cumming, Ulsterville, gained the individual race. West Down won the team race with 109 points, to Ballydrain's 116 points and the Club's 136 points. The scoring six for the Club were, (6) W. D. Baillie, (15) C. Thackway, (18) G. Cole, (23) T. M. Orr, (33) W. Ferguson and (41) H. Haggan.

A fortnight later in the Malcolm Cup with nine teams competing, Willowfield advanced one place to finish runners-up to South Lurgan. The South Lurgan total was 83 points, to Willowfield's 94 points and Ballydrain's 118 points. The Ireland's Saturday Night, referring to the Willowfield combination said that they gave a "grand exhibition of packing". This is quite apparent when you examine the finishing places of the scoring six, viz. (10) W. D. Baillie, (11) T. M. Orr, (12) D. Adams, (16) C. Thackway, (22) G. Cole and (23) B. Coulter. The individual winner was J. Cumming of Ulsterville.

In the Schoolboys' Mile Race, J. Stewart, South Lurgan was first, W. McKelvey, West Down was second and T. Simms, Willowfield,

was third.

On the 1st February, Willowfield Temperance Harriers, travelled to Dublin for the Eire Junior Championship held at Finglas, Co. Dublin. It is not my purpose in compiling this history of the Club to offer an apologia for the actions of the Club. Controversy adds little to the well-being of sport. Willowfield asked and received permission to compete in the A.A.U.E. Junior Championship from the N.I.A.A.A. Individual athletes had asked and received permission to compete in the Eire Board's Field and Track Championships in Dublin, therefore the Willowfield application did not create a precedent. Permission, as I have already stated was granted, thus the affair was carried through in a constitutional manner. The anonymous critics of the Club's policy who wrote to the local papers, deprecating the Club's action, and prophesying "complications later on" must have been somewhat disappointed when the so-called complications did not arise. To my mind, and I may say to the minds of many sportsmen both North and South of the Border, the Willowfield visit helped to strengthen the ties between the two controlling bodies in Irish athletics. Now for the race itself. Here is what the Belfast Newsletter of 3rd February, said, "Willowfield's Win. Eire Junior Championship Comes North". "Competing under a special permit of the N.I.A.A.A. Willowfield Temperance Harriers, of Belfast, won the Junior Cross-Country Championship of the Amateur Athletic Union (Eire) on Saturday.

The race was held over a distance of six miles at Finglas, County Dublin, and of the seven clubs that competed, all but the Northern Club were Dublin organisations. The race resolved itself into a match between Willowfield and the Donore Harriers, and so closely were the teams matched that only five points divided them at the finish, the Belfast team scoring 73 points to 78 for Donore..... The Willowfield Club also supplied the individual winner in the person of D. Adams. He ran a nicely judged race, and after allowing Foreman of Donore, and Malone of Clonliffe, to lead in turn, he went to the front at half distance and ran out winner by twelve seconds without being pressed." The following teams competed in the race, in addition to the Club - Donore, Clonliffe, Civil Service, City and Suburban, Hermes, Terenure. Clonliffe were third with 109 points. The Club's championship team were (1) D. Adams, (6) W. D. Bailie, (10) B. Coulter, (13) T. M. Orr, (19) G. Cole and (25) S. Thompson.

The N.I.A.A.A. Junior Championship was down for decision on the 18th January this season, but because of the snow it was postponed to the 1st February - the same date as the Eire Junior championship. The Club, having all arrangements made, elected to contest the Eire Junior with the result as stated above.

Magowan's Fields, now under cultivation in the nation's "Dig for Victory" campaign, was not available for races this year, and the Senior Championship was run on the Old Bog Meadows course at Andersonstown. Eight teams competed including

one Army team. W. C. McCooke, East Antrim, was the individual winner. East Antrim won the team championship with 66 points to Ballydrain's 77 points. South Lurgan were third with 140 points and the Club fourth with 173 points. The scoring six were, (6) J. B. Andrews, (22) W. D. Bailie, (27) T. M. Orr, (34) C. Thackway, (37) A. Rooney, (47) G. Cole. There was some confusion at the start of the race, some of the runners were misdirected, and it is questionable if the event was the full eight miles, for W. C. McCooke's finishing time was 41 minutes 23 seconds and that on a very heavy course.

The Whitehead Road race wound up the season's activities, and the Club gained another success, winning the Cup with 88 points to Royal Irish Fus., 93 points and Duncairn's 101 points. Twelve teams faced the starter, and nine completed the course. S. Ferguson, North Belfast, won the individual prize. The Willowfield representatives were (2) R. Conn, (10) W. Ferguson, (11) H. Haggan, (15) R. Kitchen, (24) G. W. Mills and (26) H. Lawlor.

1941-42.

With a Junior Championship, the Whitehead Road race and second in the Malcolm Cup, gained in the 1940-41 season, the prospects for the year under review seemed bright. A big entry of 17 teams contested the McConnell Shield at Ballyclare. The military teams were predominant with 10 to the civilians 7.

Ballydrain won the team race with 82 points to Willowfield's 189, and the Sherwood Forresters, 195 points. R. Towndrow, Ulsterville, was the individual winner. The Willowfield team were (12) H. Lawlor, (14) R. Kitchen, (20) H. Haggan, (57) G. W. Mills, (47) T. Simms and (59) J. McGuffie.

The Malcolm Cup resulted in another win for Ballydrain with 131 points to West Down's 144 points and I.T.C. 145 points. Willowfield were fifth and team were (19) H. Haggan, (23) F. Barge, (28) R. Kitchen, (32) H. Lawlor, (47) G. W. Mills and (73) J. McCormick.

In the Schoolboys' Race over the Mile the winner was E. McBride of the Club.

Nine teams battled for the Northern Ireland Junior Championship at the Bog Meadows. We had high hopes that Willowfield would win, for we had a formidable team, but all our runners did not run up to expectations and Ballydrain won the team race with 78 points to the Club's 101, with East Antrim 102 in third place. A. Jellie, Ballydrain, was the individual winner. The Club's scoring six were (5) W. D. Bailie, (15) B. Coulter, (16) H. Haggan, (18) D. Adams, (22) J. Greer and (25) F. Barge.

The Senior Championship was held at the same venue, on a water-logged course. East Antrim retained the championship with 62 points to the Club's 80 points, and Ballydrain's 119 points. W. C. McCooke won the individual title for East

Antrim for the third successive year. The Willowfield team were (4) J. B. Andrews, (10) W. D. Bailie, (14) J. Greer, (15) F. Barge, (18) J. Marsden, (19) H. Haggan.

In the Youth's championship, run off before the senior event, the placings were as follows, Ballydrain, West Down and South Lurgan with Willowfield sixth.

On the Saturday following the Senior championship an "International" race was promoted at Balmoral by the Belfast Telegraph and the Ireland's Saturday Night, under N.I.A.A.A. rules. Twenty two teams finished the course, and over 300 runners took part. In the International event, the British Army were placed first with 36 points, Eire second with 56 points, Northern Ireland third, 107 points, Canadian Army, fourth, 234 points, British Army in Northern Ireland fifth, 313 points and the R.A.F. sixth, 569 points. In the team event O'Callaghan's Mills were first with 67 points, Terenure second, 149 points, Clonliffe third, 318 points and Willowfield sixth, 370 points. The individual winner was Private Bingham, British Army, an English International Cross-Country Champion for several seasons. J. B. Andrews was the first Willowfield man home in 20th place and W. D. Bailie was second in 44th place. What is the explanation of the Northern Clubs' poor showing in this race? My opinion is that two races, like the Senior Championship and this Balmoral race was too much within eight days.

The Whitehead Road race was won this season by a regimental team, The Oxford and Bucks "B" with 88 points to Ballydrain's 86 points. Causairn were third. Willowfield, fielding a new side in this race, finished in eighth place. The Individual winner was Private Bishop of the winning team.

1942-45.

This year saw H. Lawlor develop into a first class performer. In the McConnell Shield 14 teams battled for the honours. The Bucks won the team and individual prizes, Private Bishop being Individual. The Oxford and Bucks' points were 84 to Ballydrain's 144 and Willowfield's 148. The scoring six were (2) H. Lawlor, (17) H. Haggan, (26) J. Greer, (29) H. McBride, (35) R. Millar and (39) F. Barge.

In the Malcolm Cup, eleven teams faced the starter. The regimental team lost their leadership and West Down gained the team race with 85 points to the Oxford and Bucks 89 points. Willowfield again filled third place with 159 points. Private Bishop of the Army team was the individual winner. The Willowfield placings were, (3) H. Lawlor, (21) F. Barge, (30) H. Haggan, (32) W. D. Baillie, (35) R. R. Millar and (38) J. Greer.

There were fifteen teams and over 200 runners in the Northern Ireland Junior Championship at Roseyards, Andersonstown. The Oxford and Bucks carried off the team championship with 66 points to West Down's 64 points and Willowfield's 135 points. S. Ferguson, North Belfast, was the individual winner. The

Willowfield scoring six were, (2) H. Lawlor, (7) W. D. Bailie, (28) F. G. Stevenson, (29) H. Haggan, (33) F. Barge and (36) R. R. Millar.

At the commencement of the present season the N.I.A.A.A. and the A.A.U.E. came to an arrangement whereby under the promotion of two bodies, a Junior and Senior Cross Country Championship would be held annually. The championships to be called respectively, the All Ireland Junior Cross Country Championship and the All Ireland Senior Cross Country Championship.

The first of these championships was held at Glengormley in February, 1943. Twelve teams competed, O'Callaghan's Mills won the team race with 34 points to Donore's 102 points and Willowfield's 194 points. The individual winner was M. Casey, O'Callaghan's Mills. H. Lawlor finished in third place for the Willowfield team.

In the Northern Ireland Senior championship at Glengormley, East Antrim and Ballydrain tied with 54 points each, Willowfield was third with 78 points. The individual winner was J. Nelson, Ballydrain, and this gained Ballydrain the championship, with East Antrim in second place. The Willowfield scoring six were, (6) H. Lawlor, (8) J. B. Andrews, (12) F. G. Stevenson, (16) W. D. Bailie, (17) H. Haggan, (19) C. Wright.

In the Youths' Championship North Belfast were first, South Lurgan second and Willowfield third.

The All Ireland Senior Championship at Finglas, Dublin, had seven teams competing. Ballydrain won the race with 70 points to O'Callaghan's Mills' 71 points and East Antrim's 88 points. Willowfield were fifth with 200 points. W. C. McCooke, East Antrim was the individual champion. The Willowfield placings were as follows, (13) H. Lawlor, (22) J. B. Andrews, (34) H. Haggan, (40) W. D. Baillie, (42) R. R. Millar and (49) J. Rodgers.

In the Whitehead Road race North Belfast raised the winning flag with 139 points to Ballydrain's 152 points and Duncairn's 165 points. Willowfield were fifth with 209 points. The individual winner was A. Blair, East Antrim. The Willowfield placings were, (14) F. G. Stevenson, (15) R. R. Millar, (17) C. Wright, (50) J. Rodgers, (52) A. Getgood and (61) J. Gilpin.

J. A. Lyttle won both the 100 and the 220 yards championships and T. M. Orr the Marathon at the N.I.A.A.A. championships in the summer of 1943.

1943-44.

The McConnell Shield Race was won by East Antrim with 64 points to Ballydrain's 99 points. Willowfield were third with 133 points. S. H. McCooke, East Antrim, was the individual winner. Fifteen teams contested for the Shield. The Willowfield scoring six and placings were, (3) H. Lawlor, (10) H. Haggan,

(24) D. Wilkinson, (26) E. McBride, (27) T. Baxter and (43) R. R. Millar.

The Club did not maintain its place in the Malcolm Cup at Lurgan a fortnight later. Out of a total of 11 teams, East Antrim again emerged victors, and S. H. McCooke was the individual winner. The Club placings were as follows (1) East Antrim, 61 points, (2) Duncairn Nomads, 128 points and (3) Ballydrain, 129 points. Willowfield were fifth with 194 points. The scoring six were (14) H. Haggan, (24) D. Wilkinson, (25) R. R. Millar, (32) J. Rodgers, (42) S. Thompson and (57) J. Gilpin.

The Northern Junior Championship at Glengormley attracted an entry of twelve teams, and this time the Club managed to regain third position. East Antrim completed the treble of Junior races this year, winning with 63 points to Ballydrain's 112 points and Willowfield's 115 points. S. H. McCooke was again individual winner, and the Willowfield's scoring six were (4) H. Lawlor, (18) T. M. Orr, (19) H. Haggan, (22) E. McBride, (24) R. R. Millar, (28) T. Baxter.

Thirteen teams competed for the All Ireland Junior Championship at Finglas, Dublin, seven of which were from the North. O'Callaghan's Hills won the team championship with 50 points to East Antrim's 111 points and Ballydrain's 172. Willowfield were 7th with 297 points. S. H. McCooke was the individual victor. The first Willowfield man home was H. Lawlor in 16th position.

The Northern Senior Championship was decided at Glengormley in March of this year. Only five teams competed. East Antrim won the team event with 37 points to Ballydrain's 50 and Duncairn Nomads' 148 points. Willowfield were 4th with 175 points. W. C. McCooke, East Antrim, was the individual champion and the Willowfield scoring six were (14) H. Lawlor, (24) T. M. Orr, (32) J. Rodgers, (34) S. Thompson, (35) H. Haggan, (36) J. Greer.

In the Youths' Race, East Antrim were also victorious with 30 points to West Down's 33 points and Ballydrain's 67 points. Willowfield were 5th with 84 points. The team was (15) J. McCullough, (19) J. Morrow, (25) D. Peden and (30) A. Brown.

The All Ireland Championship (Senior) was decided at Mossvale, Glengormley. Six teams competed, four from the South - Willowfield did not compete. East Antrim won the event with 47 points to O'Callaghan's Mills' 76 points and Ballydrain's 112. W. C. McCooke, East Antrim, was individual champion.

On the 11th April, the Whitehead Road Race was won by Duncairn Nomads with 63 points to Duncairn Harriers' 139 points and Willowfield's 155 points. Eleven of the thirteen entrants finished the course. The Willowfield team was (5) R. R. Millar, (5) D. Wilkinson, (29) J. McCullough, G. Rodgers, J. Gilpin and E. McBride.

J. A. Lyttle was placed second in both the 100 and 220 yards this season at the Northern Ireland Track and Field Championships.

1944-45.

By 1944 the military clubs were no longer taking an active part in the local inter-club races, as every available man was overseas for the final push against the enemy. However, 14 civilian clubs took the field in the McConnell Shield Race at Ballyclare in December, 1944. Ballydrain annexed the club race with 48 points to East Antrim's 117 points and Duncairn Nomads' 143 points. Willowfield could only manage sixth position with 253 points. Individual winner was T. Moore, Ballydrain. The scoring six for Willowfield were (3) H. Lawlor, (27) R. R. Millar, (41) H. Haggan, (52) D. Wilkinson, (57) J. McCullough and (73) J. Rodgers.

The Club stepped up one place in the Malcolm Cup, taking fifth place with 182 points. Ballydrain won the club race with 68 points to Albert Foundry's 113 points and Duncairn Nomads' 126 points. H. Lawlor was fourth, H. Haggan 20th, R. R. Millar 25th, J. McCullough 34th, T. M. Orr 45th and S. Thompson 54th.

In December a new inter-club race was inaugurated by the West Down Club, and was open to all who did not hold a Senior Championship medal, and to the A.A.U.E. clubs. Eleven clubs competed, and Ballydrain won the race with 27 points to Albert

Foundry's 116 points. Willowfield were third with 160 points. The Club's scoring six were (3) H. Lawlor, (18) R. R. Millar, (19) T. M. Orr, (34) H. Haggan, (39) S. Thompson and (47) J. Rodgers.

In the Northern Ireland Junior Championship the Club improved on its previous displays for some time and gained 2nd place with 104 points to Albert Foundry's 95 points, with Ballydrain third with 119 points. H. Lawlor in 5th position was the first Willowfield man home, and R. R. Millar was next in 19th place.

Glengormley was the venue for the All Ireland Junior Championship in February, 1945. Thirteen teams competed, including the following Southern teams - Clonliffe, O'Callaghan's Mills, Donore and Civil Service. O'Callaghan's Mills won the team race with 154 points, (2) East Antrim with 159 points (3) Civil Service with 191 points. Willowfield were fourth with 195 points. But Willowfield hearts were proud that day for H. Lawlor, who had been running very consistently for a number of years, carried off the individual championship, and to quote a press report, "Lawlor's victory was well deserved."

The Northern Ireland Senior Championship was decided without a Willowfield entry this season, and was won by Ballydrain with 44 points to East Antrim's 54 points, and Duncairn Nomads were third. S.H. McCooke, East Antrim, was the individual winner.

In the Youths' Cross Country Championship, East Antrim won with 27 points to Ballydrain's 37 points and Albert Foundry's 48 points. Willowfield were in fifth position.

The All Ireland Senior Championship was decided at Finglas on the 17th March. Seven teams competed but Willowfield did not enter a team. Ballydrain won the team championship with 43 points to O'Callaghan's Mills' 55 points and East Antrim's 103 points. P. Walshe (O'Callaghan's Mills) was the individual winner.

Fifteen teams contested in the Whitehead Road Race, and Duncairn Harriers won with 41 points to Albert Foundry's 148 points and West Down's 203. Willowfield were 9th with 320 points.

In the N. I. Track and Field Championships, J. A. Lyttle was second in the 100 yards and T. M. Orr won the Marathon in the splendid time of 2 hours 50 minutes and 41 seconds.

1945-46.

The McConnell Shield race was on the 1st December, 1945 - the first open event of the season. Thirteen teams competed over the five mile course. East Antrim, on home soil, won the team event with 101 points to Ballydrain's 118 points and Duncairn Harriers' 122 points. Willowfield were fourth with 151 points. The scoring six were (14) R. McMeekin, (15) J. Rodgers, (24) T. Jennings, (25) J. Dawson, (35) J. McCullough and (38) J. Stevenson.

Thirteen teams finished in the Malcolm Cup Race, held a fortnight later at Lurgan. Ballydrain annexed team honours with

99 points to Duncairn Nomads' 119 points and Willowfield's 136 points. The team was (13) J. Rodgers, (15) T. Jennings, (16) J. Dawson, (23) R. T. Conn, (27) J. McCullough and (42) J. Jackson.

In the West Down Cup in January, 1946, the Club raised the winning flag, defeating Ballydrain by the narrow margin of one point. Eleven teams finished the course. (1) Willowfield, 102 points, (2) Ballydrain, 103 points, (3) Albert Foundry, 119 points. The winning team was (6) H. Lawlor, (11) T. Jennings, (16) R. T. Conn, (22) J. Rodgers, (23) J. Dawson and (24) H. Haggan.

Killyleagh was the venue for the Northern Ireland Junior Championship on the 19th January. Ballydrain won the team championship with 83 points, to Duncairn Nomads' 131 points and Willowfield's 149 points.

The Club competed in the Fawcett Shield Race for the first time for a number of years, on the 2nd February, 1946, at Glen-gormley. North Belfast took first place with 117 points, with West Down second with 158 points, Ballydrain third with 160 points. The Club was 9th with 287 points.

The All Ireland Junior Championship was decided at Finglas, Dublin on 16th February this season. Fifteen teams competed. O'Callaghan's Mills won the team championship with 66 points to Albert Foundry's 145 points with Ballydrain third, 175 points. Willowfield were in 6th place with 216 points. The scoring six were (25) H. Haggan, (26) R. Miller, (27) T. Jennings, (41) R.

McMeekin, (43) N. Sharpe, (45) J. Rodgers.

The Northern Ireland Senior Championship in March resulted in a win for Ballydrain, 45 points to East Antrim's 84 points and Albert Foundry's 161 points. Willowfield were 6th with 202 points. Seven teams competed. H. Lawlor was the first Willowfield man home in 15th position.

In the Youths' Race held at the same course, East Antrim, with 49 points, won from a field of 13 teams. Albert Foundry were second with 44 points and Willowfield third, 64 points. The Willowfield team were (7) R. McMeekin, (12) J. Stevenson, (21) N. Sharpe, (24) W. A. Anderson.

There was no Willowfield team entry in the All Ireland Senior Cross Country Championship; H. Lawlor, an individual entry, finished 21st in the Race, which was won by Ballydrain with 68 points to O'Callaghan's Mills' 87 points and East Antrim's 94 points.

A new inter-club race was held at Ballynahinch on the 30th March, 1946 - the Chandler Cup - ten teams entered. The race is for runners under 21 years of age. Ballydrain won the team race with 41 points to Willowfield's 71, with Albert Foundry third, 88 points. The team was (5) J. Dawson, (8) R. McMeekin, (9) T. Jennings, (10) N. Sharpe, (19) J. Stevenson, (20) J. McCullough.

The Club also finished second in the Whitehead Road Race on Easter Monday. Seventeen teams competed and Albert Foundry won the honours with 139 points to the Club's 166 points, with North

Belfast third, 171 points. The team was (8) R. McMeekin, (13) N. Sharpe, (29) J. Warden, (33) H. Thompson, (36) G. Wilson, (47) A. Browne.

In the Northern Ireland Track and Field Championships, J. A. Lyttle was placed second in the 220 yards.

1946-47.

The season now under review turned out to be one of the best in the history of the Club. The Club gained second place in the McConnell Shield, won the Malcolm Cup, the West Down Cup for the second successive year, the Northern Ireland Junior Championship. Runners-up in the All Ireland Junior Championship, and runners-up in the Chandler Cup race. The details of the races are as follow:-

McConnell Shield Race held on 7th December, 1946 (1) Duncairn Harriers, 125 points, (2) Willowfield, 146 points (3) East Antrim, 168 points. The Willowfield Team was (11) R. McMeekin, (16) J. McCullough, (18) R. Millar, (19) J. Warden, (31) A. Anderson, (51) J. Stevenson.

The Malcolm Cup, 14th December, 1946. Thirteen teams competed (1) Willowfield, 89 points, (2) East Antrim, 115 points, (3) Albert Foundry, 163 points. The Willowfield scorers were (6) T. Jennings, (10) R. McMeekin, (12) R. Conn, (18) J. Dawson, (19) J. McCullough and (24) J. Warden. A newspaper report of the race said, inter alia, "Willowfield was a well-balanced team."

The West Down Cup, 4th January, 1947. Ten Clubs competed, and the Club repeated its victory of 1945-46, winning with 57 points to East Antrim's 101 and Albert Foundry's 103 points. The Team was (4) R. Conn, (6) H. Lawlor, (8) T. Jennings, (11) R. McMeekin, (13) J. Dawson and (15) J. McCullough.

The Miskimmon Cup - for Senior runners, held at Ballyclare. East Antrim won the event with 35 points to Ballydrain's 49 points with Albert Foundry 3rd and Willowfield 4th. R. Conn was the first Willowite home in 11th position.

The Northern Junior Championship, held on 18th January at Killyleagh saw Willowfield register a double. R. T. Conn won the Individual title and the team the championship with 78 points to East Antrim's 130 and Albert Foundry's 176. The winning team was (1) R. T. Conn, (8) J. Dawson, (13) R. Millar, (16) R. McMeekin, (19) J. McCullough and (22) J. Warden. Here is the comment of one of our leading sports' writers "The Willowfield combination constituted one of the strongest seen in action for some considerable time."

In the All Ireland Junior Championship at Glengormley on 8th February, 1947, the Club, strongly fancied to win the event, faced stiff opposition from the newly affiliated A.A.U.E. Club, Coolcree. Twelve teams competed, including Coolcree, Donore, Clonliffe and Civil Service. Coolcree proved too strong for the Club and gained first place in the championship with 68 points to Willowfield's 127 points and Donore's 183 points. The Team was

(4) R. T. Conn, (13) J. Warden, (24) R. McMeekin, (25) J. Dawson,
(30) H. Haggan, (31) R. Millar.

In the All Ireland Senior, which attracted an entry of 10 teams, Coolcree, still unbeaten in this first season under A.A.U.E. laws, gained their fourth successive win, defeating Ballydrain by 69 points to 73 points, with East Antrim third with 133 points. Willowfield were fifth with 198 points. S. H. McCooke, East Antrim, was the individual winner. R. Conn finished in 12th position.

The Chandler Cup Race was won by Ballydrain with 60 points to Willowfield's 81 points and Albert Foundry's 106 points. The Team was (6) J. Warden, (8) R. McMeekin, (9) J. Dawson, (11) J. Stevenson, (22) J. McCullough and (25) A. Anderson.

The Whitehead Road Race was won by South Lurgan from a field of fifteen teams. (1) South Lurgan, 85 points, (2) North Belfast, 159 points, (3) 9th Old Boys, 168 points, (4) Willowfield, 200 points. J. Anderson in 12th place was the first Willowite home.

The Northern Ireland Senior Championship was not decided until the 12th April, 1947, owing to inclement weather in March it was postponed, and the first available date was in April. Willowfield did not enter a team. The race was won by Ballydrain with 41 points to East Antrim's 89 points and Albert Foundry's 108 points.

J. A. Lyttle was second in the 100 yards and 220 yards in the Northern Ireland Track and Field Championships during the season of 1946-47.

1947-48.

The Fiftieth Session of the Club's existence saw the teams well to the fore, gaining Runners up in the McConnell Shield, and winning the West Down Cup for the third successive year, with third place in the Miskimmon Cup.

The McConnell Shield Race was won by Ballydrain with 149 points to the Club's 153 points with Duncairn Nomads in third place with 168 points. Fifteen Teams competed. The Scoring six for Willowfield were (8) T. Jennings, (18) L. McNair, (19) H. Haggan, (20) E. Wilson, (39) A. Anderson and (49) J. Stevenson.

The Malcolm Cup was won by North Belfast with 113 points, (2) Ballydrain, 121 points, (3) East Antrim, 153 points and (5) Willowfield 189 points. H. Haggan was 25th, (27) T. Jennings, (31) L. McNair, (32) E. Wilson, (36) A. Anderson, (38) N. Sharpe.

The West Down Cup Race, decided at Banbridge on the 3rd January, 1948, resulted as stated above, in a win for the Club. R. Conn gained the individual honour. The Team was (1) R. Conn, (10) J. Dawson, (18) R. McMeekin, (20) H. Haggan, (22) T. Jennings and (23) L. McNair.

The Club had to field a new team in the Northern Ireland Junior Championship at Killyleagh in January, 1948. Fifteen teams battled for the honours and premier place went to Ballydrain with 88 points to East Antrim's 121 and North Belfast's 163 points, with Willowfield in 4th position with 198 points. The individual winner was R. Crossan (Duncairn). The Willowfield team's finishing positions were (21) T. Jennings, (27) E. Wilson, (31) L. McNair,

(35) N. Sharpe, (36) H. Haggan, (48) J. Stevenson.

The Miskimmon Cup Race at Ballyclare was won by Ballydrain with 31 points to East Antrim's 57 points, and Willowfield's 95 points. The team placings were as follow, (2) R. T. Conn, (14) J. Dawson, (15) T. Jennings, (20) J. McCullough, (21) R. Millar and (25) H. Haggan.

The All Ireland Junior Cross Country Championship was decided at Finglas, Co. Dublin on 7th February, 1948, when the Club finished in 4th place with 163 points. The Team:- (4) R. T. Conn, (19) T. Jennings, (26) J. Dawson, (30) J. McCullough, (39) N. Sharpe and (46) L. McNair. The Championship was won by Donore with 87 points to Coolcree's 92 points, with Ballydrain in 3rd position with 152 points. Fifteen teams competed. The individual champion was K. Maguire (Donore).

The Northern Senior Championship was decided at Whitewell on 21st February. The actual finishing order was Ballydrain with 47 points, East Antrim 49 points, Willowfield 110 points. The East Antrim team, however, was disqualified, and R. T. Conn (Willowfield) who finished in second position to S. H. McCooke (East Antrim) was declared the new Senior Cross Country Champion, and the Club were second in the list of finishing teams.

On the same day, the Youth Race was won by Ballydrain, the Club not having any competitors in this event.

All Ireland Senior Cross Country Championship.

Coolcree captured the Senior title at Whitewell, Belfast, with 50 points to Ballydrain's 84 points, and Donore's 130 points. The individual champion was J. Keily (Coolcree). Willowfield finished

in 4th position. The Team:- (5) R. T. Conn, (25) J. Dawson, (30) T. Jennings, (33), R. Millar, (34) R. McMeekin, (39) E. Shirley.

Prior to the Senior race the first All Ireland Youths' Cross Country Championship was run at the same venue. The Club annexed the Championship for which 17 teams competed. The team was (3) E. Wilson, (12) G. Sharpe and (14) W. Rodgers. The points were Willowfield 29, Ballydrain 32 and Duncairn 37.

In the Chandler Cup Race the Club were placed second, the team being E. Shirley, R. McMeekin, L. McNair, E. Wilson, A. Anderson and J. Stevenson.

The Whitehead Road Race.

North Belfast won the six mile Road Race with 121 points to Duncairn Nomads' 158 points, with Willowfield in third position. The Team:- (15) J. Stevenson, (20) A. Anderson, (26) E. Wilson, (28) G. Sharpe, (32) N. Sharpe and (37) W. Spence. The individual winner was J. Morrow (Coole Glen).

In the Ten Mile Flat Championship held at Finglas, R. T. Conn gained 3rd position, the first three finishers all beating the existing Irish Record for the distance. In addition, R. T. Conn finished third in the three mile flat Championship. R. T. Conn also represented his country at the International Cross Country Championship race during this season.

In the summer of 1948, the Club was very successful in track races. W. Smyth won the Northern Ireland 100 yards championship and was 2nd in the 220 yards. J. A. Lyttle was third in this championship. S. W. Warwick won the N. I. Youths' High Jump.

E. Wilson was 2nd in the Youths' Mile, and A. Anderson gained 3rd place in both the Javelin and at Putting the Shot. In addition numerous prizes were won at the various Sports Meetings throughout the Six Counties.

To put a seal to the Club's First Fifty Years of activities, the Officials and Committee decided to hold a Golden Jubilee Dinner and Dance in the Willowfield Unionist Hall, Belfast, before the 51st Season opened. Most of the City Athletic Clubs and some of the Provincial Clubs were represented at the function. Mr. A. H. Cole, Chairman, welcomed the guests and spoke briefly of the Club's historic place in the athletic world. Mr. D. McKeag, (Joint President of the Club) submitted the toast of the N.I.A.A. Association and Mr. C. Stewart (Handicapper to the parent body) replied. Serg. Rothwell (R.U.C.) proposed the toast of "The Willowfield Temperance Harriers" emphasising the many proud achievements of the Club since its foundation in 1898. Mr. W. D. Bailie, B.A. responded for the Club. The sentiment of the "Visitors" brought felicitations from Mr. T. T. Millar (Donore Harriers) who said his Club was proud to be with the "Willows" on such an auspicious occasion. Congratulatory speeches were also delivered by Mr. R. Wilkinson (North Belfast), Mr. Campbell (East Antrim) Mr. S. Wilson (Ulster-ville), Mr. A. McMeekin (9th Old Boys), Mr. McCartney (Albertville), Mr. James Towe (Co. Antrim), Mr. W. Haire (Trinity), Mr. L. Chumes, (Duncairn) and Mr. W. Mol.

At an interval in the proceedings a Senior Cup with Replica for Club Competition was presented to the Club by Mr. James McDowell, one of our past members. Songs by Mr. McDowell and others, and a dance wound up a night of festive interest.

Fifty years old and still going strong - such is the boast of the Club, winners of 25 National and Provincial Cross Country Championships, Runners-up in 23 Championships. Winners of 6 inter Club races, Runners-up on 6 occasions, and only once failing in 50 years to finish a Team in all the races it had entered - and the only failure in a Youth Championship ! That is the record of Willowfield Temperance Harriers.

May those who assemble for the Centenary Celebration in 1998, find that the victories of the First Fifty Years have been but a foretaste of still more brilliant achievements.