

**Bailiúchán John J. Higgins,  
Leix and Ossory GAA, 1914-1917**

**GAA/Laois/p1/**

**The GAA Museum and Archive**

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## Introduction

The John J. Higgins collection was acquired, by private donation, by the G.A.A. Archive in May 2008. The collection primarily consists of letters received by John J. Higgins from a variety of sources relating to the organisation of inter-county hurling in Laois during the period 1914-1917.

The collection spans the period 1914-1917 which is, in many ways, the golden years of hurling in Laois. In the 1914 All-Ireland hurling final, played in Croke Park on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 1914, Laois (represented by Kilcotton) were beaten by Clare (represented by Quin) 5-01 to 1-00. The 1915 All-Ireland hurling final, played in Croke Park on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 1915, saw Laois (represented by Ballygeehan) beat Cork (represented by Redmonds) 6-02 to 4-01 to win their first, and to date, only, All-Ireland hurling championship.

Laois has been known as Leix, Queen's County and Leix and Ossory. In 1556 the county was named 'Queens County' in honour of Mary Tudor, Queen of England, while the county town was created and called Maryborough, again in her honour. After the war of Independence the county name was officially changed back to Laois. Locally it has also been known as Leix. Maryborough was changed to Portlaoise also after the War of Independence. At the Central Council meeting of the GAA, held on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 1903, a motion was passed whereby 'the original name for Offaly be substituted for that of Kings Co for the purposes of the Gaelic Athletic Association...also Leix for that of Queens Co' (GAA/CC/AC/1).

This collection offers a rare insight into the 'behind-the-scenes' organisation that was involved in the early years of the G.A.A. championships. Through it an understanding of the way in which a team was prepared for an All Ireland final is offered; including expenses, the organisation of training sessions, advice on how hurling should be played, team selection, the provision of training equipment and the organisation of travelling and accommodation for the squad.

An early form of player welfare is evident throughout this collection. When Laois qualified for the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling final, a fund called the 'Leix and Ossory Training Fund' was established to help ease the financial burden of players; in particular the loss of wages that players would suffer as a result of time taken off work for training purposes. In the circular appealing for funds it is explained that 'The preparation of the team for the Leinster Championship was carried out at the personal expense of the members of the team. This has involved a serious drain on the means of the men, who, in many cases, had to provide substitutes to fill their places of employment during frequent special practices. It would be too much to expect them to bear the expenses of the extra special course of training which it will be necessary for them to undergo for the playing of the All-Ireland Final. The team is mainly composed of working men to whom the loss of a day's wages is a serious matter.'(GAA/Laois/2). Responses to this fund were varied;

the majority of letters in the collection included a contribution while others explained that they could only raise a limited amount for a variety of reasons including World War One 'I thought I could do better, but things are so upset with the war its hard to get money' (GAA/Laois/35) while another respondent explains that he could not raise any money due to 'some friction that has occurred between the County Committee and our Football Team' (GAA/Laois/21). The collection also shows how the funds raised were to be used; GAA/Laois/45 contains a schedule listing the occupations of ten members of the Laois team and the estimated cost of substitute workers for each member; included also is a bill from E.P. McEvoy to Higgins for a substitute worker and rail fare requesting £1.10.0 for a 'substitute for 3 weeks at 10/- per week' and £1.0.0 for 'railway fare to and from Abbeyleix at 1/3 per day for 16 days'.

The difficulty in assembling a full team for training purposes, and the reasons for this, is apparent throughout the collection. A letter from Jas Daly, in response to a telegraph from Higgins stating 'Absolutely necessary Higgins Costelloe Troy attend here Monday' (GAA/Laois/53(2)) informs Higgins that Troy cannot attend a training session 'as he has promised contractors some stuff and he can't disappoint them' (GAA/Laois/54). Again we can see the work versus play balance when J. Duggan comments, in a letter to Higgins, that 'Phelan is more interested in farming than hurling' (GAA/Laois/72). Alternatively though we can also see the accommodating nature of employers; a postcard from P. Daly to Higgins states 'our men has got permission to get off for training for the 3 days 2 hours each day from today for the next 2 weeks if required' (GAA/Laois/57). Another factor affecting hurling in Leix in 1914 was the rise in membership of the Irish Volunteers. Bob O'Keefe, a future president of the Association, wrote in 1914 that 'Our lads are dying on the game lately. Between wet weather and volunteers the hurling is going to the wall' (GAA/Laois/180).

In the collection various letters offer suggestions as to how the team should train and play hurling. From these suggestions the different styles of play, between 1914 and today, is quite evident, with a strong emphasis placed on ground play for the 1914 and 1915 finals. Father Kearney frequently urges the team to practice on their speed and ground play commenting 'There will be no time for fancy play or raising the ball in the All-Ireland final. Men should practice striking ground balls when running at top speed' (GAA/Laois/67). One suggestion made for a practice drill is that 'two men should send a ball in his own direction with the two men running a short distance and fight for possession like two dogs for a hare' (GAA/Laois/62). The letters also offer pieces of advice to team including 'the success of the team as a whole depends on the form of each individual player' (GAA/Laois/67) and that 'centre men should "let with" the ball on all occasions...No forward should be over covetous' (GAA/Laois/64).

The way in which travel and accommodation arrangements were organised for the period 1914-1917 is recorded throughout the letters. With regards travel, the collection contains letters through which various attempts were made,

successfully, to get extra trains running to bring both the team and the supporters to the match. One letter shows how the Leix GAA was successful in getting a reduced fare, and a change in the train timetable, for the purpose of transporting the Leix team and supporters to the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final. B. Lee writes to Higgins that he is 'glad to inform you I got them to give a 3/- fare from here both for Mooncoin team and the public...they also agreed to put back 4.30p.m. train on Maryboro to 4.45p.m. if necessary' (GAA/Laois/102). Preparations for the 1915 final include a letter, from Joseph McDonald to Higgins, in which he states that he has written to 'a couple of men whom I think best for looking after a team before and after the match...Four will be quite sufficient in all as any more would be only in one another's way' (GAA/Laois/58). In relation to accommodation the collection houses a 1914 handwritten bill from Wynn's Hotel, Dublin for 25 breakfasts and 22 dinners (GAA/Laois/107).

Throughout the collection the letters have been arranged by subject type; the one exception to this rule is the collection of letters received by Higgins from Robert O'Keefe (better known as Bob O'Keefe). O'Keefe was a native of Kilkenny (a county he never played for as the declaration rule for non-residents did not operate during his playing career) who made his name within the GAA, first as a player and then as an excellent administrator, holding the posts of treasurer and chairman of Leinster Council before he became the President of the Association in 1935. His letters to Higgins have been kept together, rather than spread throughout the collection by subject type, as they show the role O'Keefe played during this period and the relationship, often at a personal level, that existed between Higgins and O'Keefe.

The letters from Bob O'Keefe highlight the role he played in helping Leix to reach the All-Ireland hurling final two years in a row. His involvement included offering advice on a range of topics, including how Leix could use their 'underdog' status to their own advantage 'we have proved a surprise package all along. Better be underestimated' (GAA/Laois/152); advise on tactics 'Strike on the ground as fast and hard as possible' (GAA/Laois/153) and team selection in which he praises Jim Jones and argues that he should be allowed train with the Leix hurlers stating that 'No one will be more surprised than myself if he does not show himself far superior to anything the County can produce' (GAA/Laois/159).

O'Keefe's letters to Higgins are sometimes of a personal nature. Writing in 1915 O'Keefe explains that his daughter's sickness has kept him away from hurling 'Our little girl has got another attack now on the kidneys...Under the circumstances I was not in any form for training...our youngster (not yet 4 years) has gone through pneumonia, measles, scarlet fever, a heat rash all over her body...You will see it is no wonder I had an anxious time and that the hurling was neglected' (GAA/Laois/155). After Leix's win in 1915 O'Keefe writes Higgins that the win 'affords me the greatest satisfaction too after my 18 years on the hurling field and especially as I feel that my own exertions early last year had a lot to do with Sunday's victory' (GAA/Laois/118). By 1917 however a visible change in his

mood is clearly evident; explaining that he is to miss a hurling match due to an upcoming confirmation O'Keefe writes 'As far as the team is concerned it will not signify much, but I feel it very much myself'(GAA/Laois/171).

Mark Reynolds  
November 2008.



A photograph of the Leix (Ballygeehan) Hurling Team, Winners of the 1915 All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship. This photograph is taken from the photographic collection of the GAA Museum and Archive; (GAA/ph/laois/001).

**Back Row:** Paddy Lee, Joe Carroll, Jim Deegan, J Loughman, Reverend J.J. Kearney, Paddy Ryan, Joe Dunphy, John Phelan, Paddy Campion, John J. Higgins

**Middle Row:** Joe Phelan, Tom Finlay, Jack Walsh, Jack Finlay (Captain), Bob O'Keefe, Ned McEvoy, Jim Carroll

**Front Row:** Jim Hiney, Jack Daly, Jack Carroll

## A. The Leix and Ossory Training Fund, 1914-1915

### i. Establishment of the Leix and Ossory Training Fund

- 1            6 March 1914            Invitations to attend the Leix and Ossory Training Fund Sub-Committee meeting  
 File containing two copy invitations, in typescript form, from M. J. Sheridan and John J. Higgins, Honorary Secretaries to the Training Fund Sub-Committee, to each of the officers of the County Committee (GAA/Laois/1(1)) and to the Honorary Secretary of the Rathdowney Club (GAA/laois/1(2)). Invitations outline the reason for the establishment of the sub-committee stating that 'At the Annual Convention of the Leix and Ossory Gaelic Athletic Association...22nd February, it was unanimously resolved that a fund be established to defray the expenses of training the Senior Inter-County Teams, and a Sub-Committee was appointed, consisting of the Officers of the County Committee...for the purpose of devising and carrying out a Scheme for the raising of the Training Fund'. The invitation ends by stating that 'A meeting of the Sub-Committee will be held in the Town Hall, Maryborough...on St. Patrick's Day, and a punctual attendance is requested, in order that a scheme may be prepared and submitted to the Convention which will sit at 3 O'Clock.'
- 2 items
- 2            29 August 1914            Circular letter asking the people of Leix to contribute to the training fund  
 File containing three copies of an open circular, in typescript form, with the names of Reverend J.J. Kearney, President, James Miller, Trustee, John J. Higgins and M.J. Sheridan, Honorary Secretaries of the Leix and Ossory Training Fund attached to it. The circular opens by stating that 'the Senior Hurling Team representing your County have, by their recent victory over the County Kilkenny Team (All-Ireland Champions) become Champions of Leinster for 1914. They are accordingly in the All-Ireland Final.' The letter continues by highlighting the importance of training and explaining that to this end the County Committee is appealing for contributions to the training fund. Outlining the reason for such a fund the circular states 'The preparation of the team for the Leinster Championship was carried out at the personal expense of the members of the team. This has involved a serious drain on the means of the men, who, in many cases, had to provide substitutes to fill their places of employment during frequent special practices. It would be too much to expect them to bear the expenses of the extra special course of training which it will be necessary for them to undergo for the playing of the All-Ireland Final. The team is mainly composed of working men to whom the loss of a day's wages is a serious matter, and they have, as stated, already sacrificed a considerable sum in this way.' The circular appeals to all 'the Gaels of Leix and Ossory and all friends of the Gaelic Athletic movement' to contribute to the fund asking people



to subscribe before 10 September 1914 as 'our men will go into training' that day.  
3 items

- 3      2 September 1914      Note requesting delegates to attend a meeting of the Leix and Ossory Training Fund Sub-Committee  
Copy note, in typescript form, stating that 'A Meeting of the Training Fund Sub-Committee will be held on Sunday next, the 6th instant, immediately after the matches, at which a delegate from your Club is requested to attend.' The note has the typed names of M.J. Sheridan and John J. Higgins, Honorary Secretaries to the Training Fund, attached to it.  
1p
- 4      7 September 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins authorising him to set up the Leix and Ossory Training Fund Sub-Committee  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins, about the need to pay for substitute workers for members of the hurling team who will miss work. O'Keefe writes 'we will have to pay a man to take Jim Hyland's place also. He is a coach-builder. He is working at home but they are a very large family and they could not very well afford to have Jim away so long' (p.1). Other mens situations are briefly mentioned with O'Keefe ending 'Of course this will involve a big sum of money and it will go near the £80 that I had in my head all along. I would like, if at all possible to have every man free of any loss whatever. You can form that Committee you were talking about [and] put it down as being sanctioned.' (pp.1/2).  
2pp

## ii. Responses to the Leix and Ossory Training Fund Appeal

- 5      September 1914      Blank receipt from the Leix and Ossory training fund  
Blank postcard used as a receipt by the Leix and Ossory training fund sub-committee. The side which is filled in by the sub-committee states 'The Training Fund Sub-Committee beg to acknowledge with thanks, subscription amounting to £ : : received from... on September...1914'. The card is headed 'Gaelic Athletic Association Leix and Ossory Training Fund'.  
2pp
- 6      c. 1914      1914 Leix and Ossory Training Fund Subscription Card  
1914 Leix and Ossory training fund subscription card. The card bears the heading 'Gaelic Athletic Association. All-Ireland Hurling Championship, 1914. Leix and Ossory Training Fund.' Lines on the card are used to fill in the subscriber and the amount, three lines of this card have been filled in. At the bottom of the card the Training Fund Officials are named as Reverend J.J. Kearney, President; James Miller, Trustee; John J.

Higgins and M.J. Sheridan, Honorary Secretaries while the collector's name, Father Conlan, has been filled in with pen.

2pp

- 7      1 September 1914      Letter from Humphry Smith and Sons to Sheridan enclosing a postal order towards the fund  
Handwritten letter from Humphry Smith and Sons, Grocers, Drapers and Ironmongers, Mountmellick to M.J. Sheridan, Honorary Secretary Leix and Ossory Training Fund sub-committee, Maryborough, enclosing a postal order for the training fund. The letter states that 'in response to your circular letter...we have much pleasure in handing you herewith P/O value 5/3 towards the expenses of your team. We hope they shall have the honour of winning the Championship of All-Ireland'. (The enclosed postal order is not included.)  
1p
- 8      1 September 1914      Letter from James Pim to Higgins enclosing a postal order towards the fund  
Letter, in typescript form, from James Pim and Son, Wholesale and Retail Merchants, Mountmellick to John J. Higgins, Honorary Secretary, Leix and Ossory training fund sub-committee, Maryborough enclosing a postal order for the amount of 5 shillings. (The enclosed postal order is not included.)  
1p
- 9      7 September 1914      Letter from E.J. Brennan to Higgins requesting collecting cards  
Handwritten letter from E. J. Brennan, Mullingar, to John J. Higgins in which he states that he has just received from Mr. O'Keefe a circular with reference to the Leix training fund and asks Higgins if he could send him one or two collecting cards and that 'I will try if I can do anything for your fund.'  
2pp
- 10     7 September 1914      Letter from Jack Fletcher to Reverend Kearney enclosing postal orders towards the fund  
Handwritten letter from Jack Fletcher, Ballacolla to Reverend J.J. Kearney in which he encloses postal orders to the value of ten shillings towards the Leix training fund. Fletcher adds that he feels 'sure the boys under your guidance will give a good account of themselves and trust that when the final whistle blows, they will leave the field "Champions of Ireland"'. (The enclosed postal orders are not included.)  
2pp

- 11      8 September 1914      Letter from William Delaney to Father Kearney enclosing a subscription to the training fund  
Handwritten letter from William Delaney, Killeigh, Tullamore to Reverend J.J. Kearney, Maryborough, in which he encloses a note to the value of 10 shillings towards the 'Queens County Gaelic training fund'. (The enclosure is not included.)  
1p
- 12      15 September 1914      Letter from Pat Dunphy to Higgins enclosing a cheque towards the training fund  
Handwritten letter from Pat Dunphy, Abbeyleix GAA, to John J. Higgins in which he encloses a cheque for the amount of £1.4.0 collected for the Leix training fund. Dunphy adds 'I wish it was a bigger sum and hope that the fund may be the means of bringing to Leix the title of All Ireland Hurling Champions'. (The enclosed cheque is not included.)  
1p
- 13      15 September 1914      Letter from R. Behan to Higgins enclosing a postal order towards the training fund  
Letter from R. Behan to John J. Higgins in which he encloses a postal order to the value of five pounds for the Leix Training Fund stating 'Only Queens men here. Wishing your fund every success'. (The enclosed postal order is not included.)  
1p
- 14      15 September 1914      Letter from R. Behan to Higgins enclosing a postal order towards the training fund  
Letter from R. Behan, 2 Sorrento Road, Dalkey, Dublin in which he encloses his subscription, ten shillings, towards the Leix and Ossory training fund stating 'I was unable to get any subscriptions outside my own. Wishing Leix every success on Sunday'.  
1p
- 15      19 September 1914      Letter from Tomás Ua Dugan to Higgins replying to the training fund appeal  
Handwritten letter from Tomás Ua Dugan, Wolfhill, Leix to [John J. Higgins] in which he states that in reply to a circular received he has 'not yet closed subs for L [and] O training fund which I am keeping open till I can send you at least 20 [shillings].  
1p

- 16      19 September 1914    Letter from Martin Carroll to Higgins confirming subscribers to the training fund  
Handwritten letter from Martin Carroll, Ballacolla to [John J. Higgins] in which he states that he has subscribed to the training fund through John Drennan, Ballincolla and that 'The Captains of Clubs here say they will collect this parish'.  
1p
- 17      19 September 1914    Postcard from J. Drennan to Higgins confirming he will send £2 towards the training fund  
Handwritten postcard from J. Drennan to John J. Higgins in which he writes that 'I will forward you by Irish Post on Monday Collection Card...It will be about £2.0.0.'  
2pp
- 18      22 September 1914    Letter from Martin McGratte to Higgins requesting a new subscription card  
Handwritten letter from Martin McGratte to John J. Higgins requesting a new subscription card as he has mislaid his. Writing of the upcoming 1914 All-Ireland hurling final between Laois and Clare McGratte asks Higgins 'What do you think of Clare' adding 'I hear from witnesses of last Sundays game that Leix should do the trick.'  
3pp
- 19      22 September 1914    Letter from J. Phelan to Sheridan stating the amount collected for the training fund  
Handwritten letter from J. Phelan, Ballygeehan, Ballacolla to John J. Higgins stating that he has not finished his collection and that 'with regard to the amount, I fear this will be small as our club membership is small [and] the interest taken in the training of our County team around here is not much indeed. I think 20/- will be as much as I can gather.'  
2pp
- 20      22 September 1914    Letter from N. Carew to Higgins about the training fund  
Handwritten letter from [N. Carew], Ancient Order of Hibernians, Mountmellick to John J. Higgins in which he apologises for the late delivery of the subscriptions to the Leix training fund stating that he has not 'collected the collection yet, as I am trying to get all I possibly can. At present I have 3£ but I hope to get some more. Hoping I have not caused any delay, I anticipate a victory for the boys'.  
2pp

- 21      23 September 1914    Letter from S. Flood concerning difficulties in raising funds for the Leix training fund due to the division between the hurlers and the footballers  
Handwritten letter from S. Flood regarding the difficulties in raising funds for the training of the Leix hurling club. Flood states that 'I regret to say that owing to some friction that has occurred between the County Committee and our Football team (that was) I find it impossible to induce any of the local Gaels to subscribe. It is purely on a matter of principle, but at the same time they wish every success to Leix. team and the Gaelic in general.' Flood ends his letter with an appeal; 'I would like you to use your influence to try and have the county united.'
- 2pp
- 22      23 September 1914    Letter from James Tarrant to Higgins enclosing a postal order towards the training Fund  
Handwritten letter from James Tarrant, Wynn's Hotel, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin to John J. Higgins in which Tarrant writes that he has enclosed a postal order for ten shillings adding 'I am sure you understand I could not bother collecting card owing to my position.' (p.2).
- 2pp
- 23      23 September 1914    Letter from Joseph Moylan to Higgins pledging £10 towards the training fund  
Handwritten letter from Joseph Moylan, Honorary Secretary, Kilcotton Hurling Club, Ballybrophy to John J. Higgins stating that he will forward on a total of ten pounds towards the training fund adding that the included two pounds from the Tullamore Club is 'a very generous donation, a real good headline for the rest of our Leinster friends'.
- 1p
- 24      26 September 1914-    Letters from James Miller to Higgins about the Leix and  
6 October 1914        Ossory training fund  
File containing two handwritten letters from James Miller, Mountrath to John J. Higgins about the Leix and Ossory training fund. In his first letter Miller explains that he cannot attend a training fund meeting (26 September 1914) and in the second he encloses a cheque for the amount totaling £7.5.0. Both letters are on James Miller headed paper. (The enclosed cheque is not included.)
- 2 items
- 25      28 September 1914    Letter from M. Phelan to Higgins enclosing a cheque towards the training fund  
Handwritten letter from M. Phelan to John J. Higgins enclosing a cheque for £1 towards the training fund and adding 'Kindly convey to Fr Kearney my sincere sympathy on the death of his brother.' (The enclosed cheque is not included.)
- 2pp

- 26      29 September 1914      Postcard from J. Drennan to Higgins enclosing subscriptions for the collection fund  
Handwritten postcard from J. Drennan to John J. Higgins in which he encloses the amount of £2.5.0. collected for the training fund and stating 'hoping our boys will be successful' and writes about arranging a match for the coming Sunday.  
2pp
- 27      30 September 1914      Letter from N. Carew to Higgins about the Leix training fund  
Handwritten letter from [N. Carew], Ancient Order of Hibernians, Mountmellick to [Higgins] in which he forwards a draft for the sum of £4.4.6 towards the Leix training fund stating that his 'only regret is its not more'. The letter is written on Ancient Order of Hibernians, Mountmellick, headed paper. (The enclosed draft is not included.)  
1p
- 28      1 October 1914      Letter from Pádraig Ó Ceallaigh to Higgins enclosing a postal order towards the training fund  
Handwritten letter from Pádraig Ó Ceallaigh to John J. Higgins enclosing a postal order for 7 shillings towards the training fund adding 'I regret very much delay in forwarding it and also the smallness of the amount.'  
(The enclosed postal order is not included.)  
2pp
- 29      1 October 1914      Letter from to Higgins enclosing a cheque towards the training fund  
Handwritten letter to John J. Higgins enclosing a cheque for two pounds towards the training fund and asking about travel arrangements for an upcoming junior hurling match. (The enclosed cheque is not included.)  
2pp
- 30      4 October 1914      Letter from Thomas Reilly to Higgins enclosing a postal order towards the training fund  
Handwritten letter from Thomas Reilly, Church View House, Abbeyleix to John J. Higgins enclosing a postal order for 28 shillings and 6 pence towards the training fund. (The enclosed postal order is not included.)  
1p

- 31      9 October 1914      Letter from Jas Daly to Higgins saying people are tired of subscriptions  
Handwritten letter from Jas J. Daly, Clonaslee to John J. Higgins in which he encloses the collecting card and postal orders to the value of £1.3.0. saying that 'This is the best I could do as the people here all say they are tired of subscriptions.' (The enclosed postal orders are not included.)  
2pp
- 32      9 October 1914      Letter from John Delahunty to Higgins enclosing postal orders to the subscription fund  
Handwritten letter from John Delahunty, Raheinleigh, to John J. Higgins in which he encloses postal orders to the value of 7 shillings 6 pence to the training fund and ends with 'hoping the boys are getting on well at the training.' (The enclosed postal orders are not included.)  
1p
- 33      12 October 1914      Letter from M. McGrath to Higgins enclosing funds towards the training fund  
Handwritten letter from M. McGrath, Durrow to John J. Higgins, enclosing 36 shillings adding he is sorry it is not more and asking 'What about next Sunday! I hope the boys are all feeling good and game for a stiff hour.' (pp.1/2).  
2pp
- 34      15 October 1914      Letter from Michael Gorman to Higgins enclosing a postal order towards the training fund  
Handwritten letter from Michael Gorman, Rathdowney to John J. Higgins enclosing a postal order for £2.10.0 adding 'if we are able to do better we [will] let you know in a few days.' (The enclosed postal order is not included.)  
1p
- 35      15 October 1914      Letter from M. Collier to Father Kearney saying the war is affecting collecting for the training fund  
Handwritten letter from M. Collier, 22 Ard Righ Road, Arbour Hill, Dublin to Reverend J.J. Kearney in which he encloses a postal order for 15 shillings 'to help you in expenses with the team.' Collier adds that 'I thought I could do better, but things are so upset with the war its hard to get money' and hopes for success on Sunday. (The enclosed postal order is not included.)  
1p

- 36      15 October 1914      Letter from P.J. Corcoran to J.J. Higgins enclosing the subscription to the Leix training fund  
Handwritten letter from P. J. Corcoran, Abbeyleix to John J. Higgins in which he encloses the collecting card for the Leix training fund together with the collected £1.4.0. wishing the team every success on Sunday. The letter is frayed and torn around the edges. (The enclosed collecting card is not included.)  
1p
- 37      15 October 1914      Letter from Matthew Bergin enclosing funds for the training fund  
Handwritten letter from Matthew Bergin, Honorary Secretary, Granstown Hurling Club, Kilbreedy, Rathdowney [to the Leix Secretary] in which he encloses funds from the Granstown Hurling Club to the Leix training fund. (Enclosure not included.)  
1p
- 38      16 October 1914      Letter from Joe Byrne to Higgins explaining the difficulties he has encountered when collecting for the training fund  
Handwritten letter from Joe Byrne, Monadrehid G.A.A. to [Higgins] in which he explains that Monadrehid could not offer any support to the Leix training fund. Byrne states that 'To tell you the truth I did my best but did not succeede. We have only twenty member in our club and had to pay one of our players 10s a week last month that got hurt'.  
1p
- 39      3 November 1914      Letter from G.F. Conlon to [Higgins] enclosing funds for the training fund  
Handwritten letter from G.F. Conlon, Newbridge, to [John J. Higgins] in which he encloses subscriptions to the Leix training fund stating that 'they made a bad show but they would play a better game next time. How are all the boys.' (The letter is torn at the bottom right corner.)  
2pp
- 40      5 November 1914      Letter from P. Duggan to Higgins enclosing his collecting card and commenting on the amount collected  
Handwritten letter from P. Duggan, 71 Tullow Street, Carlow to John J. Higgins in which he encloses a collecting card and his own contribution commenting that 'its very small I feel rather ashamed of sending such a small sum but their is nothing but collections here at present'. (The collecting card enclosed with the letter is not included with the letter.)  
1p



- 41      5 November 1914      Letter from Joe McMahon to Higgins explaining why he could not collect funds for the training fund  
Handwritten letter from Joe McMahon, Cuddagh to John J. Higgins explaining that he could not collect any funds as 'we were only a new team starting, and to enable us to do so we had to depend on our neighbours in the surrounding districts for their generous subscriptions. Under these circumstances they decline to support it.' (pp.1/2).  
2pp
- 42      26 November 1914      Letter from M. J. McLoughlin to Higgins explaining why he will not collect money for the training fund  
Handwritten letter from M. J. McLoughlin, Ballintubber, Athy to John J. Higgins explaining that he is unable to collect funds for the training fund as he 'is more interested in getting subscriptions for what I think to be a more deserving cause' (p.1) asking Higgins 'Will you kindly support my friend Keating in the appeal Naas v Co Kildare Committee and oblige.' (pp.1/2)  
2pp
- 43      26 November 1914      Letter from W. Tynam to Higgins returning his collection card  
Handwritten letter from W. Tynam, Vicarstown to John J. Higgins stating that he is returning his collection card as 'we have no team in Ballybrittas at present.'  
2pp
- 44      c. 1914      Letter from J. Phelan to Higgins enclosing a postal order towards the training fund  
Handwritten letter from J. Phelan, Ballygeehan, Ballacolla to John J. Higgins enclosing a postal order to the value of 7 shillings and 6 pence adding 'I regret amount is so small but as I mentioned before my district is a particularly bad one.'  
1p

## iii. The Leix and Ossory Training Fund in use

- 45            Undated                            Schedule listing the amounts needed to pay for substitute workers  
 Annotated schedule, in typescript form, listing the funds required for the employment of substitute workers to replace members of the Leix hurling team while they are training. Nineteen men have been named in the schedule; in ten cases their occupation is listed alongside their name. Throughout the schedule amounts have been annotated in pencil often with the abbreviation 'aw' (a week). Professions listed include Railway Milesman (James Carroll), Caretaker (William Lalor), Railway Engineman (William Lenihan), Baker (Richard Reilly) and a worker in the Rathdowney Brewery (P. Goulding).  
 1p
- 46            22 October 1914            Letter from McEvoy to Higgins claiming expenses from the training fund  
 Handwritten letter from E.P. McEvoy, Courthouse, Maryboro to Higgins in which he claims his expenses for rail fare and the employment of a substitute worker. McEvoy states 'Please find below my Bill in connection with the "Leix Training Fund" for substitute and Rail Fare' and details these as 'Substitute for 3 weeks at 10/- per week' and 'Railway fare to and from Abbeyleix at 1/3 per day for 16 days'.  
 1p
- 47            [3 April 1915]            Letter from Richard Reilly to Higgins thanking him for money received  
 Handwritten letter from Richard Reilly, Green Roads, Ballybrophy to John J. Higgins, Honorary Secretary, Leix and Ossory training sub-committee, Maryborough confirming that he has received £2 and thanking Higgins and the Committee for it. Reilly writes 'I cannot find words to thank you- and [the] committee for their kindness. I am going on well thank God and expects to be able to guard the sticks again before another twelve months passes.' (pp.1/2)  
 2pp

- 48            10 April 1915            Letter from Joe Mc Donald to Higgins confirming he has received a letter and cheque from the training sub-committee  
Handwritten letter from Joe Mc Donald, 18 North Main Street, Naas, Dublin to John J. Higgins confirming that he has received a letter and cheque from the training sub-committee. In his letter Mc Donald writes 'With your letter I found a cheque enclosed for £2 which I must say was altogether too good of you as I never expected anything' (pp.1/2) asking Higgins to thank the training sub-committee on his behalf adding 'if in the future I can be of any assistance I will be only too happy to oblige.' (p.2). Commenting on Leix's loss to Clare in the 1914 All-Ireland hurling final Mc Donald writes that he considers Leix were 'in hard luck from start to finish...on field play Queens Co had the best of it all along' (p.3) finishing by writing that he has forwarded on the letter he received from the training sub-committee to his brother, William Mc Donald.  
4pp
- 49            14 April 1915            Letter from William Mc Donald to Higgins thanking him for a cheque received from the training sub-committee  
Handwritten letter from William Mc Donald, 5 Great Brunswick Street, Dublin to John J. Higgins thanking Higgins for a cheque received from the training sub-committee. Mc Donald, states that he received the sub-committee's letter and cheque from his brother Joe and comments that he is 'at a loss to know why your committee should have sent me that cheque as I fail to see what I did, if I did do anything it was a source of pleasure to me and never for a moment expected any return for it only to see Leix All Ireland Champions but better luck next time' (pp.1/2) and asking Higgins to thank the committee and tell them 'that any time they are ever training I will be only too happy to render any assistance I can.' (p.2)  
2pp
- 50            6 November 1915            Letter from Dave Mc Donough to John J. Higgins expressing appreciation for the present received from the training fund sub-committee  
Handwritten letter from Dave Mc Donough, City of Dublin Workingmens Club, 10 Wellington Quay, Dublin to John J. Higgins thanking him for the present he received from the training sub-committee. Thanking Higgins for the present Mc Donough writes 'I appreciate it all the more as it was totally unexpected. As all I did for the Leix team was very little' (p.1) adding that a few 'will drink to the health and prosperity of "the finest hurling team Ireland ever produced-Leix"'. (p.2).  
2pp

## B. Preparations for the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling Final

### i. Organisation of Training Sessions

- 51      Undated      Anonymous postcard to Higgins about the possibility of training against the second division team  
 Handwritten postcard to John J. Higgins stating 'I was just thinking today that if we could get money enough we could get in a good number of 2nd division team. It would be a fine training for them for from what I hear Meath will make them travel all the way. Do not underestimate them.' The message is written on a 'G.A.A. Kilcotton Hurling Club, Ballybrophy' postcard and does not contain a date or a stamp.  
2pp
- 52      Undated      Letter from Jas Daly to Higgins stating that Daly has received no answer from 'three boys' about attending training  
 Handwritten letter from Jas J. Daly, Mountmellick to John about training in which he states that he 'told the three boys about training and couldn't get any decided answer from them. I will be home to-morrow night and will see them again and will let you know.'  
2pp
- 53      5 April 1914-      Telegraphs requesting the presence of individuals for Leix  
 28 September 1914      hurling training sessions  
 File containing three post office telegraphs organising training. Telegraphs organise upcoming training sessions and include 'Absolutely necessary Higgins Costelloe Troy attend here Monday They can return each week-end' (23 September 1914).  
3 items
- 54      21 September 1914      Letter from Joseph Mc Donald to Higgins about the Leix trainer  
 Handwritten letter from Joseph Mc Donald, 18 North Main Street, Naas, Dublin to John J. Higgins in which he discusses 'Mr. Cronin'. Mc Donald explains that Cronin is going [to Leix] on the first train and that Cronin 'would very much liked to have seen the match with Clare last Sunday as he would be better [informed] as how to instruct your team however you will see that he will be as much interested and as anxious to see the team winning as anyone in the country.' (p.2).  
2pp

- 55      25 September 1914      Letter from Jas Daly to Higgins informing him that Troy will not be available to train  
Handwritten letter from Jas J. Daly, Clonaslee to John J. Higgins in which he states that Troy 'can't go to train as he has promised contractors some stuff and can't disappoint them but however he may decide otherwise before Monday.' Daly adds that he has not his collection card filled in but when he does he will return it with the money collected. 2pp
- 56      29 September 1914      Postcard from J. Reilly to Higgins telling him that two players have been informed that training is commencing today  
Handwritten postcard from Reilly to John J. Higgins, Honorary Secretary, Leix and Ossory training fund sub-committee, Maryborough stating that 2 players have been informed that training for the 1914 All-Ireland hurling final 'commence today'. 2pp

## ii. Provision of Equipment

- 57      c. 1914      List of Leix hurling players that hurls have been given to  
Handwritten list of Leix hurling players that hurls have been given to. The list, headed 'Hurleys given to:', includes Jas Carroll, Fintan Killeen, Jas Kelly, John Daly and Joseph Carroll. 1p
- 58      9 September 1914      Letter from J. Quigley to Higgins confirming an order has been placed for a dozen sliothars for Leix hurlers to practice with  
Handwritten letter from J. Quigley, Gal Lodge, Barrow Street, Dublin to John J. Higgins, Honorary Secretary, Leix and Ossory training sub-committee, Maryborough confirming that Moylan of Kilcotton Hurling Club has ordered a dozen hurling balls for the Leix county team to practice with and asking when and to whom shall he send the balls. Quigley ends the letter by wishing Leix success in the final. 1p

- 59      19 September 1914    Letter from J. Quigley to Higgins about the quality and price of the enclosed dozen sliothars  
Handwritten letter from J. Quigley, Gal Lodge, Barrow Street, Dublin to John J. Higgins informing Higgins that he has enclosed the dozen ordered hurling balls assuring Higgins that 'they are identical with balls used in Leinster [and] All-Ireland finals (both of which are manufactured by me)' adding that they are made of the best Irish hide and that they will 'enable your boys to reach the perfection necessary to secure the coveted honour of All-Ireland Champions.' The letter ends with Quigley saying that the total amount due is 30 shillings but Higgins 'need only forward 25/-, the difference will represent my contribution to your training fund.'
- 1p
- 60      20 September 1914    Letter from J. Quigley to John J. Higgins confirming receipt of payment  
Handwritten letter from J. Quigley, Gal Lodge, Barrow Street, Dublin to John J. Higgins confirming he has received payment, and enclosing a receipt, adding that he consider Leix to 'have a real good chance against Clare, they should endeavour to perfect a system of scoring and above all train for speed'. (The enclosed receipt not included with the letter.)
- 1p
- 61      26 September 1914    Letter from James Lalor to Higgins about the ordering of hurls and sliothars  
Handwritten note, on a postcard, from James Lalor, Hurling Ball Manufacturer, Cooleshall, Three Castles, Kilkenny to John J. Higgins, and Sheridan, Honorary Secretaries, Leix and Ossory Training Committee, Maryborough stating he will give their letter to his brother Martin Lalor, Hurley Manufacturer, and that Martin 'will probably send hurleys on Monday' adding 'What about an order for good fast hurling balls you will play with one of mine in All Ireland final which we in Kilkenny hope you will bring to Leinster'.
- 2pp
- 62      29 September 1914    Letter from Martin Lawlor to Higgins confirming an order for twelve hurls and pricing the hurls  
Handwritten note from Martin Lawlor, Hurley Manufacturer, Three Castles, Kilkenny to John J. Higgins confirming that he got the order for one dozen hurleys through his brother, James Lalor, and that he will forward them on Thursday. He further writes that the hurls are of the best quality and cost 3/6 each.
- 1p

- 63      11 November 1914      Letter from Martin Lawlor to John J. Higgins confirming payment  
Handwritten note from Martin Lawlor, Hurley Manufacturer, Three Castles, Kilkenny to John J. Higgins thanking him for the received cheque for £2.2 adding 'I am sorry to hear hurleys were considered too dear but you will see by enclosed price list I did not advance prices on your order as I sent best quality.' The letter is written on 'Martin Lawlor' headed paper. 1p
- 64      5 October 1914      Letter from James Lalor to Higgins confirming an order for twelve sliothars  
Handwritten note, in pencil on a postcard, from James Lalor, Hurling Ball Manufacturer, Coolehall, Three Castles, Kilkenny to John J. Higgins stating that he got an order from his brother, Martin Lalor, Hurley Manufacturer, and that he will send on half a dozen hurley balls tomorrow and the remaining during the week. The note is written on a 'James Lalor' headed postcard. 1p
- 65      6 October 1914      Letter from James Lalor to Higgins about the quality of the ordered sliothars  
Handwritten note, on a scrap of paper, from James Lalor, Hurling Ball Manufacturer, Coolehall, Three Castles, Kilkenny to John J. Higgins stating that the hurling balls he sent to Higgins he 'had to make up...quickly as you want them badly' adding that he 'hurled one of them for about five minutes...I expect to go up to Dublin to see you win. John is referee.' (pp.1/2). 2pp
- 66      6 October 1914      Letter from James Lalor to Higgins that he is sending two more sliothars to Higgins  
Handwritten note, on a scrap of paper, from James Lalor, Hurling Ball Manufacturer, Coolehall, Three Castles, Kilkenny to John J. Higgins stating that he is sending two more hurling balls with more to follow adding that his wife is very ill and he is very busy at the moment but he 'will bring up special ball for Central Council for your match on Sunday.' 1p

- 67            c.October 1914            Letter from James Lalor to Higgins that he is sending two more sliothars to Higgins  
Handwritten note, in pencil on a scrap of paper, from James Lalor, Hurling Ball Manufacturer, Cooleshall, Three Castles, Kilkenny to John J. Higgins stating he is sending two more balls and hopes that when he sends on the remaining two next week he is 'able to congratulate you as All-Ireland champions' adding that he expects to be at the final and that he is 'making a special ball ordered by Central Council for the matter which I may tell you will be pretty lively if the weather keep fine.' (pp.1/2).  
2pp
- 68            29 October 1914            Letter from Mrs. Lalor to Higgins asking him not to pay her husband until Higgins hears from her  
Handwritten note from Mrs. Lalor, Cooleshall, Three Castles, Kilkenny to John J. Higgins. The letter requests that 'If you have not already remitted to James Lalor for hurling balls, don't do it until you hear from me again.'  
1p
- 69            c. 30 November 1914            Letter from Mrs. Lalor to Higgins asking for payment for the sliothars provided by her husband  
Handwritten note from Mrs. Lalor, Cooleshall, Three Castles, Kilkenny to John J. Higgins asking Higgins pay her husband, James Lalor, for the hurling balls he supplied to Leix for training adding 'I'm sure you remember me writing you telling you not to send until you hear from me. So I had forgotten to write sooner'. A note in the top right hand corner of the letter asks Higgins not to 'mention when sending that I caused the delay as he didn't know anything about it'.  
1p
- 70            5 November 1914            Letter from Tom Cronin to Higgins about training and the Maryborough training expenses  
Handwritten letter from Tom Cronin, 1 Erne Terrace (upper), Great Brunswick Street, Dublin to Higgins in which he encloses an account of 'various items I bought for our use in Maryborough while training' asking Higgins to send him cash. In his letter Cronin states that he 'shall do [his] best to spend a week or two in Maryboro. and then I may be of assistance to you. With some new blood I am sure you would win a final. Clare were not the better team by the scores in the last final.'  
2pp



## iii. Practice Drills

- 71      Undated      Notes for players previous to match  
Copy notes, in typescript form, entitled 'Notes for Players Previous to Match' in which a number of recommendations and comments are made. Recommendations and comments include 'The team possessing the greater SPEED AND DASH' will win. The success of the team as a whole depends on the form of each individual...Centre men should "let with" the ball on all occasions...No forward should be over covetous.'
- 1p
- 72      c. 12 March 1914      Letter from J. J. Kearney to Higgins regarding training for the Leix v Dublin Wolfe Tone Tournament semi-final  
Handwritten letter from J. J. Kearney, President, Leix G.A.A. to John J. Higgins about training for the semi-final of the Wolfe Tone Tournament semi-final, to be played between Leix and Dublin. Kearney states that the semi-final is to be played in Tullamore on the 12th of March adding 'From the form shown by Dublin against Kilkenny on Sunday last it is evident that our team must be in a very fit condition in order to win the semi-final' (p.1) and that he urges 'upon you the necessity for immediately commencing a strict course of training-hurling practice, running, sprinting etc' (p.2). Kearney ends with 'This course of training will stand you in good stead for future engagements, the first of which, I sincerely hope, will be the final of the Wolfe Tone Tournament.' (p.2)
- 2pp
- 73      c. 1914      Note on training methods to be used before the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling Final  
File containing three copies of a note containing eight practice drills, to be used in preparing the Leix Hurling Team for the 1914 All-Ireland hurling final between Leix and Clare on the 18th of October 1914. The drills are broken down under the headings Catching, Free Pucks, Side-Pucks, Fighting for Possession, Dribbling, Practice Matches, Combination and Striking. Beside each heading is a suggestion for practicing that particular drill. Included is the suggestion that in 'Fighting for Possession' two men should send a ball in his own direction with the two men running a short distance and 'fight for possession somewhat like two dogs for a hare.' Under striking it is suggested that 'Ground play must be practised. Clare men too fast and determined for fancy work.'
- 3 items

- 74 [c.October 1914] Anonymous letter to the Leix County Secretary concerning training prior to the 1914 All-Ireland hurling final  
Anonymous note from 'A friend of Queens County Hurling' to The Secretary of Leix Hurling Club, Leix, Queens County about the need for Leix to train hard in preparation for the 1914 All-Ireland hurling final. The letter states 'Clare is training hard...So your motto if you mean to win is to leave off work and train. If ye do not...ye will be not only beaten but disgraced'.

1p

#### iv. Personnel and Team Selection

- 75 9 September 1914 Letter from Joseph Mc Donald to Higgins confirming he has found a person to train the Leix hurling team  
Handwritten letter from Joseph Mc Donald, 18 North Main Street, Naas, Dublin to John J. Higgins confirming that he has written to and acquired a trainer for the Leix hurling team. The letter states that Mc Donald has 'written to a very good experienced trainer which I know very well and got a wire from him this evening to say he is ready when called upon.'

1p

- 76 28 September 1914 Letter from J. Duggan to John J. Higgins enclosing funds and commenting on the team selection  
Handwritten letter from J. Duggan, Main Street, Abbeyleix to John [J. Higgins] enclosing the subscription fund and commenting on members of the team. In his letter Duggan encloses a cheque for £3.9.6 saying that he collected this himself and will urge the others to send their collections as soon as possible. Commenting on team members Duggan says that 'Phelan is more interested in farming than hurling. In my opinion J. Lynan should be taken in to train...Against Clare he is just the right style for them boys'. Duggan asks if a selection has been made for a second division match stating that he thinks 'the team requires a few changes. I think Drennan full [forward] is a failure he gave a very poor display yesterday'. This letter is written on the back of the 'Leix and Ossory Training Fund' flyer in which the 'County Committee appeal with confidence to the Gaels of Leix and Ossory and to all friends of the Gaelic Athletic Association movement to contribute to the Training Fund.'

2pp

- 77      28 September 1914      List containing the weight of individual members of the Leix hurling team  
Great Southern and Western Railway telegraph and/or telephone message card containing a handwritten list of the members of the Leix hurling team and each individual's weight. Fourteen members of the team have been listed and to the right of their names their weight has been stated in stones and pounds. The players listed are Jack Carroll (10st 10lbs), P. Goulding (12st 0lbs), J. Hiney (10st 6lbs), J. Hyland (11st 8lbs), Jack Daly (10st), J. White (9st 12lbs), Jim Carroll (12st 8lbs), Jim Jones (13st), J. Kelly (11st), W. Lenihan (11st), Thomas Jones (11st 2lbs), Bob O'Keefe (11st 10lbs), Fintan Killeen (13st 7lbs) and E.P. McEvoy (12st 13lbs).  
1p
- 78      c. 1914      Copy team sheet for the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling Final  
Copy sheet naming the Leix team for the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling final. The names, typed in blue, are arranged in the position the player is to play and include, Reilly, Higgins, Lenihan, O'Keefe, Killeen, Finlay, Goulding, White/Costelloe, Joe Carroll/T. Jones, Jim Carroll, Mc Evoy/Phelan, Sheridan/J. Daly, J. Carroll, Hyland, J. Hiney and J. Jones.  
1p
- v. Travel and Accommodation
- 79      c. September 1914      Sheet detailing some of the arrangements that need to be made before the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling Final  
Handwritten note, by an unknown author [possibly Higgins], detailing some of the arrangements that need to be made prior to the 1914 All-Ireland hurling final. Topics include the possible referee 'Lalor, Breen, Irwin'; train tickets 'Write Gen. Ed Smyth for cheap tickets from Abbeyleix Mt Mellick and Mtrath'; accommodation 'wire Mr. Lee result of conversation with Fr. Kearney re players staying in Maryboro' expenses and equipment 'Write Lalor for 12 hurleys'.  
2pp
- 80      16 October 1914      Letter from Luke J. O'Toole to John J. Higgins enclosing team tickets for the 1914 All-Ireland hurling final  
Handwritten letter from Luke J. O'Toole, Secretary, Central Council G.A.A., Croke Park, Dublin to John J. Higgins enclosing team tickets for the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling final between Clare and Leix. Letter states 'Enclosed please find tickets for teams admission to Croke Park on Sunday next.' The letter is written on Gaelic Athletic Association headed paper.  
1p

- 81      5 October 1914-      Correspondence between W. Hanrahan and Higgins  
           8 October 1914      concerning travel arrangements for the Leix hurling team  
                                  File of correspondence between W. Hanrahan, Secretary,  
                                  Leinster Council G.A.A., 14 South Main Street, Wexford and John J. Higgins  
                                  concerning travel arrangements for the Leix Hurling team. In his letter Hanrahan  
                                  writes to Higgins stating that 'It would have saved a lot of trouble if you had sent  
                                  me this a week ago. I have tried for train from Attanagh but do not hope to get it  
                                  at such short notice' (5 October 1914) to which Higgins replies he 'would like to  
                                  know how I could of wired you about the train being started from Attanagh until I  
                                  first knew what train arrangements had been made? I only received the posters  
                                  on Monday morning, and immediately wired you...Ballygeehan are most anxious  
                                  to have the match played off next Sunday, and are leaving nothing undone to try  
                                  and get the team to travel, but should they not be able to field the selected fifteen  
                                  owing to train arrangements, the Secretary of the representing Club  
                                  (Ballygeehan) tells me he will have considerable difficulty in prevailing on his  
                                  club to send a much weakened team'. (7 October 1914). Hanrahan replies to this  
                                  by cautioning 'I think you should reason logically' further adding that 'Your reply  
                                  is "my attitude is to find out a mistake [and] correct it"...My view is to "prevent a  
                                  mistake you or Drennan [should] write me saying where train [should] run from  
                                  when match was fixed" to prevent a mistake.'
- 3 items
- 82      7 October 1914      Postcard from J. Drennan to John J. Higgins confirming a  
                                  special train will leave for the 1914 hurling final  
                                  Handwritten postcard from J. Drennan to John J. Higgins  
                                  about transport to the 1914 All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final in which he states a  
                                  'special train will leave [Attanagh] at 9am Sunday morning.'
- 2pp
- 83      15 October 1914      Letter from Luke J. O'Toole to John J. Higgins confirming  
                                  travel arrangements for the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling Final  
                                  Handwritten letter from Luke J. O'Toole, Secretary, Central  
                                  Council G.A.A., Croke Park, Dublin to John J. Higgins confirming travel  
                                  arrangements for the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling final between Clare and Leix. The  
                                  letter states that O'Toole 'called Knightsbridge today and arrangements will be  
                                  made for [tickets] to be left behind. Any not getting seating accommodation on  
                                  the Ballybrophy special will be taken up by the Waterford train.' The letter is  
                                  written on Gaelic Athletic Association headed paper.
- 1p

- 84      Undated      Schedule of expenses by team member  
Copy schedule, in typescript, listing team expenses which are broken down by team member. There are three columns to the schedule, the first naming the team member, the second stating his expenses and the third stating train fares. Nineteen team members are named but only sixteen have expenses attached to them. 1p
- 85      12 October 1914      Postcard from J. Drennan to John J. Higgins about the team dinner  
Handwritten postcard from J. Drennan to John J. Higgins requesting the list of particulars for the team dinner. 2pp
- 86      22 October 1914      Bill for from Wynn's Hotel to John J. Higgins for 25 breakfasts and 22 dinners  
Handwritten bill from Wynn's Hotel, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin to John J. Higgins for 25 breakfasts, at 1/6 each, and 22 dinners at 1/6 each. The total for the bill is £3.13.0. The top left corner of the bill contains the logo of 'The Clarence Hotels Company Limited'. 1p
- 87      22 November 1914      Letter from James Tarrant to Higgins sending an amended Hotel Bill  
Handwritten letter from James Tarrant, Wynn's Hotel, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin to John J. Higgins stating that 'with the Managers instructions I have made the necessary alterations. The mistake was seemingly made in the Dining Room. I hope you will find enclosed copy correct.' The letter is written on 'Wynn's Hotel' headed paper. 1p
- 88      25 November 1914      Letter from E. Fitzgerald to Higgins enclosing receipts for purchase orders received  
Handwritten letter from E. Fitzgerald, Wynn's Hotel, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin to John J. Higgins enclosing receipts for postal orders received. The letter is written on 'Wynn's Hotel' headed paper. [Enclosures are not included with this letter]. 1p

## vi. Match Programmes and Decorations

- 89      6 October 1914      Letter from James F. O'Crowley to The Secretary, Queens County GAA about the supply of county decorations  
Handwritten letter from James F. O'Crowley, Wellington Square, Cork to The Secretary, Queens County GAA, about the supply of decorations in club colours. In his letter O'Crowley encloses samples of his decorations writing that they can be made in 'the proper colours of your club on short notice [and] especially as your distinguished men play an important match soon.' O'Crowley further adds that he has a trained staff of wage earners and he that he can put whatever words are required on the decorations such as 'Up Queens County' or 'Co. Board'. He lists and prices each item he is offering for sale. O'Crowley signs the letter 'J F O'Crowley, One of the original seven at founding of G.A.A. 1884 [and] [ed] Handicapper for All Ireland'.

1p

- 90      9 October 1914-  
15 October 1914      Letters received from 'The Gaelic Athlete' about the production and sale of 1914 All-Ireland hurling final souvenir programmes  
File containing two letters, in typescript form, from 'The Gaelic Athlete', 30 Upper Liffey Street, Dublin to John Drennan and John J. Higgins, Honorary Secretaries, Leix and Ossory training fund sub-committee, regarding the production and sale of souvenir programmes for the 1914 All-Ireland hurling final. The first letter, to Drennan, asks Drennan for the placings of the Leix fifteen, with the names of the clubs from which they are drawn as 'The Gaelic Athlete' is producing a souvenir programme for the 1914 All-Ireland hurling final between Clare and Leix on the 18th of October 1914. The second letter, to Higgins, encloses 6 dozen Leix badges asking Higgins to dispose of them before the 1914 final adding 'Thanks for team placings to hand, which we are having printed. If you think any of the programmes would be disposed of on Saturday night, I could forward you a supply by rail on Saturday morning...They are retailed at 1d each, and we would invoice out at 8d per dozen.' Both letters are typed on 'The Gaelic Athlete' headed paper bearing the byline 'The Only Journal in Ireland Devoted Entirely to Gaelic Pastimes.'

2 items

## C. Preparation for the 1915 All-Ireland Hurling Final

### i. Organisation of Training Sessions

- 91            11 October 1915            Letter from P. Daly to Higgins stating that certain men have got permission to be absent from work for hurling training reasons  
Handwritten postcard from P. Daly, Rathdowney to John J. Higgins about training in which he states that 'our men has got permission to get off for training for the 3 days 2 hours each day from 2 until [4.0.6] commencing from to-day (Tuesday) for the next 2 weeks if required'.  
2pp

### ii. Personnel and Team Selection

- 92            20 May 1915            Letter from J. W. Finlay to Higgins naming the team selection  
Handwritten letter from J. W. Finlay, Ballycuddy, Ballacolla, to John J. Higgins naming the team selection. The team named is Finlay, Finlay, Walsh, Phelan, O'Keefe, Carroll, Carroll, Carroll, McEvoy, Carroll, Daly, Hinly, Deegan, Dunphy, Loughman with Phelan, Costigan and Tynan named as the substitutes. Finlay ends by stating that 'Joe Phelan will not be home until the week following. So in our opinion this is the best selection we could make.'  
2pp
- 93            [10 August 1915]            Letter from John J. Kearney to Higgins about the upcoming Leix v Tipperary match  
Handwritten letter from Reverend John J. Kearney, Newbridge, Kildare to John J. Higgins discussing the upcoming Laois and Tipperary fixture. Kearney writes that 'If possible I will be at Croke Park on Sunday to see Leix win their second All Ireland honours.' Kearney further adds that he hopes 'every man will play the game of his life [and] that he will remember it is by skill and speed [and] determination victory is won.' Commenting on the team he says 'At any cost put Jim Phelan full forward as Duggan is too light for the Tip backs, Deep is a real sport [and] as anxious to win as any of us so I am sure he will not object to standing down as substitute.'  
2pp

- 94            1 October 1915            Letter from Jim Doyle to Father Kearney declining an invitation to train Laois for the 1915 All-Ireland Hurling Final  
Handwritten letter from Jim Doyle, 1 and 2 Michael Street, Waterford to Father Kearney in which he declines an invitation to train Maryborough hurling team stating that 'I need not tell you I would think it an honor to have charge of your team in training. If I had any idea that my services would be any use to you I would have put back my holidays'. Doyle further adds that he has been in touch with Robert O'Keefe and they suggest to get a man named 'Drug' to train the team stating that he 'will be a good trainer [for] the boys. He understands quite well what training is needed for a hurling match.' Doyle also offers some advice and opinion stating that 'You ought to be very careful and don't leave them train too hard. As you know hard training weakens and stiffens the muscles and limbs. I think your boys ought to be fairly fit by now. I am sure there is not much waste flesh on any of them.'
- 3pp
- 95            15 October 1915            Letter from "Drug" to Higgins confirming he will be attending the 1915 All-Ireland Hurling Final  
Handwritten letter from "Drug", Waterford to John J. Higgins confirming that he will be at Croke Park for the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final. Drug writes that he did not write before now as he was waiting to get 'a definite answer from the Doctor thats attending me. He gave me good news today told me he would probably discharge me from his care altogether tomorrow' (p1). Of his absence Drug writes 'I feel sorry that my stay amongst you was so short whether I would be able to make the team anything better I can't tell' (p.2) adding 'I hope you will be able to bring them out in top form I expect to be at Croke Park on Sunday week to give little encouragement and shout the boys to victory.' (p.2).
- 2pp



## iii. Practice Drills

- 96      22 March 1915      Letter to the Ballygeehan Hurling Club about training exercises  
 Copy typed letter from John W. Finlay, Captain, John Phelan, Honorary Secretary and John Phelan, Honorary Treasurer to the Ballygeehan Hurling Club in which the three offer advice on training tactics leading up to the 1915 Leix Hurling Championship. The letter begins with 'For the honour of Ballygeehan, we appeal to you to do your utmost to retain Leix Hurling Championship for 1915. This we can do by acquiring the staying powers and speed necessary for a player to do his best for the whole of an hour's hard play.' To achieve this the letter highlights the importance of 'long easy jogging runs, beginning with one mile the first day and increasing the distance by, say quarter of a mile each day, doing on the fifth day...three miles.' The letter further adds that for the succeeding week the long distance running should be continued but 'vary the pace to a short sprint of 40 or 50 yards, about six times during each run' while the last week should consist of several short runs 'bursts of from 10 to 30 yards at full speed'. The letter also comments on hurling practice saying that it 'must take place each evening up to 2nd April, and special attention should be devoted to catching, striking as hard as possible, ground play and tackling. Long pucking from goal, free pucks and side line pucks must be practiced'. The letter ends by warning that 'Leix are now All-Ireland Hurling Champions, and Ballygeehan Champions of Leix...your opponents will make a determined effort to take the honour from you, and that the unbeaten record of Ballygeehan is at stake.'
- 1p
- 97      11 October 1915      Letter from J.J. Kearney to Leix advising them on training methods ahead of the 1915 All-Ireland Hurling Championship Final  
 Copy typed letter from John J. Kearney, President, Leix and Ossory G.A.A. to the Leix Hurling Team in which he offers advice on training tactics leading up to the final of the 1915 All-Ireland Hurling Championship, to be played between Leix (Ballygeehan) and Cork (Redmonds) on the 24th of October 1915. In his letter Kearney states that he hopes to impress on all the importance of catching, striking quickly after catching and ground play saying that 'There will be no time for fancy play or raising the ball in the All-Ireland Final. Men should practice striking ground balls when running at top speed.' The letter ends with Kearney appealing to each member of the team to put his 'best efforts into his training, remembering that the success of the team as a whole depends on the form of each individual player.'
- 1p

- 98            11 October 1915        Letter from John J. Kearney about training methods for the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final  
 Copy letter, in typescript form, from John J. Kearney, President, Leix G.A.A., Maryborough to an unnamed recipient advising on training techniques in advance of the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final between Leix and Cork. In his letter Kearney writes 'I desire to impress on all the importance of practicing:-Catching, Striking quickly after catching, and Ground play' adding that 'There will be no time for fancy play or raising the ball in the All-Ireland Final. Men should practice striking ground balls when running at top speed...the team possessing the greater SPEED AND DASH will certainly be the All-Ireland Champions this year.' Kearney ends the letter with 'Wishing you every success and relying on you to do your utmost for the honour of Leix.'

1p

## iv. Travel

- 99            December 1914        Memorandum from B. Lee to Higgins about the possibility of getting reduced train fares for Leix hurlers travelling to and from training  
 Handwritten memorandum from B. Lee, Ballybrophy to John J. Higgins, Maryborough. In the memorandum the issue of reduced train fares for Leix players travelling for training is raised 'I read papers...re Father Kearney's [application] for reduced fares for the tickets issued for the training of the men who joined at Abbeyleix and needless to say I made the strongest recommendations I could and I trust ye will get the refund.' The memorandum is handwritten on Great Southern and Western Railway memorandum paper; Ballybrophy has been stamped as the station of origin.

1p

- 100          5 October 1915        Memorandum from B. Lee to Higgins confirming reduced prices and potential new train timetable for the 1915 hurling final  
 Handwritten memorandum from B. Lee, Waterford to Reverend J.J. Kearney, Maryborough about travel arrangements for the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final. Lee writes that he negotiated with 'Mr. Doyle' and another official and that he is 'glad to inform you I got them to give a 3/- fare from here both for Mooncoin team and the public and a 2/- fare from Kilkenny for same...they also agreed to put back 4.30 p.m. train on Maryboro to 4.45p.m. if necessary'. Lee further comments that he is delighted the Leix team is in good form and that 'after witnessing the Munster final I have every confidence they will bring All Ireland honours this year.' The memorandum is handwritten on Great Southern and Western Railway memorandum paper; Waterford has been stamped as the station of origin.

1p

- 101      November 1915      Memorandum from B. Lee to Higgins discussing posters and travel arrangements  
Handwritten memorandum from B. Lee, Waterford to John J. Higgins. The memorandum discusses matters including posters for the upcoming Leix match (p.1), travel arrangements 'I think our boys will travel with full intercounty team as it would be a splendid practice for them' (p.1) and Leix's potential to win the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final 'I think that Leix has splendid material this year [and] should stand a great chance of winning the All-Ireland'. (p.2). The memorandum is handwritten on Great Southern and Western Railway memorandum paper; Waterford has been filled in for place.

2pp

v. General Match Preparations

- 102      14 May 1915      Postcard from J.J. O'Sullivan to Higgins asking about match arrangements  
Handwritten postcard from J.J. O'Sullivan, Roscrea, Tipperary to John J. Higgins, Maryborough. O'Sullivan asks 'if anything definite has been arranged about us (tickets etc.) for next Sunday'.
- 103      20 October 1915      Letter from Joseph Mc Donald to Higgins organising a team of four men to look after the Leix hurling team before and after the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final  
Handwritten letter from Joseph Mc Donald, 18 North Main Street, Naas, Dublin to John J. Higgins organising a team of four men to look after the Leix hurling team before and after the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final. In his letter Mc Donald writes 'I have written yesterday to a couple of men whom I think best for looking after a team before and after the match. I will arrange with two along with my brother. Four will be quite sufficient in all as any more would be only in one another's way' (pp.1/2) adding 'Anything you want us to do remember don't think bad of asking us as I can assure you the pleasure will be ours.' (pp.2/3).
- 104      21 October 1915      Letter from Joseph Mc Donald to Higgins asking him if he needs any materials for training  
Handwritten letter from Joseph Mc Donald, 18 North Main Street, Naas, Dublin to John J. Higgins telling Higgins that if he needs any training materials to let 'Bill' know.

2pp

3pp

1p

- 105      1 November 1915      Letter from the Kilkenny Journal to J. J. Kearney about the inclusion of the Leix team photograph in the journal  
Handwritten letter, on 'The Kilkenny Journal' headed paper, from [G. Kinlay] to Reverend J.J. Kearney in which a photograph of the Leix Hurling Club is enclosed, asking Kearney to let him have the names of the players as they appear in the photograph. Kinlay explains that the photograph will be reproduced in 'The Kilkenny Journal' next week and that he is sorry he 'was unable to have it last Saturday. I did not receive the photo till Friday evening and it was too late then'.
- 2pp

#### **D. Reaction to Leix's victory in the 1915 All-Ireland Hurling Final**

- 106      26 October 1915      Copy of a letter from Coote to Drennan congratulating the Leix team on their victory in the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final  
Copy of a handwritten letter from Algernon Coote, House of Commons to John Drennan congratulating Leix on their victory in the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final. Coote writes 'will you convey my hearty congratulations to the Leix team, upon winning the hurling championship.'
- 1p
- 107      28 October 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins commenting on Leix's All-Ireland win  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins commenting on Leix's success in the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final. O'Keefe writes 'I am sure you can hardly take life seriously this week after Sunday's great win. It was magnificent and I hope the team will stick together for years to come' (p.1). Of his own contribution O'Keefe comments 'It affords me the greatest satisfaction too after my 18 years on the hurling field and especially as I feel that my own exertions early last year had a lot to do with Sunday's victory. (pp.1/2). Writing that all Leix and Ossory is proud of the achievement O'Keefe states 'it is something in the Gaelic world now to be a Leix man' (p.2) before commenting that 'what a pity our footballers could not organise [and] do the trick now. They have the material if handled properly' (pp.2/3). O'Keefe asks Higgins to send him copies of the 'Leader' as he is sure "Sheridan" will have written something good and ends the letter with 'hoping you feel fully rewarded for all your work [and] worry [and] trouble over inter-county hurling matches for past two seasons.' (p.4).
- 4pp

- 108 c. 28 October 1915 Telegraph from Meehan congratulating Higgins on Leix's 1915 All-Ireland win  
Telegraph from Meehan, House of Commons to John J. Higgins, Maryborough congratulating him on Leix's success in the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final. The telegraph states 'Publish Cootes letter also my congratulations I wrote John Finlay direct on Tuesday'.  
1p
- 109 11 November 1915 Letter from J. Phelan to John J. Higgins commenting on the review of the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final found in two newspapers  
Handwritten letter from J. Phelan, Saint Joseph's, Maynooth, Kildare to John J. Higgins thanking him for the two papers received which both had a 'good comment' of the match. Phelan adds 'The Cork paper especially admitted their defeat...I am delighted Wexford won last Sunday also as all the honours are coming to Leinster this year.' (pp.1/2)  
2pp

### **E. Organisation of Leix GAA Teams, 1916-1917**

- 110 26 July 1916 Letter from J.J. Kearney to Leix advising them on training methods ahead of the 1916 Wolfe Tone Memorial Tournament Final  
Copy typed letter from John J. Kearney, President, Leix and Ossory G.A.A. to the Leix Hurling Team in which he offers advice on training tactics leading up to the final of the 1916 Wolfe Tone Memorial Tournament between Leix and Tipperary. The letter begins with 'To maintain the honour achieved by Leix in winning the All-Ireland Hurling Championship last year, I appeal to you to do your utmost to get into the best possible trim for the match with Tipperary in the final of the Wolfe Tone Memorial on 13th prox'. To achieve this the letter highlights the importance of 'long easy jogging runs, beginning with one mile the first day and increasing the distance by, say quarter of a mile each day, doing of the fifth day...three miles.' The letter further adds that for the succeeding week the long distance running should be continued but 'vary the pace to a short sprint of 40 or 50 yards, about six times during each run' while the last week should consist of several short runs 'bursts of from 10 to 30 yards at full speed'. The letter also says that hurling practice must take place each evening up to the 6th of August 1916, and 'special attention should be devoted to catching, striking as hard and fast as possible, ground play and tackling.' The letter ends by warning that 'Leix are now All-Ireland Hurling Champions...your opponents will make a determined effort to win; that they are very formidable opponents, having defeated the best hurling teams in Munster during the past few months, including Cork on two or three occasions by comfortable margins.'  
1p

- 111      9 August 1916      Letter from J. Ayres to P. McEvoy  
 File containing two copy letters, in typescript form, from J. Ayres, Honorary Secretary, Dicksborough Hurling Club, King Street, Kilkenny to Mr. P.E. McEvoy, Courthouse Maryborough. Ayres, on behalf of the Committee of Dicksborough Hurling Club. Ayres writes that he has heard that McEvoy is planning on not playing for Leix the following Sunday due a previous accident with the 'late Mr. Nugent'. Of the accident Ayres states that McEvoy had 'as much to do with it as I had. It was the fall against the paling that caused the injury. Of this you need have no doubt'. Ayres asks McEvoy to reconsider playing for Leix saying that it would be 'a favour on both the family and relatives of the late Mr. Nugent and Dicksborough Hurling Club' and states that even if McEvoy did cause the accident, accidentally or willfully, Nugent's last wish would be 'that you should continue to pay the game and hold the honour of your County.'
- 2 items
- 112      10 August 1916      Letter from William Mc Donald to Higgins making arrangements before a match  
 Handwritten letter from William Mc Donald, 95 Great Brunswick Street, Dublin to John J. Higgins about arrangements prior to a Leix hurling match. Confirming that he can help the team Mc Donald writes 'of course you might rest easy as you know it would only be a source of pleasure for me to do a turn for you or the boys. I will have everything they want in the way of oils and embrocation' (p.1) adding that the 'weather is very warm for training. I will drop up to see you at the hotel on Saturday night when I can make arrangements for Sunday morning.' (p.2).
- 2pp
- 113      9 January 1917      Postcard from W. Walsh to John J. Higgins thanking him for an earlier card  
 Handwritten postcard from W. Walsh, Waterford to John J. Higgins thanking him for a card received 'announcing postponement of match Abbeyleix v Ballyroan'.
- 2pp
- 114      28 January 1917      Postcard from [Nally] to Higgins asking for the venue of the upcoming Abbeyleix v Ballyroan football game  
 Handwritten postcard from [Nally], The Gaelic Press, 30 Upper Liffey Street, Dublin to John J. Higgins, Maryborough. Nally states that Higgins never gave him the name of the venue for the upcoming football match between Abbeyleix and Ballyroan and asks 'Please let me know same by return of post.' The message is written on a 'The Gaelic Press' headed postcard.
- 2pp

- 115      30 January 1917-      Invoices from The Gaelic Press for posters printed  
 14 March 1917  
 File containing two invoices from The Gaelic Press, General Printers and Publishers, 30 Upper Liffey Street, Dublin to John J. Higgins, Maryborough. Both invoices are for posters printed by The Gaelic Press.  
 2 items
- 116      28 February 1917      Letter from John Drennan to Higgins organising posters for upcoming GAA fixtures  
 Handwritten letter from J. Drennan, Secretary, Leix and Ossory G.A.A., Ballacolla to John J. Higgins about organising posters for upcoming G.A.A. games. Drennan asks Higgins to 'arrange posters for the Ballyroan v Abbeyleix...and Abbeyleix v Stradbally games' adding 'Kindly see Mr Sheridan [and] get out posters so as the authorities cant say anything.' The letter is written on 'Leix and Ossory GAA' headed paper.  
 1p
- 117      22 March 1917      Postcard from J. Drennan to John J. Higgins  
 Handwritten postcard from J. Drennan to John J. Higgins stating that the Abbeyleix v Ballyroan match is being arranged for Saint Patrick's day. The postcard contains the header 'Ballacolla Leix and Ossory G.A.A.' and contains a green halfpenny stamp.  
 2pp
- 118      15 June 1917      Letter from W. Hanrahan to Higgins confirming Hanrahan has sent match posters to Higgins  
 Typed letter from W. Hanrahan, Printer and Paper Merchant, 14 South Main Street, Wexford to John J. Higgins, stating that he has sent to Higgins 40 posters for the matches in Ballybrophy and that he would be obliged if Higgins would send some to Mountrath and Ballybrophy.  
 1p
- 119      Undated      Schedule of Leix hurling club team matches played  
 Copy schedule, in typescript, listing ten games played between hurling clubs in Leix and the winner of each game. The schedule lists the two teams and on the right hand side the winning team is named. The bottom of the schedule contains the number of games won by each club included. Clubs on the schedule are Vicarstown, Ballyroan, Abbeyleix, Maryboro and The Heath.  
 1p

## F. Administrative Matters, 1914-1917

### i. Correspondence with Leinster Council and Central Council

- 120      undated                      Letter from W. Hanrahan to an unnamed party about Leinster Council's subscription to Central Council  
 Handwritten letter from W. Hanrahan, Secretary, Leinster Council G.A.A., 14 South Main Street, Wexford to an unnamed party (possibly John J. Higgins) regarding Leinster Council's subscription to Central Council. In his letter Hanrahan explains that 'By resolution of last year we were to give if funds would afford it £75 to Central Council. I suggest £30 or £40 this year [and] carry over £25 or £35 as a working balance' and asks the unnamed recipient 'If you agree to these figures I will at once send out cheques to the counties...By sending out cheques now I can get books audited on March 1st'.
- 1p
- 121      December 1914                  Notice for an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Gaelic Athletic Association, Limited to be held on the 19th of December 1914  
 Notice, in typescript form, of an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Gaelic Athletic Association, Limited to be held at Wynn's Hotel, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin on Saturday the 19th of December at 8p.m. The notice lists the resolutions to be discussed at the meeting including 'That, in pursuance of the objects stated in the Memorandum of Association, the property, assets, debts, liabilities, and undertaking of the Gaelic Athletic Association and that the Trustees thereof be acquired and taken over by the Gaelic Athletic Association, Limited, and that the said Gaelic Athletic Association, Limited, shall indemnify and keep indemnified the said Gaelic Athletic Association and the Trustees or any of them against said debts and liabilities.' A resolution from the Kerry County Committee requests 'Central Council to summon immediately a Convention of the Association for the purpose (1) of amending the conditions of the Association so as to allow the affiliation of Rifle Clubs in the same manner as Hurling and Football Clubs as now affiliated' explaining that the Kerry County Committee 'consider the present situation to be of the greatest concern to the Irish Nation'.
- 1p



- 122      13 February 1915      Letter from Luke J. O'Toole to John J. Higgins explaining why a cheque has not yet been issued  
Handwritten letter from Luke J. O'Toole, Secretary, Central Council G.A.A., Croke Park, Dublin to John J. Higgins explaining that he has filled in a cheque for £3.1.6 but due to the absence of the signature of [Mr. Crowe] the cheque cannot be issued. O' Toole adds that [Crowe] 'is returning this [evening] and has promised to call on me tomorrow Sunday when I will post your cheque to reach you on Sunday.' The letter is written on Gaelic Athletic Association headed paper.  
1p
- 123      16 February 1915      Letter from W. Hanrahan to an unnamed party concerning Leinster county balance sheets  
Handwritten letter, on Leinster Council G.A.A. headed paper, from W. Hanrahan, Secretary, Leinster Council G.A.A., 14 South Main Street, Wexford to an unnamed party (possibly John J. Higgins) stating that by resolution of an All-Ireland convention the financial year for Provincial Councils closes on February the 28th 'so the four unaffiliated counties have until that date to pay up' and that 'By resolution of Leinster Convention the Balance sheets must go out a month before convention.'  
1p
- 124      18 February 1915      Letter from W. Hanrahan to Drennan about Leix representative's expenses for attending Leinster Council meetings  
Handwritten letter from W. Hanrahan, Secretary, Leinster Council G.A.A., 14 South Main Street, Wexford to Drennan regarding Leix representative's expenses for attending Leinster Council meetings. In his letter Hanrahan lists the Leix members who attended Leinster Council meetings between 15 February [1914] and 4 February [1915] asking Drennan to 'check and return to me at once as I propose sending out cheques for one attendee at each meeting on Monday.'  
1p
- 125      18 March 1915      Letter from W. Hanrahan to John J. Higgins about the Wolfe Tone Tournament  
Handwritten letter from W. Hanrahan, Secretary, Leinster Council G.A.A., 14 South Main Street, Wexford to John J. Higgins concerning the Wolfe Tone Tournament. Hanrahan writes that as the tournament is 'for a "charity" purpose we are trying to run the matches as cheaply as possible' adding that he wants Higgins 'to lend a hand in working gate, selling tickets etc.' The letter is written on Leinster Council G.A.A. headed paper.  
1p

- 126      10 June 1915      Letter from J. W. Finlay to John J. Higgins regarding the right of Ballygeehan to represent Laois  
Handwritten letter from J. W. Finlay, Ballycuddy, Ballacolla, to John J. Higgins regarding the right of Ballygeehan to represent Laois. In his letter Finlay writes that he had a card from Father Kearney requesting that Ballygeehan play Dublin, under Bob O'Keefe, but due to the upcoming Carlow game Finlay feels that 'this is rather putting on our fellows. I wonder what did we win the championship for, or if Kilcotton had won would they give us the selection of a team for Carlow.' Finlay also writes that he is 'writing to Fr. Kearney this evening also on behalf of the Ballygeehan club letting him know the voice of a meeting we held last evening, the committee of which, instructed me to write him that as champions "Ballygeehan claim the right to represent"'.  
3pp
- 127      11 June 1915      Letter from Andrew Harty to J. Drennan  
Handwritten letter from Andrew C. Harty, Secretary, Gaelic Athletic Association (Athletic Council), 68 Upper O'Connell Street, Dublin to J. W. Drennan, Honorary Secretary, Leix GAA. In his letter Harty states 'I am in receipt of your letter and note same which is all right'.  
1p
- 128      18 June 1915      Letter from J. W. Finlay to Father Kearney asking Kearney to find a replacement for him for the upcoming Leinster Council Meeting  
Handwritten letter from J. W. Finlay, Ballycuddy, Ballacolla, to Reverend J.J. Kearney, President, Maryborough G.A.A., asking Kearney find a replacement for him to attend the upcoming Leinster Council meeting. Finlay states that 'I dont think I would be capable of taking such a responsible meeting on myself...If you can at all get any other delegate I would rather, as I am not fully acquainted with one member on Council'. Finlay ends by writing 'Hoping I will get out of the job'.  
2pp
- 129      9 August 1916      Letter from Luke J. O'Toole to John J. Higgins regarding Leix team expenses  
Handwritten letter from Luke J. O'Toole, Secretary, Central Council G.A.A., Croke Park, Dublin to John J. Higgins enclosing vouchers for the Leix team and explaining that 'we must be furnished with particulars of hotel expenses of team which must end after dinner on Sunday.'  
1p

- 130      14 May 1917      Letter from James Miller to John J. Higgins about the trusteeship accounts  
Handwritten letter from James Miller, Mountrath to John J. Higgins. In his letter Miller discusses a sweepstake 'I return paper about sweepstake which was such a great success' and the trusteeship accounts 'as to trusteeship I went to bank today to transfer'. The letter is written on 'James Miller' headed Memorandum paper. 2pp
- 131      14 June 1917-      Correspondence between W. Hanrahan and Higgins about  
15 June 1917      upcoming fixtures and the secretary's successor  
File containing two letters from W. Hanrahan, Secretary, Leinster Council G.A.A., 14 South Main Street, Wexford to John J. Higgins about organising an upcoming fixture and ensuring the ease of succession. Hanrahan writes 'Wire me in the morning if there is a field available at Ballybrophy. I am waiting to get our posters and though I wrote Drennan there is no reply' further adding that he wants 'to have arrangements for June 24 perfect for my successor.' (14 June 1917). This theme is again raised when Hanrahan writes 'I am writing Tarrant, Higgins, Duggan, Miller and Corrigan to take charge in Ballybrophy. And I meant to have 24th so fully catered for in all centres my successor will have no difficulty'. (15 June 1917). Both letters are written on Leinster Council G.A.A. headed paper. 2 items

## ii. The Leix v Kilkenny Appeal

- 132      11 June 1914-      Letter, and enclosure, from W. Hanrahan to Drennan  
 14 June 1914      about a Kilkenny appeal against the score from a hurling  
                                          match with Leix
- Handwritten letter (14 June 1915), and enclosure (11 June 1915), from William Hanrahan, Secretary, Leinster Council G.A.A., 14 South Main Street, Wexford to Drennan in which he objects to an enclosed copy of Kilkenny's appeal against the score of a recent Kilkenny v Leix hurling match. The enclosed copy Kilkenny objection, from John Lalor, Secretary, Kilkenny County Committee G.A.A., Dublin Road, Kilkenny to William Hanrahan states that Lalor 'on behalf of Kilkenny Hurling team appeal against the decision of the referee in match Kilkenny v Leix played at Tullamore on Sunday' (p.1) explaining that the final score recorded by the referee was Leix 4:01 to Kilkenny's 2:06 but adding that 'I contend [and] will prove to your Council's satisfaction that the scores at termination of game should read Kilkenny 2 goals 6 pts Leix 3 goals 1 pt in so much as Kilkenny were penalised to the extent of 1 goal by the gross misrepresentation of the rule on which I base my appeal.' (p.1) Lalor explains that towards the end of the game, Rochford, a Kilkenny hurler, fouled a Leix player, resulting in a Leix free. 'In taking the penalty the Leix player raised the ball on his hurley and touching twice threw it off his hurley to his partner standing about 6 yards to his rear, the latter player catching the ball in his hand and striking it towards the goal [enabling Leix to register a goal' (pp.1/2). Lalor further maintains that this was the winning goal as no more goals or points were scored in the game arguing that 'I will refer to Rule 10 page 83 Official Guide and note which states "In all free pucks including 70 yds puck no player shall approach nearer than 21 yds until the ball is pucked". Note (1) states "Should a player stand nearer than 21 yds when a free puck is being taken the opposing team shall be awarded a free puck from where he stood." I plead that this rule has been much abused by the fact of the referee allowing the Leix players to stand within 5 yards of the one taking the penalty together with having permitted the striker to use the ball twice without getting it away.' (p.2). Based on these reasons Lalor argues that the game should be annulled adding that both he and the Kilkenny team regret having to make such an appeal against the Leix team who 'have always been friendly and manly rivals of ours for years...I am quite certain that they (Leix) will agree that we are not advocating any technicality to serve a means of justice.' (p.3). This copy appeal is handwritten on 'Kilkenny County Committee G.A.A.' headed paper.

2 items

- 133      15 June 1915      Letter from J. Drennan to John J. Higgins about appealing a decision made during the Leix v Kilkenny match  
Handwritten letter from J. Drennan, Ballacolla, to John J. Higgins discussing the 'enclosed appeal...against the referees decision in the match Leix v Kilkenny [and] played at Tullamore on June 6th'. Drennan suggests that 'as all the delegates will be at Maryboro on Sunday next they could hold a meeting [and] see what would be best to be done as a meeting of Leinster Council may be held before our Co Committee meeting'
- 2pp
- 134      18 June 1915      Letter from John Phelan to J.J. Kearney about the objection lodged by Kilkenny  
Handwritten letter from John Phelan, Honorary Secretary, Ballygeehan Hurling Club to J.J. Kearney, President, Leix about the objection lodged by Kilkenny against the score line of a Leix v Kilkenny hurling match. In the letter Phelan states that he has 'received word from Mr. Drennan, that the objection lodged by Kilkenny against Leix, will be heard on Sunday next' (p.1) commenting that 'My team is of the opinion that under no circumstances ought match to be re-played...It might be well to instruct delegate to this effect.' (pp.1/2).
- 2pp
- iii. Tributes to Reverend J.J. Kearney
- 135      November 1915      Memorandum from B. Lee to John J. Higgins about the presentation watch for Reverend J.J. Kearney  
Handwritten memorandum from B. Lee, Waterford to John J. Higgins commenting on the proposed presentation watch to be given to Reverend Kearney. Lee writes that he is 'very pleased indeed to see that the Gaels of Borris and Ossory have decided to pay a richly deserved compliment to Father Kearney their esteemed and beloved President to mark the occasion of that glorious victory in the All-Ireland hurling final.' Pledging to the fund Lee praises Kearney's efforts and commitment to the Gaelic pastimes in Leix. The memorandum is handwritten on Great Southern and Western Railway memorandum paper; Waterford has been filled in for place.
- 1p
- 136      4 December 1916      Letter from Tarrant to John [J. Higgins] listing the subscribers to the 'Father Kearney Testimonial'  
Handwritten letter from E.P. Tarrant, Castletown to John [J. Higgins] in which he lists the subscribers to the 'Father Kearney Testimonial'. In his list Tarrant includes the club name, the name of the person representing the club and the amount contributed.
- 1p

- 137      19 December 1917      Letter relating to the purchase of a souvenir watch for Reverend Kearney  
Handwritten letter, in pencil, from [J.D.] to John informing him that the presentation committee has decided to purchase a gold watch and that it has been arranged for [Tarrant] to go to Hopkins to arrange to have the watch made for £20-£30. The letter also discusses possible times and dates for the presentation and the inscription which is to read 'Presented to Rev J.J. Kearney by the Gaels of Leix and Ossory as a mark of respect...on the occasion of his departure from amongst them'. The letter is written on 'Leix and Ossory G.A.A. Ballacolla' headed paper. 1p
- 138      15 February 1917      Postcard from J. Drennan to John J. Higgins informing him of the date Father Kearney was elected President  
Handwritten postcard from J. Drennan to John J. Higgins, Honorary Secretary, Maryborough GAA stating that 'Father Kearney was elected President on Nov. 1st 1909. Excuse delay of not sending sooner'. The postcard bears the heading Ballacolla, Leix and Ossory G.A.A. and contains a green halfpenny stamp. 2pp
- 139      16 January 1917      File of material from Hopkins and Hopkins to Higgins the selection of watches available for Kearney's testimonial  
File containing a typescript letter and handwritten list of a selection of watches, from Hopkins and Hopkins, Manufacturing Jewellers, Dublin to John J. Higgins, Maryborough. The letter states that 'As instructed by Mr. E. P. Tarrant we are sending a selection of Gents gold Waltham Watches per registered parcel post to-day. Trusting you will be able to make a suitable choice from same'. The list of watches sent to Higgins divides the watches into 3 categories: 18 ct Waltham Watches, 9 ct Waltham and 9ct Alberts. Each watch has a code and its price beside it. Both the letter and the list are on Hopkins and Hopkins headed paper, the letter containing an image of the Hopkins and Hopkins building and the Daniel O'Connell monument. 2 items
- 140      29 January 1917      Letter from Hopkins and Hopkins asking Higgins if he has selected a watch  
Letter, in blue typescript, from Hopkins and Hopkins, Manufacturing Jewellers, Dublin to John J. Higgins, Maryborough asking 'With reference to the gold watches and Alberts sent you on the 15th inst., we would be glad to know if you have been able to make a selection from same. We thank you to make returns as soon as possible as we are stocktaking this month'. The letter is printed on Hopkins and Hopkins headed paper and contains the image of the Hopkins and Hopkins building, opposite the Daniel O'Connell monument. 1p

- 141      1 February 1917      Letter from Hopkins and Hopkins confirming, and pricing, an order for an Albert and Watch  
Letter, in blue typescript, from Hopkins and Hopkins, Manufacturing Jewellers, Dublin to John J. Higgins stating that they 'are glad to hear that the presentation is to be made to Father Kearney as we happen to know that Gentleman very well, he being a valued client of the firm. We are pleased to make a special price for the Albert and Watch selected at £25 nett. including subscription.' The letter is printed on Hopkins and Hopkins headed paper and contains the image of the Hopkins and Hopkins building, opposite the Daniel O'Connell monument.  
1p
- 142      15 February 1917      Letter from Hopkins and Hopkins asking Higgins for further instructions regarding the watch  
Letter, in blue typescript, from Hopkins and Hopkins, Manufacturing Jewellers, Dublin to John J. Higgins asking 'With reference to gold watch and albert for which we quoted you some time ago, we should be glad to have your further instructions as we are holding same over.' The letter is printed on Hopkins and Hopkins headed paper and contains the image of the Hopkins and Hopkins building, opposite the Daniel O'Connell monument.  
1p
- 143      19 February 1917      Letter from Hopkins and Hopkins suggesting engraving initials on the back of the watch  
Letter, in blue typescript, from Hopkins and Hopkins, Manufacturing Jewellers, Dublin to John J. Higgins suggesting that Father Kearney's initials 'be engraved on the back of the watch as this will look very well' adding that they have received instructions for the presentation watch. The letter is printed on Hopkins and Hopkins headed paper and contains the image of the Hopkins and Hopkins building, opposite the Daniel O'Connell monument.  
1p
- 144      20 February 1917      Letter and receipt from Hopkins and Hopkins to Higgins for the watch  
Handwritten letter, and receipt, from Hopkins and Hopkins, Manufacturing Jewellers, Dublin to John J. Higgins for the £25.0.0. received for the presentation watch. The letter requests that Higgins responds immediately to let them know if they should engrave Kearney's initials on the back of the watch. The letter is printed on Hopkins and Hopkins headed paper and contains the image of the Hopkins and Hopkins building, opposite the Daniel O'Connell monument.  
2 items

- 145      21 February 1917      Letter from Hopkins and Hopkins to Higgins confirming they are engraving the back of the watch  
Letter, in blue typescript, from Hopkins and Hopkins, Manufacturing Jewellers, Dublin to John J. Higgins confirming that they are 'having Fr. Kearneys initials done in a nice style on the back of watch and we are forwarding same to-morrow so as to reach you by Friday.' The letter is printed on Hopkins and Hopkins headed paper and contains the image of the Hopkins and Hopkins building, opposite the Daniel O'Connell monument.  
1p
- 146      22 February 1917      Letter from Hopkins and Hopkins to Higgins confirming they have posted the watch  
Letter, in blue typescript, from Hopkins and Hopkins, Manufacturing Jewellers, Dublin to John J. Higgins confirming that they have sent the watch by registered post adding that 'we trust it will reach you safely.' The letter is printed on Hopkins and Hopkins headed paper and contains the image of the Hopkins and Hopkins building, opposite the Daniel O'Connell monument.  
1p
- 147      c. 1917      Letter from John J. Kearney to Higgins about the appointment of a President  
Handwritten letter from Reverend John J. Kearney to John J. Higgins concerning the appointment of a President. In his letter Kearney arranges to meet with Higgins 'when you can take pot-luck with me' and comments that 'Fr. Birmingham does not care to act as President. You might as a matter of form ask him [and] get a definitive reply but he wont accept. Fr Arthur Murphy would not suit at all.'  
1p
- 148      5 March 1917      Letter from John J. Kearney to Higgins about the next President and the watch presented to him  
Handwritten letter from Reverend John J. Kearney, Newbridge, Kildare to John J. Higgins in which he discusses asking James Miller to accept the position of President stating that 'I am getting very stupid. I asked Mr. Miller to take the Presidency [and] he said he would. Tell Jim Duggan privately that I asked him. Jim would have a lot of worry if he were President [and] he is rather young for it. Mr Miller is the best you can get [and] he is best entitled to it.' Kearney also comments on the watch presented to him saying 'The watch [and] chain are exquisite-too good [and] too grand altogether...I enjoyed the evening with the lads very much [and] was very sorry more did not come.'  
2pp



- 149      Undated                      Letter from John J. Kearney to Higgins organising a sports day in Newbridge  
Handwritten letter from Reverend John J. Kearney, Newbridge, Kildare to John J. Higgins in which he makes preparations for a sports day in Newbridge. He writes 'Sports here next Sunday. Ask Frank Kelly could he bring his [table] and I will be ever obliged. We failed to get one...Kindly see Ben Watson [and] ask him lend me a cricket net the Aunt Sally [and] the balls, such as they are. He can send them by rail [and] you may be good enough to pay freight.'
- 2pp
- 150      9 August 1917                      Letter from John J. Kearney to John J. Higgins concerning awards  
Handwritten letter from Reverend John J. Kearney, Newbridge, Kildare to John J. Higgins in which a number of topics are discussed including the awarding of a gold medal 'Give the extra gold med as you wisely suggest to D. [Chapster] as he deserves it for all his trouble etc.'; the provision of awards 'Joe Foley could procure from W. Rowe some broaches or trinkets for a few shillings each [and] make them second prizes where required' and the Kildare footballers 'I like Newbridge well [and] am sure to like it better [and] better as it is said to be a very special place. I cannot exactly see the beauty of it yet. Kildare footballers are delighted with themselves since Louth'.
- 2pp

## G. Letters received from Robert O'Keefe, 1914-1917

### 1. Training

#### a. Organisation of training sessions

- 151      28 August 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins discussing the 1914 Hurling Championship  
 Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Kilcotton Hurling Club, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins in which a number of points relating to the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling Championship are raised. Topics discussed include the amount of work being undertaken by Higgins 'I was thinking...of the amount of work this business brings on you, but I hope you will be repaid in the way most pleasing to you by seeing the [championship] coming to our county' (p.1); training arrangements (pp.1-2); the Leix and Ossory Training fund 'I hope all the [secretaries] will take up the collection in earnest, If they did we should have no difficulty in getting the £100' (p.2) and the negative public perception of Leix Hurling 'Kilkenny Journal seems to think very little of us. Wexford, Dublin and Kilkenny must be very poor indeed when Munster puts so little value on us' (p.2) with O'Keefe arguing that Leix can use this to their advantage 'we have proved a surprise package all along. Better be underestimated. I hope we can manage to keep things (our doings) quiet. the less blowing the better' (p.2). The letter is written on GAA Kilcotton Hurling Club headed paper; the place name 'Ballybrophy' has been crossed out and replaced, in handwriting, with 'Borris in Ossory'.
- 2pp
- 152      22 September 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins concerning training arrangements for the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling Final  
 Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins making training arrangements for the upcoming 1914 All-Ireland Hurling Final against Clare. O'Keefe writes that Killeen has arranged with his boss to get each day for three weeks and go to Maryboro on the 2 o'clock train (p.1) and that 'Reilly is waiting to get instructions from you to arrange for a man' (p.1). Of the trainer O'Keefe states that he should have a timetable drawn up for each evenings work (p.2). O'Keefe also writes that 'all the people around here who were in Thurles think we should beat Clare. Lee lays particular stress on (1) able to stay full pace for hour...(2) no fancy striking. Clare will not give time. Strike on ground as fast and hard as possible (3) [Clare] made all their scores in rushes. When ball enters scoring area their forward players rush in' (pp.2/3).
- 3pp

- 153      13 October 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins explaining his absence from training  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins explaining his reasons for not attending two training sessions in Maryborough stating that 'I got a terrible attack of pains [and] headache yesterday morning.....felt so bad that I thought it was all up with me for next Sunday.' The letter ends with O'Keefe assuring Higgins that he feels better and will be able to attend training tomorrow evening. O'Keefe ends the letter 'I hope Killeen turned in for training'.  
1p
- 154      23 May 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins explaining why his hurling has been neglected recently  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins explaining his reasons for not attending recent hurling training. Writing of his daughter he states 'Our little girl has got another attack now on the kidneys. She was very bad for a few days last week...she is slightly improved today...Under the circumstances I was not in any form for training [and] did not handle a stick since the Ballygeehan match till this evening.' (p.1). Further on in the letter O'Keefe comments that 'Since 13th Feb. our youngster (not yet 4 yrs) has gone through pneumonia, measles [and] scarlet fever, a heat rash all over her body...and now she has a kidney attack. You will see now it is no wonder I had an anxious time and that the hurling was neglected. Ballygeehan may write their victory down to that.' (p.2).  
2pp
- 155      28 August 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins explaining why he cannot play in Waterford on the 29th of August 1915  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins explaining his reasons for not being able to attend a hurling match in Waterford on the 29th of August 1915. O'Keefe explains 'I got two blows from John Phelan on Sunday that nearly finished my hurling. My left knee and thigh are quite stiff yet [and] hurling is out of the question' (pp.1/2) before adding that he would not of been able to travel to Waterford anyway as his daughter is sick 'and it would never do to go far away.' (p.2). The letter states that there is much 'indignation around here over those notes in Leader re Leinster final, and on my word I cannot blame the lads.' (p.3).  
3pp

- 156      27 September 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins explaining why the full team did not travel to observe a hurling game  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins describing the circumstances behind a situation which resulted in O'Keefe assuming 'we are all in the black books over yesterdays affair' (p.1). O'Keefe explains that for various reasons the full Leix team was not in Limerick 'each man to observe the style of his opponent' (p.4). Of the actual match O'Keefe comments 'It was not classic hurling...Cork were superior everywhere and their forward line is the best ever I saw working' (p.4). (The second page of this letter is missing.)  
4pp
- b. Personnel and Team Selection
- 157      17 August 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins supplying an address for Patrick Daly  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins in which he supply's an American address for Patrick Daly adding 'I hope you will be successful in getting him. It would be doubly welcome to some of us. You know why' (pp.1/2).  
2pp
- 158      3 September 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins in which he argues that Jim Jones should be allowed train with the team  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Kilcotton Hurling Club, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins in which O'Keefe argues that Jim Jones should be allowed to train with the Leix hurling team. O'Keefe writes of Jones 'Try and persuade Fr. Kearney to give him a chance. He is one of the 15 who brought honours to Leix. If he does not show himself capable at the end of the term he need not be selected. No one will be more surprised than myself if he does not show himself far superior to anything the County can produce...in my opinion his standing as one of the 15 in Leinster final gives him an undisputed right to be trained' (p.1). The letter is written on GAA Kilcotton Hurling Club headed paper; the place name 'Ballybrophy' has been crossed out and replaced, in handwriting, with 'Borris in Ossory'.  
2pp

- 159      8 September 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins about the fate of 'Lalor'  
 Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Kilcotton Hurling Club, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins in which the fate of 'Lalor' is discussed. O'Keefe writes 'I have just heard that Lalor is going up to the depot next Thursday. It relieves me a lot to know that he is getting called up in any case as they were beginning to get uneasy and a little delay more might make them think strange things. If we could get Lalor out immediately on being passed, for the weeks between now and match everything would be right'. O'Keefe also expresses concern that Lalor must be gotten out soon as 'if he remains there for any time he will be illegal' (p.2) adding that 'I know very little about police business so if you think it can be managed in anyway act as you think best. His loss would be great as the Clare man on that side is a great scorer' (p.2). The letter is written on GAA Kilcotton Hurling Club headed paper; the place name 'Ballybrophy' has been crossed out and replaced, in handwriting, with 'Borris in Ossory'.
- 2pp
- 160      10 September 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins about player shortages for the upcoming Abbeyleix game  
 Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins stating that 'I suppose we may now give up hopes of Lalor' and that 'We will play Abbeyleix on 20th though we will be short a couple of players'.
- 1p
- 161      15 September 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins concerning training arrangements for the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling Final  
 Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Kilcotton Hurling Club, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins making training arrangements for the upcoming 1914 All-Ireland Hurling Final against Clare. O'Keefe writes that he hopes 'Higgins' will be able to get the three weeks off work as 'in our practice games we would want him for combination purposes' (p.1). O'Keefe further writes that he is glad to hear 'Troy' is home and that they should try and get him to train but 'Lalor has not come back so we can now leave him out of the reckoning. It is a pity but we must manage without him' (p.1). Of the game against Abbeyleix O'Keefe writes 'We had very near a rebellion over our match with Abbeyleix. Wouldn't it be funny if we got knocked out. I wrote Drennan to have field bare. If it is grassy we won't play' (p.2). The letter is written on GAA Kilcotton Hurling Club headed paper; the place name 'Ballybrophy' has been crossed out and replaced, in handwriting, with 'Borris in Ossory'.
- 1p

- 162 c. 1914 Letter from Robert O'Keefe making arrangements for the 1914 Hurling Championship  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to 'Mr. Lee' discussing arrangements for the 1914 All-Ireland Hurling Championship. O'Keefe states that he has 'developed a rather bad cold...and will not be able to go to Maryboro this evening' asking Lee to ask Higgins to select the team this evening and send the team member names, with club names beside them, to Luke O'Toole and John Drennan. The letter is torn at the top meaning the date is missing from the letter.
- 1p
- 163 12 October 1914 Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins naming the men who will travel to the 1914 All-Ireland hurling final  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins naming the men who will travel for the 1914 All-Ireland hurling final. O'Keefe writes 'We had a meeting last night [and] picked 24 men to travel on next Sunday. When we see what we have we can select team' (p.1) adding that he is asking a number of named men 'to travel along with as many as possible of our own team' (p.2). O'Keefe ends his letter by advising Higgins not to 'put on Dugan next Sunday. Waterford will have a strong team.'
- 3pp
- 164 10 May 1915 Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins discussing the upcoming inter-county hurling match between Leix and Kilkenny. Starting the letter O'Keefe comments on a recent defeat 'I am sure you will be surprised to hear from me so soon after yesterday's defeat: after having all my bright hopes for this year dashed so ruthlessly aside' (p.1) before commenting on the inter-county championship 'I would like to see Ballygeehan taking up the inter-county match with Kilkenny in earnest. They should select their team at once...unless the thing is done immediately we will see Leix taking the field as of old, with an untrained [and] disorganised team' (pp.2/3). Commenting on individual players O'Keefe suggests that Higgins should 'get Fr. Kearney to move the Finlays' adding that 'you must keep this note perfectly secret. I don't want the Finlays to think that I am interfering in the slightest degree. It is their duty now to do the best they can for Leix.' (p.3).
- 4pp

- 165      11 May 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins naming who he thinks should be in the Leix hurling team  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins naming who he thinks should be on the Leix hurling team. O'Keefe writes 'You put me in a rather awkward position by asking me to state a team. However I give it below on your stated condition. You will see I give Kilcotton the majority as I do believe we have more of what you call "good" hurlers than any other club' (pp.1/2). Commenting on match preparations O'Keefe suggests 'plenty [of] short sprints are what is wanting with vigorous hurling every evening. Let there be complete rest for last 5 or 6 days' (p.3).  
4pp
- 166      4 June 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins about a possible hurling match to unearth new players  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins about organising a hurling match so that they can look for potential new players. O'Keefe comments that the 'match you mention should be a good draw [and] perhaps you may unearth some "dark horses" but to my mind the first round of the [championship] if got through at once would give a better opportunity for unearthing the new hands.' (p.1). O'Keefe further comments that in 'certain quarters just now it is an accepted dogma that there are no hurlers outside a certain radius in this county...if you are arranging that game I would rather see Rathdowney [and] Kilcotton v Rest of County. I think it would be far more interesting' (p.2). Ending the letter O'Keefe asks 'Have Kilkenny lodged objection yet?' (p.3).  
3pp

## ii. Match Preparations

- 167      7 November 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins arranging a venue for the upcoming hurling final  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins making arrangements for the Hurling Final (possibly the county hurling final). O'Keefe suggests that the match should be played in Kilcotton or Ballygeehan commenting 'Of course I would prefer Kilcotton as ground is good [and] I suppose you would have a better crowd. I think Ballygeehan would not object...If the Committee could agree to this it would save them a lot of expense besides the financial difficulty of guaranteeing a special from Ballybrophy' (pp.2/3). O'Keefe ends by commenting that he hopes the training fund 'panned out nearly right' and wishing the Junior team success tomorrow stating that 'The Leinster hurling "double" would be something to be proud of even though we failed so miserably at the last fence. However it is all before us.' (p.4).  
4pp

- 168      18 October 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins making travel arrangements for the 1915 All-Ireland Hurling Final  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins making travel arrangements for the upcoming 1915 All-Ireland Hurling final, between Leix and Cork on the 24th of October 1915. O'Keefe writes that he is 'very glad you have decided on going up on Saturday evening. You should warn all the players to keep it quiet, otherwise there will be crowds of Leix supporters on the watch' (p.1) further suggesting that Higgins should 'write to Knightsbridge to arrange for a special corridor carriage to be reserved for team at Ballybrophy. I am sure the Co. will oblige you willingly. Do it at once in your capacity as Sec to Training Committee.' (p.1).  
2pp
- 169      19 October 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins on match preparations for the 1915 All-Ireland Hurling Final  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins concerning preparations for the 1915 All-Ireland hurling final. Topics include the selection of players 'Jack got Fr. Kearney's letter and will play in new position...The only change I think not for the better is that of John Phelan. He is too wild for that place and besides McEvoy would play a better "spoiling game" on Sheehan' (pp.1/2); tactics for the game 'I hear they are depending chiefly on their forwards paralising the Leix backs before they can settle down [and] thus getting a lead which Leix cannot pull up' (pp.2/3). O'Keefe also comments on general match preparation 'You must see after a good ball yourself. The two we have at present are not up to the mark' (p.3) and player preparation ' You three "caretakers" must be very strict on Saturday night. There is no use in depending on any of the players. What about getting one or two others.' (pp.3/4).  
4pp
- 170      17 June 1917      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins about preparations for an upcoming match  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins about preparations for an upcoming hurling match. O'Keefe writes 'We will have everything in good order for Sunday. We are getting field wired [and] mowed. Kindly send on goal nets to Joe Moylan.' (p.1). Explaining that he will not be part of the team due to an upcoming confirmation O'Keefe comments 'As far as the team is concerned it will not signify much, but I feel it very much myself.' (p.2)  
2pp



## iii. Administration

## a. General administrative correspondence

- 171      23 September 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins arranging a meeting  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins stating that O'Keefe and Mr. Lee 'are going to Maryboro' tomorrow evening...to have an interview with you about various matters. It would be well if you could have Mr. Sheridan present [and] of course Fr. Kearney if at home'.  
1p
- 172      13 December 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins requesting Higgins sends money owed to Mr Lee  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins asking him to send the £1.7.0. due to Mr. Lee for tickets adding that if Higgins has not got the money to hand 'please let me know and I will pay him myself [and] you can send [account] to me when you get it from O'Toole' (pp.1/2).  
2pp
- 173      28 March 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins (possible preparation for annual congress)  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins informing Higgins that he will be travelling to Dublin on Sunday and asks if Higgins could get him the names of the Leix delegates 'so that I can arrange for a proxy. I will only want the proxy whilst O'Sullivan's case is on'. O'Keefe also asks Higgins to acquire an agenda for him and ends the letter with 'I am sorry you cannot be there'.  
1p
- 174      31 March 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins trying to organise a proxy vote (for the upcoming Central Congress)  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins about organising a proxy vote (possibly for the annual congress). O'Keefe writes that he is disappointed that he has not heard from Higgins 'over Sunday's Meeting' (p.1) adding that 'I presume you are making things right over the proxy. It would indeed be rather hard lines if I could not get a chance of attending. If you could not get proxy perhaps Fr. Kearney could write O'Toole [and] say I was appointed as an additional delegate at Sunday's meeting' (pp.1/2).  
2p

- 175      1 September 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins arguing against the proposed cancellation of a game  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins about the possible postponement of the Kilcotton v Ballygeehan hurling match. Writing against such a postponement O'Keefe comments that he is surprised Higgins is in favour of the postponement arguing that a person called "vigilant" is influencing him. O'Keefe writes 'But I may tell you as far as we are concerned there is no question of putting it off. The Co. Committee were well aware of the facts when making the fixture [and] you were also...yet both you [and] Committee concluded that it would be to the interests of Co. team to bring off fixture in the meantime.' (pp.2/3). O'Keefe also writes that he has it on good authority that Ballygeehan were very disappointed when one of their fixtures, before the Leinster final, was not cancelled 'in order to get rid of Jack Carroll [and] myself' continuing that 'They need not be afraid on that point, the 4 Kilcotton men will retire from team anytime they wish. Now when they find Kilcotton are taking up the running in earnest they are anxious for a postponement to steal a march on us like last spring.' (p.4). [The second page of this letter is missing]
- 4pp
- 176      4 September 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins asking if a County Committee meeting is to take place  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins asking Higgins if a County Committee meeting is to take place on the 5th of September 1915 writing that 'some of the neighbouring teams got notice of such a meeting. Kilcotton got no notice.'
- 1p
- 177      1 November 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins thanking him for copies of papers Higgins sent to him and commenting 'The notes are first class [and] give my kindest regards to Sheridan for that paragraph about myself. I appreciate it very highly.' The letter also explains why O'Keefe missed the County Committee meeting asking if 'there was anything concerning us under discussion' (p.2) before asking Higgins that 'If you have any news about matters Gaelic that would interest me don't forget to let me know. I would feel rather lonely if I did not get an odd note from you.' (p.2). The letter ends with O'Keefe telling Higgins 'The Borris footballers are anxious to know if there was any fixtures made for them yesterday'. (p.3).
- 3pp

- 178      4 September 1916      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins seeking expenses  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins seeking expenses. Letter states that O'Keefe wanted to meet Higgins as he 'wanted a chat with you over our expenses to your sports in Maryboro' (p.1) adding that 'Expenses were promised and as they have been paid already to Rathdowney our lads are asking why they are not paid to us...when we have cleared up [doctors] fees for the Battle with Clonaslee we may go bankrupt' (pp.1/2). [This letter is in two halves].

2pp

b. Proposal to start the Hurling League earlier

- 179      18 November 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins suggesting an earlier start to the hurling league  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins about the possibility of starting the hurling league earlier 'in order to finish up about May in time for the Championship' (p.2). O'Keefe argues that finishing the league in May 'would be of immense help to inter-county teams next year besides the great leveling up it would work in county teams' (p.2). O'Keefe asks Higgins for his opinion on the matter suggesting that they could raise it at the next county meeting saying that he will write in more detail to Higgins first 'as I expect your active co-operation if started.' (p.3). O'Keefe also comments on the junior hurling team 'I was delighted our Juniors won [and] I hope they will now finish one better than us, Seniors' (p.1) asking if Higgins knows when the Junior County final will be.

3pp

- 180      18 December 1914      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins about the state of Leix hurling  
Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins on a number of topics including the Leix and Ossory training fund 'I am pleased indeed to hear that the training fund is such a success' (p.1) and the need to start the hurling league 'immediately after the convention' (p.2). Commenting on hurling O'Keefe writes 'Our lads are dying on the game lately. Between wet weather [and] volunteers the hurling is going to the wall. However we must get into line soon...I intend making a bigger bid for honours in 1915' (pp.2/3).

3pp

181      16 January 1915      Letter from Robert O'Keefe to Higgins on a number of hurling topics

Handwritten letter from Robert O'Keefe, Borris in Ossory, to John J. Higgins on a number of Leix hurling related topics including the proposed earlier starting time for the hurling league 'I will send in that notice re hurling league to convention. Kindly send me on any League rules you may have and I will draft out a set for ourselves and send them on to you [and] Fr. Kearney' (p.1) and the state of hurling in Leix with O'Keefe commenting 'It is very hard to coach our men back to the fold again. We have tried 3 or 4 times [and] can only get 5 or 6 together.' (p.2). The letter ends by referring to 'Little Tim' with O'Keefe asking Higgins 'as you seem to know who "Little Tim" is' to tell him 'we have already heard enough of the "account" we gave on 18th Oct. Tell him we don't want it branded on our foreheads...instead of good he is doing an infinite amount of harm.' (p.2).

2pp