

TIPPERARY ATHLETES



Mick Waters

by **Michael O'Dwyer**

Mick Waters was born on 8 December 1905 at Newtownward, Grange, County Sligo. He was the eldest son of Michael Waters, a farmer, and Catherine 'Kate' Waters (née McGowan). His parents got married at Ballintrillick church on 14 March 1904. Both villages of Grange and Ballintrillick are north of Sligo town. Mick Waters wrote in the *Garda Review* of March 1935, 'As far back as I can remember I was always keenly interested in every branch of athletics. In 1919 at a sports' meeting held in my native place, Grange, Co. Sligo, I secured 2nd place in the 440 for boys under 14 years. After that I took up high jumping, as this event appealed to me more than any other.' However, towards the end of the 1925 athletics season he received an injury which prevented him from taking any further part in the high jump. Another excerpt from the *Garda Review* reads, 'To General Murphy goes the credit of having started me on my javelin throwing career. One day in the autumn of 1925 he visited the Garda Grounds in the Phoenix Park, where a number of athletes were training. He gave a few of us a demonstration of how to throw the javelin. I immediately took to the event and practised it very patiently.' Mick Waters was probably the first Irish athlete to devote any study to javelin throwing. He spent a summer's holidays at Loughborough College under the coaching of the famous Finn, Armas Valste, and possibly as a result of this he improved the Irish record to 168 ft 8 in. (51.41 m) at the national championships in 1934 at Fermoy. Initially, his winning throw was 168 feet 2 inches but when measured with a steel tape for ratification purposes it showed 168 feet 8 inches. He was then a sergeant in Cloonacool, County Sligo. Sergeant Mick Waters won a total of twelve national javelin titles and was four times runner-up. In Tipperary he was stationed in Hollyford when he won the Irish title in 1936 and again the following year when he was runner-up, and was stationed in Clonakenny when he won the Irish title in 1938. He was the first winner of the javelin at the Tipperary athletics championships when it was introduced in 1936 and he retained the title the next two years. For the three years from 1936 to 1938 he represented Tipperary in the javelin in inter-county athletic contests. Several times he beat 170 feet only to lose a new record on technical grounds. On one such occasion, after winning the Irish javelin title in 1941, he had an exhibition throw of 175 ft 5½ in. (53.48 m).

Titles Won at Senior National Championships:

National Athletic and Cycling Association Championships

1933	Javelin	146 ft 9¼ in.	(44.73 m)
1934	Javelin	168 ft 8 in.	(51.41 m)
1936	Javelin	155 ft 9 in.	(47.47 m)
1938	Javelin	159 ft 9 in.	(48.69 m)
1939	Javelin	151 ft 3 in.	(46.10 m)
1940	Javelin	161 ft 1 in.	(49.10 m)
1941	Javelin	166 ft 10½ in.	(50.86 m)
1943	Javelin	149 ft 3 in.	(45.49 m)
1944	Javelin	153 ft 6 in.	(46.78 m)
1945	Javelin	154 ft 10½ in.	(47.20 m)
1946	Javelin	154 ft 2 in.	(46.99 m)
1947	Javelin	149 ft 7 in.	(45.59 m)