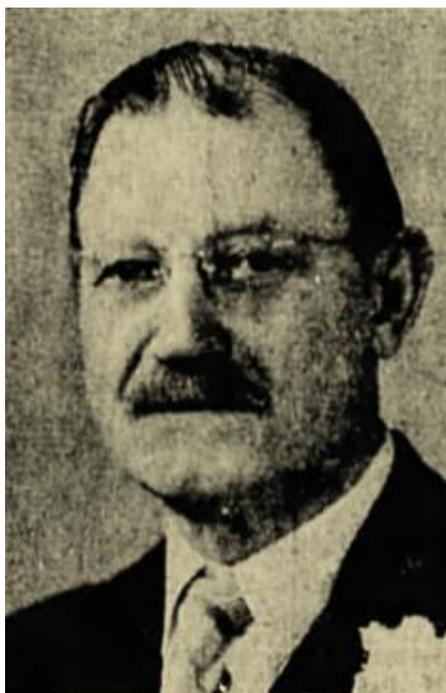


TIPPERARY ATHLETES



Jack Peare

by Michael O'Dwyer

Jack Peare was born on 13 November 1866 at Main Street, Carrick-on-Suir, County Tipperary. He was a son of William Peare, a watchmaker, and Matilda Peare (née Irwin). His parents got married in Carrick-on-Suir on 20 August 1853. Their eldest son, Charles Peare (1855–1941), competed in the 120 yards hurdles in the Irish athletics championships in 1884. However, when leading he fell at the second hurdle. Jack Peare has the distinction of being one of five athletes who competed in the first all-round championship held in Ireland. A precursor of the decathlon, the five competitors were Jack Peare (Carrick-on-Suir), Pat Davin (Carrick-on-Suir), Dan Bulger (Dublin), Tom Donovan (Queen's College, Cork) and George Gray (New York Athletic Club). The national championship event was organised by *Sport* and held under the auspices of the Gaelic Athletic Association on 9 July 1888 at Ballsbridge. The contest was won by Pat Davin, Gray was second, and Bolger third. One of Jack Peare's best performances was at Portarlinton sports in 1889 when he won the 100 yards handicap, the high jump and the long jump and ran second in the 120 yards hurdles handicap. At one stage he was based in Tipperary town where he was a member of Rosanna Football Club. He got married to Catherine Hally, Carrick-on-Suir, on 21 January 1890 in Mount Melleray Abbey. They soon emigrated to the United States, sailing on the RMS *Umbria* from Queenstown (Cobh) on 30 March 1890 and after landing in New York they headed west to the state of Oregon. He first worked in Eugene in a jewellery store before taking up employment in La Grande, north-eastern Oregon, where he later started his own watchmaking business in November 1891. At a sports meeting in La Grande he broke three Pacific north-west records in the 120 yards hurdles, high jump and long jump. He coached La Grande High School and had them wearing the Carrick-on-Suir colours of blue and white. The school's athletes still wear these colours today. One of the students he coached was his son, William Peare, whose time of two minutes and two seconds for the 880 yards made in 1910 stood as a record in eastern Oregon for over fifty years. Jack Peare was also for many years chief of the fire department in La Grande. For fifty-two years he was chairman of the local county Republican central committee. In 1912, his son, William, joined the family business as an optometrist and the business was then known as J. H. Peare & Son Jewellers & Optometrists. Jack Peare died on 25 July 1950 in St Joseph's Hospital, La Grande, aged eighty-three, and is interred in Hillcrest East cemetery, La Grande.