

Limerick assault is linked to murder

By Éibhir Mulqueen,
Midwest Correspondent

GARDAÍ in Limerick believe that two serious assaults which occurred in the city within 12 hours are related.

In the first a man was stabbed shortly before 1 a.m. yesterday at the Lee Estate, in the city's Kings Island area and in sight of the historic King John's Castle. He was brought to hospital by local people and died there at around 9.30 a.m.

He was named locally as Mr Eric Leamy (19), a single man, from St Mary's Park.

Less than 40 minutes later a young man was assaulted with an iron bar in full public view at the junction of St Ita's Street and St Senan's Street, half a mile from where the first attack occurred.

The victim was in a critical condition on a life-support machine in Cork University Hospital yesterday evening.

Gardaí retrieved the iron bar and have appealed for witnesses to both incidents to come forward. A park and pathway at the Lee Estate were sealed off yesterday for examination, and

some houses were searched later in the day.

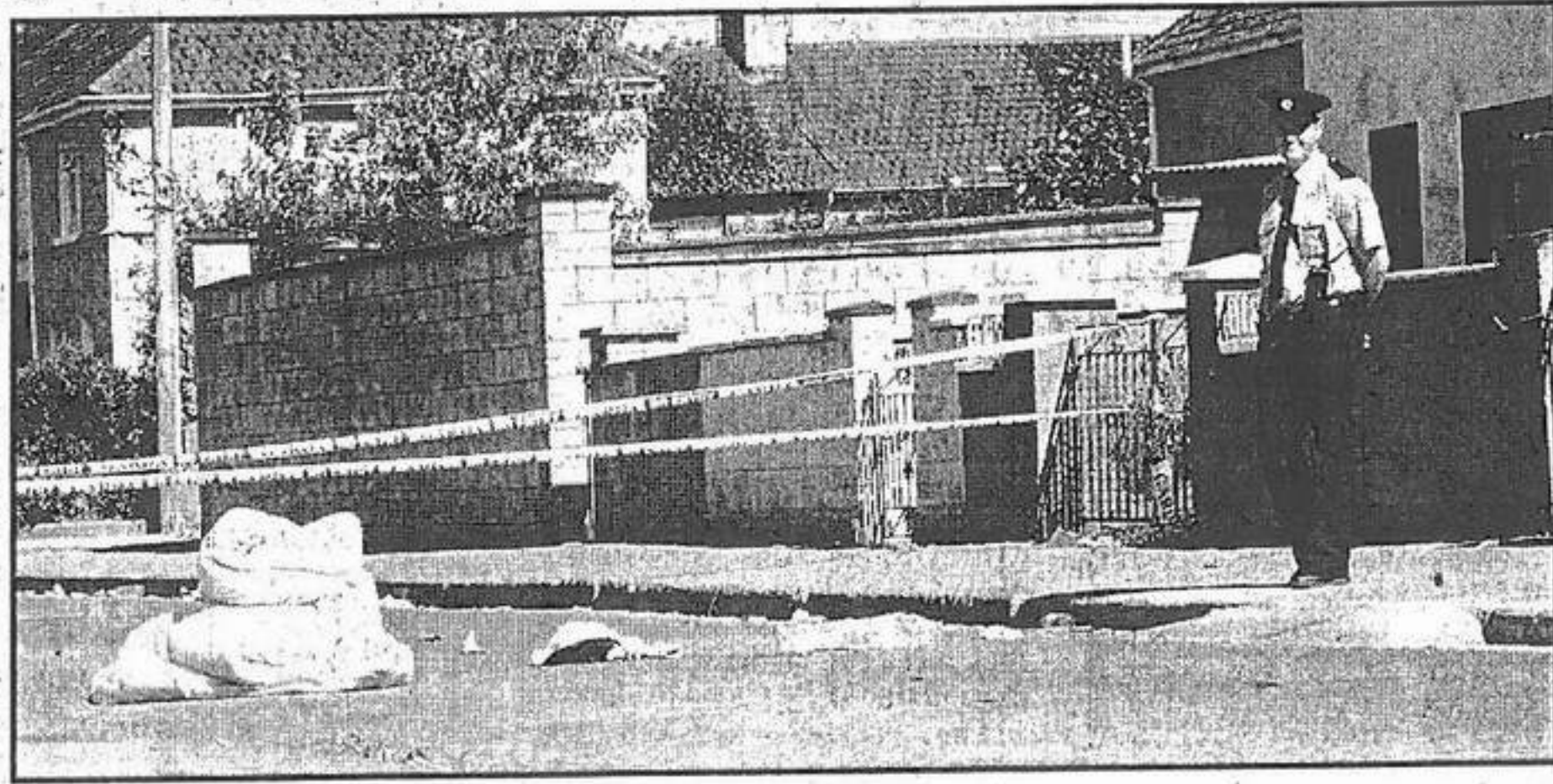
In the immediate area of the first attack, close to an entrance to Island Road, some bloodstains were visible on the ground.

Residents were taken aback at the news in an area which is normally quiet. One said she had "heard a few words" at about 12.15 a.m. but had not taken any notice. A group of men is believed to have congregated at the spot where the attack occurred.

At a press conference yesterday afternoon, Chief Supt Gerry Kelly of the Limerick Garda division said a massive operation of gathering witness statements in relation to both incidents was under way, and motives remained to be established.

Three days ago a 20-year-old man facing serious drugs charges was stabbed in the Killeely area of the city.

Mr Hanley died in Hogan Avenue. But the theory that the murder was feud-related was rejected by the Garda as the investigation proceeded. One



A garda at the scene of an assault at St Mary's Park, Limerick, yesterday. The incident has been linked to an earlier murder in the city. Photograph: Sean Curtain/Press 22

source said it was "a drunken brawl that got out of hand". The victim's funeral takes place in Tullamore, Co Offaly, today.

Yesterday two men and two women were being held and questioned at Mayorstone Garda station in relation to the murder of Mr Anthony Casey,

an unemployed man from Ballinacurra Weston, who died on August 12th. Mr Casey died from a severe beating he received in the city centre and, again, is not feud- or drugs related.

That same weekend a 24-year-old man died in hospital after

being found with stab wounds at a green area in Pine View Gardens in the Moyross Estate shortly after 1 a.m. on Monday. The victim was named as Mr John O'Sullivan, of Craevel Park, Moyross.

A 29-year-old man has been charged with his murder.