



There's only one street in Dromcollogher, wrote Mr. French, but he was wrong then and he's even more wrong now.

## JUDGE: I WILL SUPPORT GUARDS

By LEADER REPORTER

"I WILL keep law and order and I will support the Guards", said Judge John Gleeson at Limerick Circuit Court, when he adjourned for 12 months a charge against John "Brefini" O'Rourke, (34), 5 Creval Park, Moyross, of resisting Det. Garda Marcus Nash in the due execution of his duty on January 26 last.

The jury found the accused guilty on the charge of resisting Det. Garda Nash and disagreed on a second charge against the accused of unlawfully and maliciously committing damage to a car, the property of the Minister for Justice, to an amount exceeding £50, on the same date.

Mr. Gerry Tynan, B.L., who appeared for the prosecution (instructed by Mr. Michael Murray, state solicitor), entered a nolle prosequi on the second charge.

Det. Nash, Henry Street, told the court that on the date in question, while on duty in the patrol car, he heard a call on the radio that the accused had used a gun in the Black Swan bar.

### Patrol car

Det. Nash added that at 8.20 p.m. he parked the patrol car in the C.I.E. grounds facing Davis Street, and at 9.15 p.m. he noticed Martin Bryan rush out of Charlie St. George's premises and run into the C.I.E. premises.

"About one minute later I saw Brefini O'Rourke and Patrick Kenneally come out of the same premises, and walk towards Wickham Street", he continued. They were accompanied by the wife of the accused, he said.

The accused and Kenneally went into Ma Reilly's premises, where they stayed for about half a minute.

"I pulled the car up alongside them. I got out of the car, produced my identification card, and told all three of them who we were", said Det. Nash, who had been accompanied by Det. Garda Senan O'Gorman.

"I then told them that I was arresting them under Section 30 of the Offences Against the State Act", he added.

He told the court that when witness was putting his identification card back into his pocket, he was grabbed by the arm by Kenneally, and his coat was torn in the incident.

"Both men then got very violent and shouted 'You will have to get the force to arrest us'", said Det. Nash, who added that he then decided to call for assistance.

"While I was calling for assistance, Brefini O'Rourke started banging the front passenger's window and the windscreen with his clenched fist", Det. Nash told the court.

released until he made a statement".

Det. Nash: "That is totally incorrect".

Further cross-examined by Mr. Nix, he said it was not correct that he told the accused in the station that he (witness) knew he did not kick the car.

Det. Garda Senan O'Gorman, who accompanied the last witness, corroborated his evidence.

Garda Thomas McLoughlin, Henry Street, told the court that he saw two men kicking the sides of the patrol car and jumping on the car on the night in question.

He described the attitude of the two men as "very violent" and added that they appeared to be intoxicated.

Michael Kiely, publican, Davis Street, told the court that the accused approached him in his premises and he told him that he was not being served because he was barred.

He turned back to his score board and then a person passed him and said that the accused had a gun.

### Counter

"I looked up the bar and saw Brefini O'Rourke point what appeared to be a gun across the bar counter", he added.

Michael Kiely said that the accused then left the bar. He returned about five minutes later, asked what the to-do was about, that somebody had called the Guards.

"I just spread his jacket to see if he still had what he was supposed to be carrying. He did not have anything, and he denied that he ever had", said witness.

In reply to Mr. Nix, witness denied that he said to the accused "put away that piece of sh—".

Lisa McCoy, barmaid, told the court when she told the accused he was not being served, he made some comments and took what appeared to be a gun out of his pocket.

"He then started to bang it on the counter", she added.

John "Brefini" O'Rourke, told the court that he left home at 6 p.m. and went to Nellie Monaghan's pub, where he had about two pints. He was joined by Martin Bryan and Paddy Kenneally, a friend of Martin's.

They then went to Rose O'Grady's premises, where witness had one or two pints, before going to the Noel Edward pub.

While walking up Davis Street, witness said, he decided he wanted to see Mike Kiely, and Kenneally went into the premises with him.

"I said to Mike, I know you have a bike with me, but why are you not serving my wife?" said witness, who added that Kiely said it was not true, that he was not serving his wife.

"Kiely pushed me. I had the young fellow's toy gun in my pocket for the purpose of getting it fixed. It pushed against my ribs

IT'S STILL something of a mystery why Percy French should have chosen Dromcollogher to write about. Still, he wrote about Ballyjamesduff with even less reason — as a dare to see whether the place could be incorporated into a lyric.

Of course, poor old Percy was wrong when he wrote it. There was already more than one street. Not much more, admittedly, but more nonetheless. And the square, as everyone knows, is a triangle. The original square on a hypotenuse.

Drom won the Glor na nGael, and this writer had the pleasure of cycling in his early teens to catch a glimpse of the presenter of the prize, Eamon de Valera, then incumbent at the Phoenix Park. It was arising from that ceremony that the little park in the centre of the "square" was improved and maintained.

### Welcoming

The town, if so it can be called, because it is really as cosy and welcoming as any small village, is very much associated with its farming hinterland. It has had a fine tradition of creamery work, and its grain stores and bakeries served a wide area, stretching, of course, into north Cork.

Dromcollogher is situated on the road which skirts the rounded old Mullaghareirk mountains, which links, in effect, Charleville to Abbeyfeale, and all points between. The road to the south, to Liscarroll and Buttevant, penetrates the pass between the Mullaghareirks and the Ballyhours, while a fan of roads to the north link Drom with all of west and mid Limerick.

The people of Drom are renowned down the years for their generosity. Organisers of charitable collections will relate, again and again, the excellent reception and comparatively large donations which are generated there. This, given that the area cannot be described as rich, is remarkable.

In fact, the area is downright poor land. Only to the north of the town is there any good land to speak of. And yet, the farming community is contented and progressive, demanding nothing but their rights.

### Private people

Dromcollogher people are private people. Not secretive or deceptive, but Drom is a place where the people go about their business expecting to be unimpeded by officialdom. They welcome improvements to their area, of course, however.

One improvement which was welcomed and actively sought-after was the mart. Drom, like other places, had its fairs, but, with the increasing ease of transport, these were under threat.

The people of Drom realised, unlike their neighbours in Newcastle West, that the days of the fair were numbered. They got the mart which might otherwise be in N.C.W., and all take pride in its operation.

Drom people are a good people in other ways too. It is necessary to hold a district court there for only one hour every two months, and the peace is easily kept by one sergeant and a solitary guard.

Dr. James Ambrose, the new P.P.,

## Percy would not sing the same song about Drom today

LIMERICK PARISHES by MARTIN BYRNES



Dromcollogher Calvary.

can be assured that he will not be too shocked at confession time.

### Mrs. Savage

Drom has a secondary school, of course, operated for so many years by the late Mrs. Savage, and the place is served by a full bank branch, an efficient post office, and the local vocational school is constantly under review with the idea of expanding its facilities. Adult courses have proven popular at the "tech", and both class

sizes and exam results have been more than encouraging.

Drom's GAA field has seen many a mighty battle of skill down the years — including an embarrassing soccer match between the men of Mrs. Savage's school and those of Mr. Jim Breen's of N.C.W. That was embarrassing only because it was played before the infamous "ban" was lifted. When news spread that a soccer match had actually taken place on its hallowed turf, the matter was reported, according to legend, to the county board, and one man, feigning outrage, commented that the bishop should be called to exorcise the evil spirit of the demon soccer ball.

But Drom's claim to fame internationally is really more vested in East Germany than West Limerick. The Saar family, owners of Irish Dresden, makers of the famous filigree ceramic statuettes, based their operation in Dromcollogher, and, with expert local assistance, built the business to one of the most innovative and elegant in the country. A worldwide reputation puts the products in the same league as Waterford Crystal. It is traditional, all over Limerick county that, when a presentation is required to be made, a piece of Dresden from Drom is the most acceptable gift.

### Fire sequel

While writing about the terrible cinema fire disaster in the *Limerick Leader*, some weeks ago, this writer referred to the tremendous sense of community which that awful event engendered. There is no reason to believe that that communal fidelity has in any way been eroded in the intervening six decades.

Drom's local councillor is Tom Cregan, and his seat has never been the subject of speculation, even from the most fanciful of local commentators. Like the area which he serves, he is reserved and private, and knows the value of hard work.

And that work ethic has gained many commuter-style jobs for the people of Drom and district. Many work at the offices and factories in Newcastle West, Castlemaheon and elsewhere. More than one commutes to Shannon, and several to Limerick. The people of Dromcollogher leave their native place reluctantly if at all.

The population of the built-upon area of Drom is barely 500. It gained a creditable 71 per cent in the last two Tidy Towns competitions. It is clean, well-lit and, with a few exceptions, its houses and shops are neat and intelligently decorated.

### Last bus

The legendary Cork bus, which left Drom at about 8.15 each morning, to arrive in Cork several hours later, having completed a meandering, scenic, but time-consuming inspection of such places as Doneraile, is no more. The bus from Broadford, its sister village within the parish, connects with Limerick.

But whatever level the public transport, one thing remains certain; in an emergency, while there's a drop of petrol left in the cars in Drom, a needy person will never be in want of a lift.

If Percy saw Drom today, he'd be singing a different song.

## Two sentenced for cemetery vandalism

By LEADER REPORTER

BRIAN MURRIHY (18), 15 St. Laurence's Park, Garryowen, and Paul Nash (17), 42 Greenfields Road, Limerick, were each sentenced to six months detention in St. Patrick's Institution on each of 16 charges of maliciously damaging monuments of the dead at Mount St. Laurence Cemetery between April 19 and 21 last, to run concurrently, by Judge John Gleeson at Limerick Circuit Court this week.

Judge Gleeson said he had considered community work but added that the more he thought about it, the more unsuitable it seemed to be. "It must be a custodial sentence", he stated.

"I could give them six months on each charge, but I will give them a total of six months".

### Comprehension

He said that he was satisfied that the intelligence of both was ample for them to comprehend that what they were doing was wrong.

"I do not accept that the accused in the case should get credit for their saying it was a reaction to a 'trip'. That is taking things too far", said Judge Gleeson.

Referring to the accused youths having drunk tea, Judge Gleeson said: "I do not take that as an excuse for a crime as heinous as this".

He added that he did not grant a suspended sentence as he felt there would be a danger of the accused being beaten up, even away from the place.

"By inflicting some court punishment, I feel that I have warned off that", he said. "They deserve what 'm giving them".

Both defendants pleaded guilty to maliciously damaging monuments of the dead in memory of Anzlow/Ma Iden/O'Connell, Michael Hogan, the Shanahan family, the residents of the Good Shepherd Convent, Molly and Bridget Guerri, the Gleeson family, the McCarthy family, Michael O'Sullivan, John and Annie Twoomey, Sam Slater, Margaret and Pat Kennedy, Teresa O'Donovan, David Richardson, Patrick O'Halloran, James Nicholas and Catherine Brown.

Det. Sgt. Michael Brown told the court that 161 headstones were knocked in the graveyard in two nights.

He said that 40 headstones were toppled but not damaged, 33 were toppled and disjunctured and 88 were broken badly.

The damage was discovered on a Sunday morning and caused "great distress" to some people.

Media furora

on their way home the first night they took a short cut through the graveyard, and Murrihy fell over the kerb of a grave. In a fit Murrihy then pushed the headstone, and it just toppled over. He then pushed a few more of them.

The two accused went back the following night and did the same thing to a number of other headstones.

Replying to Judge Gleeson on the cost of the damage, he said that in some cases there would be no relatives surviving to erect headstones.

He referred in particular to the monument of Michael Hogan, and said that a special committee had been formed to raise funds to restore the monument.

Judge Gleeson remarked that in the case of a malicious damage claim the first £100 would have to be paid by the relatives.

Cross-examined by Mr. John Edwards, B.L., who appeared for Brian Murrihy (instructed by Mr. John Hayes, solr.), witness agreed that Murrihy was "not the brightest of boys".

Further cross-examined by Mr. Edwards, witness agreed that Murrihy was mildly mentally handicapped and had a mental age of 12 years, even though he was now 19 years of age.

He further agreed that Murrihy had no previous convictions. Judge Gleeson asked if it would be possible to extract 50 hours of community work in respect of each charge from each of the accused.

### Enquired

Mr. Michael Rynne, B.L., who appeared for Paul Nash (instructed by Mr. John Hayes, solr.), told the court that he had already enquired into that possibility and had been informed that in the event of the two accused being put to work to repair the damage, there was the fear as happened in other parts of the country that relatives might set upon them.

Replying to Mr. Edwards, Det. Sgt. Brown agreed that both accused had drunk taken on the night in question.

He also accepted that Murrihy would not have appreciated at the time the upset he was causing.

"He did not seem to realise the consequences until his first appearance in the district court", said Det. Sgt. Brown.

Replying to Mr. Rynne, Det. Sgt. Brown said that Nash was one of a family of six and was living with his parents.

Both families co-operated fully. "Nash's father was as ample as a policeman in the investigation", he added.

Det. Sgt. Brown told the court that he wished to make it clear that both the accused only pushed the monuments and that no instruments or tools were used.

Dr. Maura Collins, consultant psychiatrist with the Brothers of Charity at Bawnmore, told the court that Murrihy was one of a family of 13.

through. He could not read or write, was immature and easily led.

She did not think that he had the least idea of the upset he was causing to relatives. "As far as he was concerned, it was stone", she added.

Mr. Edwards said while not wishing to belittle the crime, he wished to point out that his client had no previous convictions, had pleaded guilty to the offence and was now very remorseful for what he had done.

"He did not fully appreciate the consequences of what he was doing", said Mr. Edwards.

He added that his client did have drink taken on the night and was now no longer taking drink.

"If given a chance I think he would take advantage of it", said Mr. Edwards.

He asked that his client not be given a custodial sentence and that he be considered for some form of community work instead.

Mr. Rynne said that his client was so remorseful that he had asked for certain matters, which would be in his favour, not to be mentioned in court.

He added that his client had realised the seriousness of what had done until he read the paper the following morning.

"Since then he has been absolutely sorry", said Mr. Rynne. He added that a custodial sentence might be extreme in case.

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