

LEADER BRIEFS

Man is assaulted in city park

GARDAI are examining CCTV footage of an incident at Arthurs Quay Park during which a man was hit across the head and robbed. The incident happened at around 6.30pm and that two men carried out the attack.

They took the man's wallet and his Nokia mobile phone.

Money taken from shop

A THIEF who entered a cloakroom at a shop in the Crescent Shopping centre stole €200 from a handbag which belonged to a staff member. Gardai say the man, who was seen on CCTV, was of thin build and around 6'2" in height with brown hair and side locks. He was wearing black glasses, a black jacket and cream pants.

Women assaulted

INVESTIGATIONS are continuing after two women were assaulted during separate incidents in the Clareview area. During the first incident a woman in her 30s was assaulted at Merval Drive and the following day a woman in her 60s was attacked at Brookville Avenue.

Medical Ball at the Strand

THE University of Limerick will hold their medical ball on March

Two names left off city's roll of honour

■ Dr Tadhg Moloney has uncovered more forgotten Freeman of Limerick

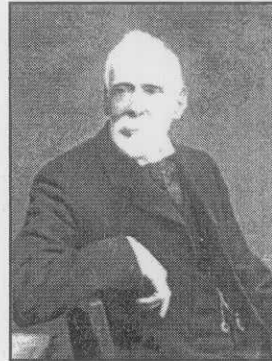
By MIKE DWANE

LIMERICK historian Tadhg Moloney is attempting to get political backing to add two names he feels have been mistakenly omitted from the city's Roll of Honorary Freeman.

Dr Moloney, Gouldavoher, has been unsuccessful to date in getting politicians to add six Boer War fighters to the list, but is hoping for better luck with the Fine Gael-controlled Council in tacking on the names of TD Sullivan and John Dillon, father of former Fine Gael leader James Dillon.

While researching a doctorate in Mary Immaculate College on constitutional nationalism before independence, Dr Moloney came across a number of anomalies on the Roll of Freeman. He found evidence of the City Council voting to confer the honour on Sullivan, Dillon and on the Boers but their names have been excluded from the official roll.

According to the Council, this is because they never came to Limerick for a ceremony or signed the official roll.



TD Sullivan, composer of God Save Ireland, was in prison when he was voted a Freeman of Limerick

But Dr Moloney said there were others who never signed the book who appear on the Roll of Freeman to this day, including the first to receive the modern version of the honour, Isaac Butt

Nor did other freemen attend a formal ceremony, including Nationalist MP William O'Brien, Papal Nuncio Mgr Paschal Robinson. Another former MP, Edward Dwyer Gray, was actually dead when he was awarded the honour on the same day as Michael Davitt in 1882, Dr Moloney noted.



John Dillon MP, father of Fine Gael leader James Dillon, was also in prison at the time his name was added

Both John Dillon MP and TD Sullivan, another politician but best known for composing the Nationalist song "God Save Ireland", were in prison when Limerick City Council voted to make them freemen of the city.

Dr Moloney has found a letter from the Munster News of November 23, 1881 in which Dillon expresses his gratitude from Kilmainham Gaol.

"The freedom of the City of Limerick is a very high honour, and the circumstances under which I have received it make me value it even



Historian Dr Tadhg Moloney, who wants to see City Council act with consistency when it comes to its Freeman

more than I should otherwise have done," Dillon wrote from the cell in which he had been placed under the coercion laws.

The Munster News of January 14, 1888 – a year before the Limerick Leader was first published – has a similar letter from Sullivan written from Tullamore Gaol.

In it, Sullivan speaks of his pride in being connected with such a "noble city" and says "I hope I may never give its patriotic citizens any reason to regret the presence of my name on their roll of honorary burgeses".

Sullivan needn't have worried. His name doesn't appear on the roll and, Dr Moloney believes, incorrectly so.

The relevant legislation, the Municipal Privileges Act of 1876, "makes no reference to a ceremony attending in person or to signing it, as the Council claims today".

If anything, the act proves Limerick City Council has over the years illegally honoured at least nine people who had served time in jail – including Davitt, De Valera and Tom and Kathleen Clarke – in breach of a section of the act precluding "persons convicted of a felony" from being honoured.

In 2007, Dr Moloney was involved in a successful campaign to have the Fourth Earl of Dunraven restored as a Freeman of Limerick. Limerick City Council voted in 1918 to have Dunraven expunged from the roll, owing to his support for conscription in Ireland.

City politicians have been less willing to support putting the Boers on the roll, with some saying they could not support the idea of posthumously completing the

honour for men involved in setting up an apartheid state in South Africa.

Dr Moloney, a former member of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement, said "it was not a political matter but just about bringing some consistency to the procedures under which the highest honour in the city is granted".

Sinn Féin's Cllr Maurice Quinlivan was the only one of 17 councillors to respond to Dr Moloney when he asked about having the Boers reinstated but Cllr Quinlivan said he could not support this because he believed in equality. Dr Moloney said he accepted this and gave Cllr Quinlivan credit for at least responding.

But he is hopeful the Fine Gael party in particular might pay more attention to his latest proposal in relation to Sullivan and Dillon.

"It would be remiss of Fine Gael if they allowed such a notable character as John Dillon – the father of their own former party leader James – not to be honoured as a freeman of Limerick in accordance with the wishes of the Council in 1881," he said.

Switch Good Friday match to solve spiritual crisis