

144-105
GLIMPSES OF
LIMERICK
by WILLIE
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Courage of Limerick's first-ever lady Mayor

ON SUNDAY, March 6, 1921, around the hour of 11.30 p.m., ex-Mayor, Michael O'Callaghan, "St. Margaret's", North Strand, was murdered by armed forces of the Crown in the presence of his wife. Thirty minutes later, Mayor George Clancy, who had succeeded O'Callaghan and who resided 300 yards from the scene of the cold-blooded heinous crime, suffered a similar fate, his wife being wounded by the thugs when going to the aid of her dying husband. A third victim in the person of Volunteer Joseph O'Donoghue, was murdered at Janesboro, on the outskirts of the city, while the family with whom he resided, were

reciting the Rosary. On hearing of the tragic news by phone, Rev. Fr. Philip Murphy, O.F.M., with Doctor James Roberts, rushed to the scene of the crimes to render whatever assistance they could offer to the tragic bereaved widows.

Meeting

Later that Monday, at a hurried convened meeting of the City Council, Mrs. O'Donovan, sister-in-law of ex-Mayor O'Callaghan, was unanimously elected mayor *pro tem*, and was conferred with the chain of office.

On Tuesday, at the removal of the bodies of the martyred trio to St. John's Cathedral, where they lay-in-state, pending the funeral to the Republican Plot in Mount St. Lawrence Cemetery, Mrs. O'Donovan continued wearing the chain, despite a Proclamation, signed by General E. P. Strickland, Officer Commanding, Southern Command and Brigadier-General B. F. C. Doran, forbidding any military, or semi-military, or other adornments, at funerals.

Came the final day, when Councillor James Casey, by agreement, wore the chain, more in defiance, at the same time fearing a flare-up might ensue, following on the final obsequies, in which the Lady Mayor might become involved — as instanced when Michael Downey, on returning from a funeral on a similar occasion, was shot to death with a dozen bullets in his back, by the Black and Tans, at the St. Patrick's Well, Singland.

NOTE: On the large Memorial slab, erected on the land of Jury's Hotel, facing Sarsfield Bridge, on it for all to see, reads:

MICHAEL
O'CALLAGHAN,
Mayor of Limerick, 1920.
GEORGE CLANCY,
Mayor of Limerick, 1921.
Murdered in their homes on
the night of March 7, 1921.

and
JOSEPH O'DONOGHUE,
Volunteer, also murdered on
the night of March 7, 1921.

• For sake of historical accuracy, no other reason. All three martyrs were murdered between the hours of 11.30 p.m., March 6 and 2 a.m., March 7, 1921. —W.W.G.