

## FATAL FALL FROM PARAPET OF RIVER BRIDGE

**MR. EDMOND COLLINS** (61), music teacher, of Lower Maiden Street, Newcastle West, met his death under tragic circumstances on Friday evening of last week, when he accidentally fell from the parapet of the bridge at Bridge St. in the afternoon. Deceased, who had been sitting alone on the bridge wall was seen by passers-by to fall backwards and into the rock-strewn river bed some eleven feet below. As a result of the fall he received serious head and other injuries and when taken from the river was found to be unconscious and in a critical condition. Amongst the earliest arrivals on the scene were Rev. M. Kelly, C.C., and Rev. Father Dere, O.M.I., a missionary, who immediately rendered spiritual aid and assisted in having the injured man removed to the pathway just off the river. Deceased was later taken to St. Ita's Home and subsequently removed to Croom Co. Hospital, where he died overnight without regaining consciousness.

### BRILLIANT MUSICIAN.

Member of a well-known and esteemed local family, the late Mr. Collins was a highly popular and respected citizen and the news of his tragic demise occasioned widespread regret throughout the district. A brilliant musician and highly successful teacher of music, he succeeded his father, the late Daniel Collins, in the musical profession, in which he acquired a unique reputation throughout West Limerick and the adjoining areas. As a skilled pianist, violinist and soloist, he was a well-known figure for more than forty years at concerts and other social functions throughout the district, and his services were always readily available to the organisers of charitable and sporting social events. His last public appearance was at a concert held on the previous Sunday night in the Desmond Hall by the Moneygway Young Farmers' Club. Deceased, who was unmarried, is survived by a brother and sister.

### THE INQUEST.

Accidental death was the verdict returned at an inquest at Croom County Hospital on Saturday.

Evidence was given by Patrick Sammon, Bridge Street, Newcastle West, that on Friday afternoon as he was passing down towards South Quay he passed deceased, who was sitting on the wall of the bridge. After passing a short distance witness heard a shout and when he looked back he saw that deceased had fallen off the wall of the bridge into the river, about eleven feet below. Witness with some others went to the assistance of deceased, whom they found lying in the bed of the river. After spiritual and medical aid had been summoned deceased was removed to the County Home.

Formal evidence of identification was given by Mrs. Hanna McAuliffe, Knockane, Newcastle West.

Dr. Quinlan, House Surgeon, Croom Hospital, who carried out a post-mortem, deposed that death was due to multiple injuries to the head, which could have been caused by a fall, as described.

Returning a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, the jury found that death was accidental from injuries received by a fall off the bridge into the river.

The Coroner (Dr. J. P. Cleary), Sergt. J. Daly, Newcastle West, and the foreman of the jury joined in expressing sympathy with the relatives of deceased.

### FINAL TRIBUTE.

The remains were removed to Newcastle West Parish Church on Saturday evening and there was a very large and representative attendance at the funeral on Sunday to Churchtown cemetery. All sections of public, professional and private life were represented in the huge cortege, which represented a striking tribute to the memory of deceased.



by Mulntir Na Tire.

## IN NEED OF NEW OFFICE HEADQUARTERS

THE Limerick Co. Vocational Education Committee are moving their headquarters from 68 Connell Street because their landlord (Mr. Thomas Gough) is doing what they consider an arbitrary rent.

Tuesday the Committee decided set up a special sub-committee investigate the question of getting alternative accommodation for Chief Executive Officer (Mr. M. Moran) and the office staff.

The decision was reached after discussion on a notice of motion by Chairman (Senator Sean Hartney), who said: "That in view of a very high rent being demanded the landlord for the Committee's office accommodation, a sub-committee be formed to explore the possible alternatives and to report thereon to the Committee."

### LANDLORD LOOKING FOR INCREASE.

"We had these offices for £70 a year," Senator Hartney said. "Some months ago we got an application from the landlord for an increase of the rent. On discussing the matter with him fully, we discovered we were looking for £150 plus rates, which is more than treble what we are paying. In our interviews with him we were prepared to go to a certain part of the way, but he isn't prepared to do any business with us."

The Chairman said they would like to leave the premises as soon as possible, so he thought no one should be lost in arriving at the decision. The best way to arrive at something was to appoint a small sub-committee to go into a number of suggestions and make a recommendation to a meeting of the full Committee.

One suggestion that should be considered by the sub-committee, Senator said, "is the advisability of providing office accommodation in one of the three new national schools we are building in the county. Your headquarters should be in one of these schools, as you haven't got a very big staff to fix up. If you buy these premises we now occupy you would pay a big sum for a start and would then continue to pay an annual rate on it. When this sub-committee sends back its recommendations, you can either accept or reject them."

# Co. Limerick Man Who Became Lord Mayor Of Cork

**MR. WILLIAM FITZGIBBON**, a native of Rathkeale, Co. Limerick, was Lord Mayor of Cork in 1856 and 1857. A man of very charitable instincts as well as great business acumen—as the subjoined special article shows—he devoted the entire of his salary as Lord Mayor for his two years of office to local charities in the southern capital.

Here is a six-mark question: Where was the first department store in Ireland built? The answer is Cork City and the person responsible for the enterprise was a Co. Limerick man, a Mr. William Fitzgibbon, of Rathkeale. This was brought to light in a special article in the *Irish Independent* dated Saturday, June 28th, 1952. The contribution was signed "I.M." and appeared under the heading "In Cork For The Show." The article dealt in general with industrial and cultural developments in the Southern Capital. It recalled that when the new Courthouse was built in Cork in 1842 the old Sessions House, which had been built by Cork Corporation on the site of the King's Castle, "passed with the surrounding property to a Mr. William Fitzgibbon, of Rathkeale, and there the first department store in Ireland was built."

### A BUSINESS PIONEER.

Up to that time shops even in London and other English cities were specialised. "It was left to Limerick man in Cork," wrote "I.M.," "to bring millinery, tailoring, haberdashery, shoes, mantles and furnishings all under one roof."

The new store was opened in 1846, one of the famine years, and we are told in the article already mentioned that "as a compliment to ancient history and to Queen Victoria, who then reigned, it was called the Queen's Old Castle."

Several families named Fitzgibbon have lived all down the years in Rathkeale district but inquiries in that locality failed to elicit any definite information as to which particular section of the clan the William Fitzgibbon of the famous Cork enterprise belonged.

### VERY HELPFUL INFORMATION.

The present very courteous and obliging Manager of the Queen's Old Castle, Mr. T. J. Magahy was appealed to and he very kindly went to the trouble of unearthing from records of his up-to-date and progressive firm some very interesting further information as to the career of the William Fitzgibbon in question.

Beyond the fact that Mr. Fitzgibbon was a native of Rathkeale, Mr. Magahy was unable to state the actual place of his family residence in that locality. He gave, however, some other very interesting details.

"William Fitzgibbon," to use the words of our very helpful informant, "was a native of Rathkeale, Co. Limerick, and claimed to be a descendant of the White Knight, a fact in which he always took great pride."

### FIRST VENTURE.

Coming to details of Mr. Fitzgibbon's earlier business activity and enterprise in the Southern Capital, Mr. Magahy writes:—

"His first business venture was in Shandon Street (then Mallow Lane), and it proved such a success that after a few years he transferred to Washington Street (then St. George's Street). Here his success continued, and in 1842 he conceived the ambitious project of acquiring and roofing the entire

block bounded by the South Main Street, Castle Street, Grand Parade and Brunswick Street.

### SECURED PROPERTIES BIT BY BIT.

"Bit by bit he secured leasehold and fee-simple properties, including the disused Court House, which was built in 1806, and though times were not favourable for such a huge venture (grim famine was brooding over the land) he started to build in 1844, and in 1846 the new building was ready for occupation.

"Up to this time all shops specialised in only one particular trade. There were milliners, crumple-makers, hosiers, house-furnishers, etc., but Fitzgibbon foresaw the advantage of the departmental system, and introduced the different trades under one roof. In this way the Queen's Old Castle can reasonably claim to be the pioneer of fully equipped monster warehouses in these islands."

Mr. Fitzgibbon in due course became a member of the Cork Corporation and was elected Lord Mayor of the City for two years, 1856 and 1857. He distributed the whole of his salary as chief magistrate for his two years of office between the then local charities in Cork.

### TRIBUTE OF RESPECT AND GRATITUDE.

The following inscription was engraved on a marble tablet formerly in the Lancasterian Schools, Western Road, Cork: "Erected by the Presentation Brethren as a tribute of respect and gratitude to the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Cork, Wm. Fitzgibbon, Esq., to perpetuate the memory of his Mayoralty and the munificence with which he distributed the entire salary of Chief Magistrate during his successive years of office between the charities of the city, amongst them the Presentation Schools, to which his Worship had been also an annual subscriber for over thirty years, A.D. 1857."

### WONDERFUL QUALITIES.

Such was the Rathkeale man who launched on its great career of success the Queen's Old Castle, Cork, deservedly recognised as one of the most successful and enterprising business firms in Ireland. Mr. Fitzgibbon, apparently, had wonderful qualities of energy, initiative and foresight and his generously charitable instincts were evidently on a par with his business acumen.

## RADIO OFFICERS' UNION

At the annual general meeting of the Irish Civil Aviation Radio Officers' Union, Rineanna, the following resolution was adopted:—

"That this meeting condemns the failure of the Government to implement the findings of the Civil Service Arbitration Board, especially in view of the fact that the majority of our members are in the lower income group, and calls on the Government to honour its obligations."

THIS read

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