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Gardai received a phone call at 2.40am informing them of a man walking through Moyross with a

and we are looking at all possibilities," said a Garda spokesman. Meanwhile Gardai

were brought to Henry Street Garda Station where they were charged and released.



The late William Geary who has died in New York aged 105

William Geary 105, has died in New York

By **NORMA PRENDIVILLE**

WILLIAM Geary, the former Garda superintendent who fought for over 70 years to clear his name, has died in New York at the age of 105.

Mr Geary was dismissed from the Gardai in 1928 having been accused of taking a bribe from the IRA in Co Clare. It was a charge he vehemently denied and was vindicated when, in 1999, the Irish Government completely exonerated him and awarded him a full Garda Supt's pension.

Mr Geary, who was born on February 28, 1899, died following pneumonia on October 14. Arrangements are being made to hold a memorial service for him in his home-place of Ballyagran later this month.

William Geary grew up on a farm, Cloonee Cottage, a few miles from Charleville but as a young man trained as a wireless operator and spent a number of years sailing the high seas on merchant ships before joining the newly-formed Garda Síochána in May 1922.

He quickly rose through the ranks, becoming a superintendent in 1924 before being posted to Kilrush, Co Clare in February 1928.

On June 15 that year, Mr Geary was ordered to appear at the Chief Superintendent's office

in Ennis where he was warned "Your life his ruined, you'd better tell the truth". Mr Geary then had to appear before (Garda) Commissioner Eoin O'Duffy, the deputy commissioner Eamonn Coogan and Chief Superintendent David Neligan and was told they had "evidence" that he had taken £100 for information given to Republicans and that they also had a signed receipt for the money.

Mr Geary was shocked at the allegation and denied it. But he was searched, his lodgings, personal belongings and officer were later searched and he was suspended from his duties. He was offered a job in Government Buildings "if he told the truth" but Mr Geary continued to maintain his innocence. He expected a full enquiry at which he could have a solicitor present but this did not happen. Instead, he was dismissed from the force on June 25 and a report was published in the Irish Independent a few days later. "I was branded a criminal, a felon and I was ashamed to stay around in Ballyagran," he told the Limerick Leader in an interview last year. "It was a slur and a stigma on my family name. We are an honourable people. Never was a Geary convicted of anything."

He left for New York shortly after and spent

the remainder of his life there, never returning home. He refused to do so, he told the Limerick Leader until his "good name" was restored. "I was branded a scoundrel and had to live with that indignity all my life," he said at the time.

In a campaign stretching from the 1930s until 1999, Mr Geary wrote to various Ministers for Justice and various Taoisigh. But it was 1999 before the then Minister for Justice John O'Donoghue publicly declared that the only evidence produced against William Geary was "certain intercepted IRA correspondence" and that he was not convinced the procedures followed in 1928 were satisfactory.

"The Government considers it reasonable that Mr Geary should have the impediments to the future enjoyment of his good name and reputation lifted," the Minister said. Mr Geary accepted a pension but refused to have it paid retrospectively.

Mr Geary met his Roscommon-born wife, Margaret Shyrane in New York where he worked for over 30 years with Consolidated Edison. They had two daughters, Helen and Anne.

Following his wife's death and up until his own death, Mr Geary continued to live alone in his New York apartment with his daughter Helen living close by.

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