

# Shoot-out at the Workhouse

## The shooting of Bobby Byrne

**O**n Sunday April 6th 1919, Bobby Byrne, adjutant to the 2nd Limerick City Battalion of the I. R. A. was wounded in a rescue attempt that went wrong. The rescue, which took place during visiting hours at the Workhouse Hospital on Shelbourne Road, Limerick, was carried out by an estimated thirty-five to forty strong group of I.R.A. volunteers. In the struggle to rescue Byrne, one policeman was killed and four others were injured, one being shot in the spine. Byrne was taken to a house in Meelick, County Clare and died later that evening. So, who was Bobby Byrne and what was the sequence of events that led to this tragic occurrence?

On the morning of Monday December 31st 1918, John Street Police Station was a hive of activity. Head-Constable Healy was getting his team together - Sergeants Breen, Moroney, Corry and Constable P. Guiry - for a raid on a house, 300 or 400 yards from the police station.<sup>1</sup> The house, at Town Wall Cottage, was the home of Byrne's mother, Annie. When the police entered the house and began their search, Sergeant Breen found an unloaded revolver on a dressing table in a bedroom; while Sergeant Moroney was searching the kitchen he came across a pair of field glasses on top of a dresser and some ammunition in a drawer. Some documents, including Byrnes adjutant's notebook,<sup>2</sup> were also found in the house. They also raided the house of Martin Barry in Garryowen and took away some papers. No arrests were made at any of the houses. Two weeks later, on Monday January 13th 1919, Bobby Byrne was arrested under the Defence of the Realm Act (D.O.R.A.) and taken to the City Jail on Mulgrave Street.<sup>3</sup> In a letter, from the prison, to his mother he told her not to worry and that he was well and fit - but all that was to change.

Robert J. Byrne was born in Dublin on November 28th 1889. Although his mother was from Limerick, their address at that time was 5, Upper Oriel Street, Dublin North.<sup>4</sup> His father who was also called Robert was a fitter by trade. After the death of her husband Mrs Byrne moved back to Limerick. In 1911, Mrs Byrne and her family lived at Donovan's Row, [near what is now the offices of United Drug]. Prior to that the young 18 year-old Bobby had entered the Civil Service in May 1907, where he took up a position as a learner, in the G.P.O. in Limerick. He went from there to Kinsale, County Cork, in July 1908, to work as a sorter. Later on he moved to Bandon, where he lived with the Crowley family on Cavendish Quay. He returned

by Des Ryan

to the G.P.O. in Limerick on October 15th 1911.<sup>5</sup> In his position at the Postal Telegraph Section he was able to gather information, which he passed on to I.R.A. Intelligence Officers.<sup>6</sup> By 1916 Byrne had come to the notice of the police because of his involvement in the Irish Volunteer movement. The following year the police had placed him on a list of "alleged disloyal Post Office officials in Limerick. They also noted down some of the insulting remarks that Byrne had made about the Union Jack, while viewing decorations in a local dance hall, before a Post Office Union Officials dance.<sup>7</sup> It would appear that Byrne was kept under surveillance at the Post Office. On September 3rd 1918, Byrne attended a meeting in the Town Hall that had been called to protest against the



Robert J. Byrne, the prisoner, who died soon after his rescue

action of the Mayor, Sir Stephen Quin, in inviting the Lord Lieutenant to visit Limerick. The meeting fell through due to lack of a support.<sup>8</sup> Sometime later Byrne was called before the management of the Post Office, where several accusations, going back as far as 1916, were made against him. He was accused of marching with the Irish Volunteers at the funeral of the ex-Mayor and Fenian John Daly, in July 1916, and with being associated with a dance where, it was alleged, seditious emblems were displayed. Byrne denied the charges but was sacked from his job. A London based newspaper of the period *The Workers Dreadnought* claimed that Byrne was a cousin of Daly.<sup>9</sup>

On Monday January 13th 1919 Byrne was arrested at his mother's house.<sup>10</sup> He was taken to the military barracks on Edward Street to be court-martialled before a British military tribunal, the officers in charge being Captains Wakefield, Grey and Rush. The police officers who had searched his mother's house were there to give evidence. He was charged with being in possession of a firearm and ammunition. Byrne made no reply to the charges and refused to recognise the tribunal, as he felt that the officers were representatives of an army of occupation in Ireland and in his view they would be unable to give an impartial judgement. Although no sentence was passed on Byrne that day, he was still held in custody.<sup>11</sup> Byrne lost no time in organising a campaign for political status within the jail. Two weeks later, on Tuesday February 4th, the *Limerick Chronicle* newspaper reported the "result" of the court-martial; Byrne was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment with hard labour and returned to the prison on Mulgrave Street. The next day, at 6 30 p.m.<sup>12</sup> sixteen political prisoners being held there caused a disturbance when they barricaded their



A view of the wing of the Workhouse Infirmary, where the melee took place



cell doors and smashed up the furniture and anything else they could lay their hands on. Republican songs being sung by the prisoners attracted a fairly large crowd onto the street outside. The police were sent for and it was not until 9 o'clock that evening that peace was restored. The republicans, it was stated, objected to being classed as ordinary criminals. The response from the prison authorities was immediate, all visits were stopped and any food or clothing being brought in by visitors or being sent in was also stopped.<sup>13</sup> Some of the men had their boots removed and were left barefoot and handcuffed day and night. Others were removed to solitary confinement.<sup>14</sup> At a meeting of City Councillors that Thursday, the treatment of the prisoners was discussed. Mr Dalton felt that the republican prisoners were justified in fighting for their rights, as these rights had already been conceded to prisoners in Dublin and Belfast. When he asked if the Mayor, Alophonsus O'Mara, was empowered to visit the jail, he was told that Mayor could if he took the oath of allegiance to the Crown<sup>15</sup> [which the British government was trying to make compulsory for all civil servants]. Alderman McDonnell J.P. and Mr L. O'Donnell had visited the jail that day and had been told that the republican prisoners were deprived of their food and handcuffed. The prisoners had no grievance with the governor or the prison warders but they wanted to be treated as political prisoners.<sup>16</sup> The following day the Mayor wrote a letter to the Chief Secretary condemning the forced feeding of prisoners who had not yet been tried. A leaflet going around the city, at that time, stated that not only were the men handcuffed during mealtime and sleeping time but they were also deprived of their boots and that one of their number Henry Meany, who was in a bad state of health, was both handcuffed and manacled during mealtime. Meany had been arrested for drilling Volunteers on Gerald Griffin Street. His relatives had been sent for, as it was feared he would die. On the Tuesday night of the following week the Mayor presided at a public meeting held at the O'Connell Monument calling for the release of Sinn Fein prisoners. After the meeting there was an improvised march to the City Jail, led by a Sinn Fein band playing nationalist airs.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile the Irish Post Office Clerks Association held a meeting in the Town Hall to protest against the practice of secret reporting on staff members, with nationalist views, in the Postal Service. The Mayor presided at the meeting, which included council members and trade union activists. The Mayor said that if a charge was made against a man, it was only right that he should get a chance to defend himself. Another speaker, Mr. McNally, from Dublin, went on to say "the Post Office service was open to any person to make a charge against a member of the staff, and then hide himself behind a veil of secrecy. Within the past eighteen months or so, Mr. Robert Byrne, a member of the local Postal Service, has been charged with four separate offences and dismissed recently from

his position. It is an extraordinary thing to think that although those charges were levelled against him, he was not given an opportunity of defending himself. Mr. Byrne denied these charges, but to no avail. The executive of the association had, for years past, been protesting against this system of secret reporting. So far they have not succeeded in wiping out that vicious system. They had protested at their conferences and in their journal, but had not been successful and now they wanted public opinion to support them in their campaign. They had come to Limerick to open their agitation and ask for the support of the citizens, and he knew the appeal would not be in vain."

The next speaker, Mr. Allen from Belfast, an executive of the association, said, "the citizens of Limerick, as elsewhere, were the best judges of the efficiency of those who were employed in the public service. That did not however appear to be the view of the Postal authorities, whose methods were not at all what they should be in dealing with secret reporting. In Mr. Byrnes case, the rights and privileges of a citizen had been encroached upon, and if he did not receive justice it was up to the people of Limerick, whose servant he was, to see that at least he got a chance of meeting his accuser and defending himself. His official career was terminated because of a report secretly made. The Association appealed to the citizens of Limerick in its agitation to abolish secret reporting in the service, and to see that Mr. Byrnes was restored to his position."

One of the last speakers, Mr. O'Connor, proposed a resolution strongly protesting, on behalf of the citizens, against the system of secret reporting in the Post Office; declaring the dismissal of Bobby Byrne from the Postal Service as unwarranted and unjustifiable, and calling upon the Postmaster General to reinstate him. It was agreed that copies of the resolution be sent to the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, the Postmaster General, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and the Secretary of the Irish Post Office.<sup>18</sup>

Towards the end of February, James Kennedy, one of the political prisoners, involved in the disturbance at the jail, was charged with causing malicious damage to prison property. Although Kennedy was not present at the court, he was fined 40 shillings. One of the prison officers giving evidence stated that he heard shouting and whistles blowing. Making his way to Kennedy's cell he found the door barricaded. He asked Kennedy to remove the blockade but he refused; when they broke in the door they found the place littered with glass, a broken table and damage to the wall of the cell.<sup>19</sup> A week later two more prisoners, John Breen and a young man named O'Toole, were charged with the same offence.<sup>20</sup>

At a meeting of the Workhouse Board of Guardians, on March 5th, one of the items on the agenda to be discussed was an increase in the salaries of visiting doctors, i.e., doctors who were on call to the workhouse or the city jail but not

actually employed there. Some of the board members wanted this put on hold as it was known that one of the doctors, Michael McGrath, the City Medical Officer, involved in the revision of the salaries was also helping with the forced feeding of prisoners at the city jail. The board were also seeking an interview with visiting Justices to the prison in order to impress upon them the need to have elementary prison justice granted "to our people." The least they could do was to try and prevent the treatment that the prisoners were getting in the prison. Mr. P. Bourke felt that the board should request an early settlement to the dispute at the prison and "to the way that our fellow citizens are being treated at the jail. Three members of the board, Mrs. Rynne, Mr. Bourke and Mr. B. Skehan<sup>21</sup> were appointed to meet with the visiting Justices before any salary increases were passed by the board <sup>22</sup>

At a further meeting of the board, on Wednesday March 12th, Mr T. Coffey a hospital staff member told the meeting that a certificate had been received from the prison authorities stating that Robert J. Byrne, a political prisoner, was a fit case for transfer to the hospital. One of the board members objected, saying that the Workhouse Hospital should not be turned into a prison. He would agree, he said, to admitting Mr. Byrne if he was a free man, but if he was brought in under armed guard, he should not be admitted. The military authorities, he felt, only want to relieve themselves of responsibility. Mr. Reidy asked if the military authorities could [use] force [to bring] him into the hospital. In reply, Mr. Ledden said that Byrne was a prisoner and if he was brought in under military escort he would still continue the hunger strike. He advised the board to let the military authorities have that responsibility if this young man dies and not the board. Another board member said "if this man is dying, let him die in jail, or else let the prison authorities set him free." Mr. P. Bourke was of the opinion that the military authorities could move Mr. Byrne to any hospital in the city [the County Infirmary being across the road from the jail]; but if the board has to make a choice on whether or not to accept Mr. Byrne, who was in a delicate state of health, then he would prefer for him to be admitted to the Workhouse Hospital. Mr. Brennan made the comment "when a prisoner goes on hunger strike it is not for fun. When the prison authorities see a prisoner is dangerously ill they want him removed to a hospital. If Robert Byrne wasn't set free then they should not admit him." At the end of the meeting, Mr. T. Coffey was instructed not to admit Byrne unless he was a free man.<sup>23</sup>

Later on that evening, Byrne, accompanied not by the military but by prison warder and three policemen, was taken to the Workhouse Hospital. A medical certificate and also a letter from the prison governor notifying the hospital administration that the prison authorities were transferring Mr. Byrne to the hospital under the Criminal Administration Act of 1914 and that the prisoner was still in legal



custody.<sup>24</sup> Mr. Coffey, after seeking advice on the matter, admitted Byrne to the hospital, under protest.

At a meeting of the board the following week Mr. P. Bourke was annoyed by the fact that Byrne was under police guard, in the hospital; he said it was a disgrace. Mr. Ledden pointed out that at their last meeting they had agreed that Mr. Byrne should not be admitted to the hospital unless he was a free man. He wanted to know under what conditions and authority he was admitted and also the results of the boards delegation to the visiting justices. Mr. Bourke said that the committee appointed to meet with the visiting justices had done so [the day before]. They had discussed the entire situation with the Justices, asking for no concessions, only a demand that the men be given the status of political prisoners, as they were entitled to. The justices, who included Sir Charles Barrington, promised that they would do what they could, but they could give no definite answer on the subject.<sup>25</sup> Mr. Coffey explained that he had consulted the committee appointed to meet with the visiting Justices before admitting Mr. Byrne; Mr. Ledden and Mr A. Brennan still held the view that Byrne shouldn't have been admitted unless he was a free man and that by doing so, they [the board] were helping with the administration of British law.

At a meeting of the board on March 25th, at which Dr. Michael McGrath was present, Mr Sheehan referred to boards previous meeting. He said that the indirect charges against Dr. McGrath hadn't been substantiated, but if they were proved to be true he would have no sympathy for the doctor. Mr. P. Bourke, in reply, said that Dr. McGrath was a personal friend of his and that the doctor had done great work during the flu epidemic in the city [which was world wide at the time]. His resentment was not against Dr. McGrath but the system he represented. If the board were to give their support to the doctor, Mr. Bourke said, then they would have to withdraw from the organisation from which they belonged – Sinn Fein. Mr. Sheehan then suggested that a committee be appointed to interview Bobby Byrne to see if he had been ill treated in prison by Dr. McGrath so that the charges made could be substantiated. Mr. Brennan intervened to say that he wouldn't insult Mr. Byrne by going down to the ward to interview him in the presence of the warders and the police of the British Government. Another member suggested bringing Mr. Byrne to the boardroom but was told that it was not feasible. By this time the persistence of Mr Sheehan was annoying Mr. Brennan who said "As you insist in pressing the matter, I'll tell you, he [Dr McGrath] brought in Dr. Irwin to forcibly feed three Clare prisoners." Dr. McGrath interrupted straight away and denied the charge, claiming all he had done was to introduce Dr. Irwin to the governor [of the prison] and said that it was normal practice to call in another doctor in such cases. He denied that three prisoners had been forcibly fed [and if it was true] he had no hand in it. Just before

the meeting finished Mr Brennan referred to the case of Thomas Ashe, a hunger striker who had died after being moved. Dr. McGrath replied that any patient he had sent out [of the prison] always returned in good health.<sup>26</sup>

In the meantime plans were being made to rescue Byrne from the Workhouse Hospital. Commandant Peadar Dunne called a meeting of the battalion officers, which was held at the Roger Casement Sinn Fein Club near the City Dispensary on Lower Gerald Griffin Street. Five men were to be selected from each company<sup>27</sup> and Sunday April 6th was designated as the day of action. Prior to that the volunteers were given a course of instruction in the art of effectively tying and trussing up the policemen guarding Byrne. A number of the men were chosen because of their sturdy build and their aptitude for the work, rather than their general abilities.<sup>28</sup> The battalion motorcar driver would take Byrne to an arranged hiding place. No battalion officers were to take part in the rescue attempt. Michael Stack and Jack Gallagher, the only two men authorised to carry arms, were placed in charge of the operation.<sup>29</sup>

When the board met on April 3rd one of the items on the agenda was the appointment, by a vote of the board, of a dispensary doctor for Limerick Urban District No. 2. Seventy-one members attended the meeting. There were two candidates Dr. McGrath and Dr. J.G. Holmes, Medical Officer at Barringtons Hospital. Before the voting took place Mr. Brennan reiterated

the charges that he had made against Dr. McGrath at a previous meeting of the board and wanted to know if the doctor still denied the charges. When several members of the board said that the charges had nothing to do with the election, Mr Brennan said that his reputation was at stake. The chairman called on Dr. McGrath to reply. The doctor admitted that he knew about the forced feeding as he had been standing by. Infuriated, Mr. Brennan shouted at him, "standing by, I'll prove that you gagged a prisoner's mouth and held him while Dr. Irwin forcibly fed him." Mr. Leddin intervened to say that of the most eminent medical men in Ireland had given it as their opinion that forced feeding was a danger to life; he also felt that Dr. McGrath could have chosen not to take part in the operation. At the request of Mr. Brennan, the board members decided to call in Mr. J. Connell, Kilrush, a prisoner alleged to have been forcibly fed at Limerick Prison. In his statement Mr. Connell described how Dr. Irwin had forcibly fed him while Dr. McGrath had gagged him. Some time later Mr. Connell was transferred across the road to the County Infirmary. In reply Dr. McGrath said that the procedure of force feeding did not produce any nervous effect on the person. When the board members voted, Dr. Holmes received 46 votes; Dr. McGrath received 21, while four members decided not to vote. Dr. Holmes thanked the chairman and also his supporters. Dr. McGrath said that time would vindicate every action that he had done in the discharge of his duty. The meeting then adjourned.<sup>30</sup>

Sunday April 6th was a bright sunny day. As the volunteers prepared themselves for the rescue attempt, there was a change in how Byrne was to be taken from the hospital. When the battalion driver had to leave Limerick urgently, as he was needed elsewhere, it was decided to use an undertaker's funeral carriage to take Byrne to a hiding place. Around two o'clock small groups of volunteers made their way to the Workhouse Hospital. About fifteen of the volunteers stayed in the corridors and around the grounds, while another twenty or more entered Byrnes ward. Shortly before zero hour, the carriage for the prisoners get-away, with Miss Mary Giltenane, a Cumann na mBan member, in it, made its way through the main gates to the back of the hospital; giving the impression that it was there to take part in a funeral from the hospital,<sup>31</sup> so as not to attract too much attention. Byrne was upstairs in No. 1 ward of the infirmary building. His bed was in an alcove in the ward, screened off, and out of the view of other patients.<sup>32</sup> There are several accounts of what happened next. Eamon Dore, from Glin, a veteran of the 1916 Rising, has related how he visited Byrne that Sunday and how he "found great difficulty in disguising the purpose of our talk from the listening policemen. I left him after a few minutes before the appointed hour of rescue, cutting the time so fine that I actually met some of the rescue party on the stairs as they were assembling to enter the ward."<sup>33</sup>



Jack Gallagher





**Sergt. J.F. Goulden, Ballyneety, injured**



**Const. J. Tierney, Killeely, injured**



**Const. J. Fitzpatrick, Clarina, injured**

Michael Stack in his account said, "the arrangements made for the rescue were that I was, first of all, to visit the Union [Workhouse] and tell him [Byrne] what we had intended doing. When I had finished my visit, I would leave his room and go out of that particular ward, travelling around the hospital and by a roundabout way come back to the same ward again. While this was happening, the remainder of my party were to visit patients in the ward and pose as friends and so work their way near the armed guard over Byrne. The whole rescue was timed and, on the blast of a whistle from me they were to rush the R.I.C. guard and pin them down. At the psychological moment when this was happening, Byrne was to jump from the bed."<sup>34</sup> How Dore or Stack managed to convey to Byrne that he was going to be rescued is a mystery. Byrne was being guarded that day by Sergt. J. Goulden, Constables M. O'Brien, T. Spillane, J. Tierney, J. Fitzpatrick and prison warden John Mahoney. While three of the policemen had taken up vantage points to observe the visitors,<sup>35</sup> Constables Spillane and O'Brien were sitting on either side of Byrne's bed and had their revolvers drawn just as the trouble started.<sup>36</sup>

When Stack blew the whistle all hell broke loose, startled visitors jumped to their feet and panic stricken, ran for the ward doors. He said "As I was approaching Byrne's bed I saw Constable Spillane fire at Byrne and throw himself on the bed on top of Byrne. When I saw this happening, I fired at Spillane who fell over Bobby Byrne on the bed. I had then to pull Spillane off Byrne to get Byrne out of the bed. As Byrne was being taken through the ward, Constable O'Brien freed himself from the unarmed party and drew his gun and was about to fire when I shot him. He died immediately and I relieved him of his arms."<sup>37</sup>

The prison warden John Mahoney, in his account, said that when the whistle was sounded "two men appeared at the door, with revolvers and ordered "Hands up while another group of young men burst in behind them. The two constables, Spillane and O'Brien, had their revolvers in their hands just as the thing started but I did not see them use them. They were sitting behind Byrne, and got on their feet at once. As Byrne tried to leave the bed I rushed over and caught him while the two police-



**Const. Spillane, who was shot, with his brother and Const. Clarke**

men got into handgrips with the crowd. Several shots were fired and Constable Spillane was thrown over and fell on top of me on the bed; Spillane also held on to Byrne. A fight was raging at either side of the screen between the two constables, the sergeant and the crowd. While we were holding Byrne, Spillane was shot in the back by a civilian who was about four feet away. Someone caught hold of me by the neck and I was thrown down between the prisoner's bed and a press. I was stood on and I partly lost consciousness. When I

recovered my legs were tied together and I could see Constable Spillane struggling with Byrne at the door. I untied my legs, rushed at Byrne and caught him; Constable O'Brien was at that time using his baton on the crowd. Constable Spillane was struck on the head and dragged away. I was lifted with the prisoner past Constable O'Brien and then I was struck on the hand and head and I had to let go of the prisoner. It was at that time that Constable O'Brien was shot and he dropped. As I was holding Constable O'Brien I was struck



**The ward in which the tragedy was enacted**





M. Brady, the Coroner who opened the inquest on Bobby Byrne, with Dist.-Inspector A.V. McClelland, Killaloe, who conducted the proceedings on behalf of the police



Left to right: Messrs. T. O'B. Kelly, solicitor, who represented the next-of-kin at the inquest on Bobby Byrne; T.J. Byrne, of Dublin, a brother of deceased, and M. Brennan, prominent in the Sinn Féin movement, and a friend of Bobby Byrne

again and was stunned. When I recovered there was great confusion and excitement. I saw no policemen in the ward except Constable O'Brien, who was on the floor bleeding."<sup>38</sup>

While all this was happening, Byrne, clad only in his nightshirt and covered by an overcoat, staggered down the stairs with the help of two of his comrades. When they came out onto the grounds there was no sign of the carriage. They made their way out the main gate and down Shelbourne Road where they stopped and commandeered a pony and trap being driven by John Ryan of Knockalisheen, and his young daughter Nancy. They brought the wounded Byrne to their home near Meelick, County Clare.

The prison warden John Mahoney came out looking for Byrne but there was no sign of him. When Mahoney went back to the ward, Constable O'Brien, who was dying, was being attended to by a priest and some nuns.<sup>39</sup> By that time the sergeant and the other constables had been found, tied up,<sup>40</sup> badly battered and bleeding profusely from the head,<sup>41</sup> in the operating theatre next to the ward.<sup>42</sup> Mahoney helped in getting Constable Spillane, who had been shot in the back and also badly beaten about the head, into a bed. There were bullet marks on the walls and a statue of the child of Prague on a little altar in the ward, had been hit by a ricochet; a truncheon was also found.

When John Ryan reached his home near Meelick, Byrnes rescuers had to plead

with Ryan's wife to take in the injured man.<sup>43</sup> He was carried to an upstairs bedroom and as his condition deteriorated, through the afternoon, a doctor was sent for. The newly appointed Urban District dispensary doctor, and resident medical officer at Barringtons Hospital, John Holmes arrived at the house around 7 o'clock. Byrnes condition was by then, Dr. Holmes said, "hopeless." He asked Byrne who had shot him; Byrne replied that it was "the man who was shot." Robert J. Byrne died at 8.30 p.m. that evening. The bullet that caused Byrnes death was never recovered from his body as it was felt that it had gone in too far. If it had been extracted it would have shown whether or not Byrne had been shot by the police or by his rescuers.

Bobby Byrnes life has been overshadowed by the events, which followed his death – the general strike of April 1919, otherwise known as the Limerick Soviet. In early April 1965, forty-six years after his death, a beautiful headstone was erected over his grave by his relatives and his old I.R.A. comrades.<sup>44</sup> On Wednesday April 6th 1983, the Bobby Byrne Fianna Fail Cumann, founded in 1926 in the Irish-town area of the city, organised a special anniversary Mass for Byrne at St. John's Cathedral at 7.00 p.m. A function was held after the Mass at the Town Wall Cottage. Surviving members of the rescue party, Limerick City Old I.R.A., Fianna Eireann, and Cumann na mBan were invited.<sup>45</sup> On May 29th 2009, the ninetieth anniversary of Byrnes death, the Mayor of Limerick,

John Gilligan, opened the Robert Byrne [Memorial] Park on Clancy Strand. I visited Robert Byrne's grave in Mount St. Lawrence Cemetery some weeks later; it is rather ironic that despite the publicity and hype surrounding the opening of the park in his honour nothing was done to improve the appearance of his grave.

#### REFERENCES

1. Limerick Chronicle 21-1-1919
2. Limerick Chronicle 2-4-1983
3. Limerick Chronicle 14-1-1919
4. Records at St. Camillus Hospital, Limerick
5. Post Office Staff Records (Dublin)
6. Eamon Dore's statement to the Bureau of Military History
7. Liam Cahill *The Forgotten Revolution* (Dublin 1990)
8. Limerick Leader 13-2-1919
9. Limerick City Museum
10. Limerick Leader 3-2-1919. One local newspaper gave Byrne's address as 8, Sarsfield Street, Limerick where his aunt ran a newsagents and stationery shop.
11. Limerick Chronicle 21-1-1919
12. Limerick Leader 28-2-1919
13. Limerick Chronicle 6-2-1919
14. Limerick Leader 16-4-1938
15. Limerick Chronicle 8-2-1919
16. Limerick Chronicle 8-2-1919
17. Limerick Leader 13-2-1919
18. Limerick Leader 13-2-1919
19. Limerick Leader 28-2-1919
20. Limerick Leader 7-3-1919
21. Limerick Chronicle 6-3-1919
22. Limerick Leader 7-3-1919
23. Limerick Leader 12-3-1919
24. Limerick Chronicle 13-3-1919
25. Limerick Chronicle 20-3-1919
26. Limerick Chronicle 26-3-1919
27. Michael Stack's statement to the Bureau of Military History
28. Limerick Leader 16-4-1938
29. Michael Stack statement to the Bureau of Military History
30. Limerick Chronicle 3-4-1919
31. Limerick's Fighting Story 1916-21 (Cork 2009)
32. Richard Abbott *Police Casualties in Ireland 1919-1922* (Cork 2000)
33. Eamon Dore's statement to the Bureau of Military History
34. Michael Stack's statement to the Bureau of Military History
35. Richard Abbott (op. cit.)
36. Limerick Leader 18-4-1919
37. Michael Stack's statement to the Bureau of Military History
38. Limerick Leader 18-4-1919
39. Limerick Leader 18-4-1919
40. Limerick Leader 10-4-1965
41. Limerick Leader 18-4-1919
42. Limerick Leader 10-4-1965
43. Liam Cahill (op. cit.)
44. Limerick Leader 10-4-1965
45. Limerick Leader 2-4-1983

A special word of thanks to Tom Keogh, who suggested I write this essay, to Sean Gannon and Mike Maguire, Limerick City Library, to local historian, Frank O'Connor and Tom Toomey, for their help in its compilation.

Photograph of Jack Gallagher, courtesy of Frank Gallagher. All other photographs, courtesy of the Irish Independent.