

Involved in an accident 'in way'

LEADER REPORTER

A 25-year-old man who failed to sell a car having been quoted £1,200 in price, proposed to take it to a family in Clare to see if they could find a buyer. The court was told that the man was involved in an accident on the way and later Garda enquiries revealed that he had no insurance.

The court was told that the man was John Gortnacloc, Broadford, Co. Clare. His solicitor, Mr. P. J. Keegan, accepted the facts as stated by Sergeant Eamon Kirby.

Mr. Keegan, he said, worked for the State in the West, and had failed to see the car there, and that his family could assist in the matter.

The man was fined £100, with endorsement of £100, win endorsement of £100, together with a £15 fine for not having a licence.

'From side to side'

A fine of £225, with a year's probation from driving, and a licence suspended for 12 months, was imposed at the West court on Damien O'Connell, Knockbrack, Knocknashinga, when he was convicted of driving with a urine-alcohol level of 0.15g per 100ml. Mr. Michael Noonan, prosecuting, stated that his client was driving from the mart on the way to the court.

The court was told that the driver, Ted O'Donnell, was charged with driving on the left, which, he said, was occasioned by Mr. Emperor driving a car from side to side of the road on his offence, which was occasioned by the alcohol matter, was charged to account with the other driver.

Musical special

A special musical evening will be held at Adare on this Friday in aid of the purchase of a vital fund for sick children. The event will be joined by Stephen O'Shea and his band.

Clare Music Circle is a group of friends who came together in 1983 to pool their talents and share their interest in music. There are 16 members and the direction of Kieran O'Shea. Proceeds from this event will be devoted to the nursing care unit at the St. Vincent's Hospital, Temple Street, Dublin.



Mannix Joyce, who launched the Castleconnell booklet, with, from left, Kay Hickey, Catherine Hyland, Dorothy Owens, Betty Tuohy, president, I.C.A. Guild, and Hanneluise Doran, committee member of the Castleconnell I.C.A. Guild.

Tan atrocity that led to Truce: book

IT IS GENERALLY believed that a shoot-out at what is now Hickey's Bar in Castleconnell, in which two RIC men and the man who served them drinks, were killed by Black-and-Tans in a tragic mistake, led to the conference which ended the Troubles, says a newly-published history of Castleconnell.

The bar at that time—1921—was known as the Shannon Hotel, originally one of seven in Castleconnell to cater for angling visitors from all over Britain and the Continent.

The 50-page history and walking guide to Castleconnell, in which the incident is recalled, has been compiled and published by the local ICA guild: it is lavish with maps and old pictures from the Lawrence Collection, taken at the turn of the century.

The Troubles, says the historical section of the work, was a time when some great local mansions such as The Hermitage and Mountshannon, were burned down: both were seen as symbols of oppression—in fact, one was owned by an Irish-American and the other by a family which admired, and gave hospitality to, the great Irish bard, Turloch O'Carolan.

The incident of the shooting at what is now Hickey's Bar, says the booklet, was one which was to have historical repercussions.

"On a Sunday evening on 17th April, 1921, three off-duty RIC men cycled out from Killaloe for a drink at the Shannon Hotel in Castleconnell," it records.

"They were served by Denis O'Donovan, a man of Nationalist back-

ground but esteemed by all, who stayed and chatted with them. Someone, it seems, sent word to the Black-and-Tans in Newport that three 'Sinn Feiners' were drinking in the hotel. Soon the hotel was surrounded by Crown Forces, armed with machine guns.

"Several groups of them rushed into the hotel, shouting that the 'Sinn Feiners' must surrender. The RIC men had no time to explain: they drew their guns and defended themselves. In the end, two were killed and the third escaped.

Military inquiry

"Mr. O'Donovan was taken out, accused of 'harbouring rebels' and pumped full of bullets in sight of his wife and children.

Mr. O'Donovan was father of Dermot G. O'Donovan, the prominent Limerick solicitor, now retired, and grandfather of Derry O'Donovan, who continues the family legal practice, and P.D. founder and leader, Desmond O'Malley, T.D. The history continues:

"A military inquiry glossed over the affair, saying Mr. O'Donovan had been killed accidentally in the course of the attack. But on April 26, the very day on which the military inquiry was concluded, Lord Parmoor raised the matter in the House of Lords, quoting at length from letters from his brother, who had been in the hotel at the time and had himself been threatened by the attackers. His eye-witness account utterly exploded the official story."

Although the House of Lords agreed that scandalous crimes were being committed in Ireland in the name of law and order, no action was

taken on Lord Parmoor's request for a public inquiry.

"But it is generally believed that it was this incident which led Lloyd George to seek a conference with the Irish leaders, shortly thereafter, which led to the signing of the Treaty . . ."

The Shannon Hotel was noted for the many titled people who came for the fishing to Castleconnell. King George V is said to have come incognito, while other visitors included Lord Iveagh, Lord Kingston of Kilonan Castle, Lord Ainsborough of Adare, and ambassadors from as far afield as Canada, Switzerland and Japan.

The booklet, well-researched and very readable, points out that Mountshannon, the great mansion which was burned down during the Troubles, had been owned by a wealthy Irish-American, Thomas Nevins. The other mansion burned, The Hermitage, was a stop-over for the great Irish bard, Turloch O'Carolan, where his resident admirer, Dean Massey of Limerick, had the only life portrait of him painted—it is now in the National Gallery. The Masseys had a bedroom in the house named after O'Carolan. The house fell vacant in 1916 on the death of Baron Massey.

The guide to Castleconnell deals with the village and approaches in fair detail, but there are extensive appendices, treating of the Castle and the Bourke family which lived there, the Spa, the fishing, the churches, the fauna and flora and sections devoted to the Famine, the local bog, poetry and travellers' descriptions.

Altogether a worthwhile contribution to the archives of the Limerick Region.

—Paddy Moroney.

'TAKEAWAY

FOOD SOLD