

EXECUTIONS IN DUBLIN.

SCENES NEAR MOUNTJOY

Dublin, Tuesday.—A Press Association message says:—Patrick Maher and Edmond Foley, both of County Limerick, and Wm. Mitchell, an R.I.C. Constable, were executed at Mountjoy Prison, Dublin, to-day, the first two for the murder of a policeman at Knocklong, and Mitchell for the murder of a County Wicklow magistrate and farmer named Dixon.

Notice that the executions had been carried out was posted at 8.15.

Dublin, Tuesday.—Messrs. Patrick Muller, of Knocklong, Co. Limerick, and Edmond Foley, Duntryleague, Galbally, Co. Limerick, were executed in Mountjoy Prison at 7 o'clock this morning. Both men, after assisting at two Masses and receiving the Holy Viaticum, walked with firm step to the scaffold, and met their death with courage and fortitude. They stood side by side on the trap of the execution chamber, and were launched into eternity simultaneously. Death in each case was instantaneous.

Their lives while in prison was most edifying. They attended with great assiduity to the ministrations of the Very Rev. Canon Waters, the Catholic Chaplain, and the Rev. Father McMahon, the Assistant Chaplain, who were with the condemned men in their last moments.

After the hanging of Messrs. Maher and Foley Constable William Mitchell, who was convicted by courtmartial of the murder of Mr. Dixon, J.P., near Dunlavin, was also executed in Mountjoy. He was attended by the Rev. Mr. Green and the Rev. Mr. Verschoyle, Protestant Chaplain. His execution took place at 8 o'clock, and at 8.15 a typewritten bulletin, of which the following is a copy, was affixed to the main gate of the Prison by one of the warders:—

NOTICE.

The sentences of the law passed upon Patrick Maher and Edmond Foley, found guilty of murder, and William Mitchell, found guilty of murder, were carried into execution this morning by order.

A copy of the notice, when brought to the outer gate, was seized by the people and carried off before the prison official had time to post it up. Subsequently possession of the notice was obtained. It was taken away by someone amongst the large crowds which had assembled in the vicinity.

The impressive scenes which have been associated with the recent executions of other Irishmen in Mountjoy Prison were repeated this morning outside the building. Before six o'clock men and women and girls, and even small children, began to arrive at the Jail. Unlike the previous occasion, when they were permitted to approach the main entrance gate, the citizens were prevented from going beyond the broad avenue leading from the North Circular road to the building. The gate at the top of the avenue was closed, and behind it and along the railings cordons of soldiers of the Lancashire Fusiliers, with rifles and fixed bayonets, were drawn up, supported by a double-turreted armoured car. Some Auxiliary Cadets were also on duty in the space occupied by the military, who appeared to be much impressed by the spectacle of the crowds praying outside the Jail gate.

The Very Rev. Canon Waters, the Catholic chaplain, accompanied by the Rev. Father McMahon, the assistant chaplain, passed into the prison at ten minutes to six o'clock exactly. The early arrivals were considerably augmented by groups of people who immediately joined in the recital of the prayers and the singing of hymns, which had been proceeding for some time. Kneeling on the gravel walk in front of the closed gate the people prayed with great fervour, and sang with deep emotion.

Shortly after seven o'clock the crowd assumed large proportions. The mass of people filled up the long avenue for a considerable stretch. Their demeanour was highly edifying. Almost everyone was seen with beads in hand reciting the Rosary and joining in the other prayers and the singing of the hymns.

A large crucifix, bound with crepe, was erected on the railings and was surrounded by lighted candles. The melting of the wax was productive of a remarkable effect. A statuelike form gathered at the base of one of the candles and was held up to view before the people, who were greatly impressed by the spectacle.

Mr. Wm. Foley, the father, Mrs. Foley, the mother, and other relatives of Edmond, accompanied by Mrs. Maher, the mother, and Miss Maher, the sister, of Patrick Maher, arrived at 6.30 a.m. The group of grief-stricken relatives excited the deep sympathy of the spectators. They took up a position in front of the crucifix and joined in the prayers which were being offered up for the spiritual welfare of the condemned men. Though greatly affected they bore their ordeal with splendid fortitude until the official notice of the executions was issued. Then they were unnerved by the terrible ordeal, and were assisted by sympathetic friends, who helped some of them away. At the same time the crowd quivered with excitement as if they had received an electric shock. Some of the women cried aloud and tears rolled down the cheeks of almost everyone. The people as with one voice, ejaculated "The Lord have mercy upon their souls," as the death notice was affixed to the gate. The crowd then recited the Litany for the Dead. It was a deeply affecting scene.

Canon Waters celebrated Mass at six o'clock. The two prisoners assisted with great fervour and devotion, and received the Holy Viaticum. About nine persons, who included the Auxiliary police guards, who were in charge of the prisoners, were present at the solemn ceremonies. Immediately afterwards the Apostolic Blessing was bestowed on the condemned men, for whose spiritual welfare Father McMahon also celebrated Mass at 6.30 a.m. During the Mass and until they were executed both men prayed unceasingly. They had slept for three or four hours during the night and were happy and cheerful. They were described by an eye-witness as being perfectly brave, and as excellent and holy men.

The pinning process, the men's hands being tied behind their backs, took place in the cell, where they were visited by the executioner and his assistant.

In the procession to the execution chamber one of the executioners led the way. Canon Waters walked with Mr. Maher, and Father McMahon with Mr. Foley. The assistant executioner and some prison officials brought up the rear. Prayers were recited by the priests, and the responses were given in a firm tone by the condemned men, who walked with a firm step.

On entering the execution chamber the two men stood side by side on the trap beneath the scaffold beam from which two ropes depended. The executioner put the white cap on Mr. Maher and having adjusted the rope tightened it round his neck. A similar process was adopted with Mr. Foley. The bolt was then drawn and the men were dead instantaneously.

Father McMahon immediately anointed the bodies. As an eye-witness remarked, the bravery of these two men was most extraordinary. A touching incident, which illustrated the good relations between the prisoners and their Auxiliary guards, took place some time before the execution. One of the Auxiliaries who possessed a scapular from Lourdes which he wore during the war, placed them round the neck of Mr. Foley, and at the time of the execution he was wearing them. The scapulars were subsequently removed from the body and handed back to the policeman.

FAREWELL MESSAGE.

The following message, signed by the two condemned men, was given to the relatives, on parting with them for the last time last night:—

"Struggle on for the honour, glory and freedom of dear old Ireland. Our hearts go out to all our dear old friends. Our souls go to God at seven o'clock in the morning, and our bodies when Ireland is free, shall go to Galbally.

"Our blood shall not be shed in vain for Ireland, and we have a strong presentiment, going to our God, that Ireland will soon be free. We gladly give our lives that a smile may lighten the face of our dear 'Dark Rosaleen.' . . .

We will see that Ireland will be free. Farewell, Farewell, Farewell."