

DYING WISH TO BE BURIED IN FERMOY

Clonmel, Wednesday Evening.

The capture of Mr. Liam Lynch, the Irregular "Chief of Staff," has been the sole topic of conversation here. It appears National troops were operating in a mountain valley between Newcastle and Mount Melleray when fire was opened from rocky, rising ground on them.

They returned the fire and followed up. Liam Lynch, who was with several others, fell, and his companions tried to carry him away, but owing to the advance of troops they made off along the hills.

The troops found Liam Lynch lying wounded in the stomach. They sent at once for a priest and a doctor, and Father Hallinan, who was staying in a house nearby, and a doctor attended the injured man, whose condition was serious from the first. The ambulance was requisitioned from Clonmel, and Lynch was removed in it to the Clonmel Workhouse Hospital. His condition on arrival about 6 o'clock was low, and he succumbed to his injuries about 9 o'clock.

When the troops reached the spot where Lynch was wounded in the mountain, they found several top boots and hats, belonging evidently to companions, who had fled across the hills.

THE INQUEST

This afternoon Dr. Stokes, Deputy Coroner, held an inquest on the remains at Clonmel Union Boardroom. The body, which lay confined in the mortuary, was viewed by the jury. The proceedings were brief and formal.

The following were sworn on the jury:—Mr. Raymond Murphy (foreman), Messrs. John Lovett, P. Smith, E. Ryan, R. Stapleton, Phil. Cunningham, John Ryan, M. Steele, E. Morris, P. O'Gorman, Ed. Ahearn, and James Ryan.

General Prout represented the authorities and Inspector Kilroy, the Civic Guard.

A military witness made the following deposition:—

"I identify the body of Liam Lynch, lying dead at the deadhouse. He was aged about 33 or 34 years and unmarried, and a native of Anglesboro', Co. Limerick. I believe he was 'Chief of Staff' of the Irregulars. I knew him to be always actively engaged in operations against the Government forces."

MILITARY EVIDENCE

Coroner—If it is the wish of the jury, General Prout will call witnesses who were present at the time that deceased was wounded.

Foreman—I think that would be the proper course.

A military witness deposed:

"I was in charge of a column operating in Crohane Mountain, south-west of Clogheen,

at about 10 a.m. yesterday. Fire was opened on us by a number of Irregulars. We returned the fire and deceased was wounded."

How long did the firing last? Witness—About 20 minutes or half an hour. The column advanced under fire and the Irregulars retreated and we found deceased lying on the mountain. He was lying on his back, face upwards, and appeared to be badly wounded. One of my party bandaged up his wounds, and I sent for the priest and doctor. We took him down from the mountain to Newcastle, where he was attended to by the priest and Dr. Power, Ardfinane, who said the dressing had been very well done.

A DYING WISH

"Dr. Dalton soon arrived with the Red Cross ambulance. In conversation with me," witness proceeded, "deceased asked that he be buried in Fermoy, along with Fitzgerald, and told me he was Liam Lynch. General Prout said the military authorities would see to that."

Mr. Stapleton—Had the wounded man arms on him? Witness—No.

Dr. Redmond Dalton, Military M.O., deposed:

"I went out yesterday with an ambulance to Newcastle. In a house there I found the wounded man, Liam Lynch. There were two bullet wounds in the body, one entrance wound being somewhat behind and to the right between the lower border of the ribs and hips. The exit wound was at about the same level on the left side.

"There was a fair amount of external and a considerable amount of internal haemorrhage, and he was suffering severely from shock. After consultation with the doctor who was attending the patient, we decided it was best that he should be removed to Clonmel. We brought him back in the ambulance to Clonmel, arriving about 6 o'clock at the military ward, St. Joseph's Hospital.

CAUSE OF DEATH

"The patient was very low all the time and died shortly before 9 o'clock. Death was, in my opinion, due to shock and haemorrhage, following the wounds described."

The Coroner asked the jury did they require any further evidence. He said the body had been identified as that of Liam Lynch, who, according to the evidence before them, was one of the party of Irregulars who opened fire on the troops and was fatally wounded in the return fire.

The jury considered the evidence before them sufficient, and after a brief consultation found that

death was due to shock and haemorrhage, following bullet wounds caused by a party of the National Army in the execution of their duty, and wished to add a vote of sympathy to the relatives of deceased.

The Coroner joined in the expression of sympathy.

A juror (Mr. Smith) said the jury would like to know if the last wish of the deceased, that he be buried in Fermoy, would be carried out.

The Coroner said General Prout had given an assurance as to that already.

Liam Lynch is a native of South Limerick, and first came into prominence in 1920 as O.C. Cork No. 2 Brigade, I.R.A. Later he became O.C. 1st Southern Division. He led the raid on Mallow Barracks, where a huge quantity of arms and ammunition was captured, a British sergeant being killed in the fight. The town was subsequently sacked by British troops. Six local young men were arrested and sentenced to death for the attack, and Liam Lynch publicly assumed responsibility for the raid and declared that the convicted men had no part in it.

At the time of the army split he supported Rory O'Connor, and was appointed "Chief of Staff," which post he held till very shortly before the Four Courts fighting, when he ceased to act in that capacity in consequence of differences of opinion with his colleagues as to proposed action against the British. He took part in the abortive peace conference in May. On the outbreak of the fighting in June he was arrested in Dublin by National troops and taken to Wellington Barracks, but following certain assurances he was released.

He proceeded south, but on his way was again arrested, with other leaders, by Maj.-Gen. Prout, but was released again under similar circumstances. On reaching the South he resumed his position as "Chief of Staff," and took charge of the campaign against the Government. He has since been much sought for.

The dead leader was a man of considerable personal courage and ability.



THE LATE LIAM LYNCH

IMMENSE FUNERAL PROCESSION.

Touching Tribute.

PATHETIC SCENES AT GRAVESIDE.

After lying in state for a day in the hospital in Clonmel, the remains of the late Mr. Liam Lynch were removed on Friday amid pathetic scenes to Mitchelstown, and the funeral at Fermoy on Sunday was in its vast dimensions a marked tribute to the dead leader. Mournful scenes were witnessed when the remains were laid to rest in the Republican Plot at Kilcrumper, a short distance from Fermoy. Big contingents were present from all parts of the South and Midlands. A conservative estimate must surely place the number of motor-cars at well over 500, and they came from Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary, Waterford, Dublin, and the Midlands.

The number of horse vehicles was not less than 300, and when the cortege left Mitchelstown for the cemetery it stretched along the road a distance of about five miles. The remains had been interred and all the last rites concluded before thousands of people could have reached the cemetery.

From an early hour on Sunday morning thousands of people reached Mitchelstown, whither the remains had been removed from Clonmel on Friday. When the remains arrived in the North Cork town they were placed in the mortuary of the parish church. A panel in the lid was opened, and there was a further lying in state, the little chapel being visited by thousands of people from all parts of the district. Requiem Mass was celebrated on Saturday morning, and was largely attended.

Shortly before the hour of departure on Sunday rain fell in torrents. The funeral procession left the church shortly after two o'clock. The coffin was draped in a huge Tri-Colour, the dead leader's cap and belt being placed on the lid. Preceded by several hundred members of the Cumann na mBan, who carried wreaths.

The coffin was borne through the streets by comrades of the deceased.

On the outskirts of the town the coffin was placed in a hearse, and conveyed to the cemetery. A deputation from Cork Corporation marched behind the hearse, and Cork R.D.C. was also represented.

Thousands of people lined the streets as the mournful procession passed by, and for miles outside the town there were throngs of sightseers. Several special vehicles had to be provided for the conveyance of the hundreds of beautiful wreaths which were sent by friends and sympathisers, chief amongst them was a massive tribute from Mr. De Valera. It bore the following inscription on a card:

"When Emmet's epitaph can be written, Ireland will write yours too, Liam.—Eamon De Valera."

The wreath was brought to Mitchelstown by Master Vivian De Valera, who journeyed specially from Dublin and attended the funeral with Miss Annie MacSwiney.

It was close on seven o'clock when the funeral arrived at Kilcrumper. Long before that thousands who had arrived by other routes were present in the cemetery, which was approached with the utmost difficulty. A downpour of rain added to the inconvenience.

Pathetic scenes were witnessed at the graveside. The members of deceased's family, including his brother, the Rev. Bro. Lynch, of the Christian Schools, Omagh, were present and wept bitterly during the last sad scenes. A poignant figure at the graveside was Miss Keyes, the dead leader's fiancée, who had watched by the bier of her betrothed since Wednesday morning. When the remains were placed in the grave all heads were bared and the Rosary recited.

It was an impressive and emotional scene, as the night slowly stole down from the lofty mountain, and the wind sougled a last mournful requiem through the leafless trees. The Rosary recited, an eloquent funeral oration was delivered by Prof. Stockley, T.D., who paid a glowing tribute to the memory of the dead leader. The grave was then closed and the last prayers recited.

A firing party then stepped forward and fired three volleys over the grave, and the Last Post was sounded.

During the passage of the funeral through Mitchelstown the guards at the various army posts turned out and presented arms. A large number of individual soldiers and members of the Civic Guard also attended the obsequies, including one of the latter whose life had been saved by the dead leader during the Anglo-Irish fighting.

DESTROYED BY FIRE.

House of the Late General Liam Lynch.

MITCHELSTOWN, Thursday.

The home of the late General Liam Lynch, situated at Anglesboro, Mitchelstown, was completely destroyed by fire on Wednesday morning.

It appears that on Tuesday night a candle, which was neglected, set fire to the ceiling in the room, but this was easily extinguished by the neighbours.

When the family had retired to rest again the fire broke out afresh, and it was with difficulty that the children of Mrs Mullins, the late General's sister, were rescued.

The neighbours did very valuable work in attempting to extinguish the flames, but the house, with the exception of one room occupied by Liam Lynch's mother, was completely destroyed.