

FOUR FISHERMEN DIE IN FANAD HEAD ACCIDENT.

One body and smashed boat washed ashore

IN THE WORST TRAGEDY along the Donegal coast for more than twenty years four fishermen are presumed to have lost their lives when out salmon fishing off Fanad in the early hours of Saturday morning.

The alarm was raised around 9 o'clock on Saturday morning when the men, including two brothers of a well-known fishing family failed to return. A search got under way, in which a helicopter joined, found the body of one of the men which was picked up in a pool of water among the rocks near Fanad Lighthouse. The smashed boat was found nearby on the rocks and a section of the net picked up near Ballure had a good catch of 57 salmon still in it, indicating that the tragedy struck suddenly with the nets still out.

THE body recovered was that of James Brown, aged 44, of Inch Island. Still missing are: Gilbert (Bertie) Brown, a brother of James, aged 36, also of Inch Island; Thomas Porter (57), married, of Inch Island; Eugene McGinley (17), of Balleighan, Newtowncunningham. James Brown leaves a widow and a 2-years-old daughter. His wife was formerly Miss Maisie Gamble, of College Terrace, Derry, a daughter of Mr. Wilson Gamble, a director of M. and M. Scott, The Diamond, Derry.

ONLY RECENTLY MARRIED
Bertie Brown was married less than a year ago to Miss Patricia Doyle, daughter of Very Rev. Canon J. E. Doyle, Rathmullan. Thomas Porter was married and lives a grown-up family. A road worker, he had only recently returned from working in England. He went out to assist the Brown brothers at the salmon fishing. Young Eugene McGinley is a son of Mr. and Mrs. J. McGinley, Balleighan, Newtowncunningham. He has a brother and three sisters. It is understood that Friday night's ill-fated trip was only his second salmon-fishing expedition.

The trip that was to have such a tragic ending started at seven o'clock on Friday evening, when the Brown brothers' 30-foot boat, the Playmate, pulled out from Inch Island on its way down Lough Swilly to the finishing grounds in the Atlantic off Fanad Head.

The boat was due back at nine o'clock on Saturday morning. The Brown brothers had a busy day ahead of them. They were due to operate the Saturday morning ferry from Fahan to Rathmullan and they had also planned to go to Letterkenny to "mark" the channel. James had recently been appointed pilot on the River Swilly for boats coming into Letterkenny harbour.

When the boat did not arrive back at Inch around the scheduled time Mrs. James Brown phoned Letterkenny in the hope that they had gone there. It was found that they had not done so and anxiety for their safety began to rise.

LAST SURVIVING BROTHER SEARCHES

William Brown, the 47-years-old last surviving brother of the Brown family, set out in his own boat to search the Lough and the area around Fanad Head. Gardaí were notified and a widespread search was started. Boats from other Swilly ports joined in and a message was sent to the naval air station at Eglington, from which a helicopter piloted by Lt. Commander Thornton, who commands the helicopter squadron at the station, took off immediately.

The helicopter made a thorough search of the area in which the boat was thought to have been. It had to interrupt its search to return to the station to re-fuel, but it took off again without delay. The pilot was unable to find any signs of survivors and it abandoned the search at seven o'clock on Saturday night.

While the search was in progress word was received that the last time the Browns' boat had been sighted was at ten o'clock on Friday night when it was seen passing Fanad Lighthouse on its way to the fishing grounds.

BODY AND BOAT FOUND

Then, in the afternoon of Saturday, Patrick Coll, of Araheera, found the wrecked boat on the rocks near Fanad Lighthouse. Forty yards away James Brown's body was picked up in a pool of water among the rocks. Coll, who was accompanied by other local men, Mick Boyle and Francis Priel and Gerry McKinley, was one of the last persons to see the crew alive. He had been fishing for pollock in the vicinity when the boat passed on its way to the salmon fishing grounds.

What happened out there in fishing grounds in the early hours of Saturday morning will never be known. At 3 o'clock there was a heavy squall and heavy rain. It lasted about quarter of an hour and in those short minutes, it is believed, the tragic fate of the four men was sealed. The catch of salmon had been good—fifty-seven of them were found in the section of the net from the ill-fated boat which was salvaged at Ballure. One theory is that the engine failed, that the squall drove the boat close inshore and that the heavy nets helped to drag it to its doom on the rocks.

When the body of James Brown was recovered it was without sea boots, and it is assumed that he had kicked them off in his last struggle to reach safety.

James and Bertie are the third members of the Brown family to meet their death from drowning. About thirty years ago another brother, John, was drowned in the Swilly.

EXPERIENCED BOATMEN

The Browns are one of the best-known families in the area and the two deceased, like the other members of the family, were experienced boatmen. For years they had been familiar figures on the Swilly, not only as fishermen but as operators of the ferry service which plies across the Lough from Fahan to Rathmullan.

On Saturday night the remains of James Brown were brought home to Inch and the scenes witnessed on their arrival reflects the deep sense of shock, loss and regret that the tragedy has evoked all over the North-West and the heartfelt grief that has gone out to all those so tragically bereaved.

"A GREAT TRAGEDY" SAYS CORONER

AT an inquest on the body of James Brown held on Saturday night by Mr. J. P. McGinley, M.Ch., Coroner, a verdict of death from accidental drowning was returned.

William Brown (47), a brother of the Browns, said he last saw his brother James alive around eight o'clock on Friday evening. The crew were leaving in a small boat to go to a bigger fishing boat. He knew they intended to fish for salmon off Fanad Head. It was their custom to return home about 9 o'clock the following morning. When the boat failed to appear he got anxious.

"I went up a hill and surveyed the lough with binoculars, but saw no trace of them. I came home around eleven o'clock and found that Reginald Porter, a grandson of the deceased, was also looking out for the men. I sent him to James' wife to see if she had phoned anywhere. She told him that James was to go to Letterkenny to erect stakes to mark the channel. I then discovered he had left the markers in a small boat. It was then decided to phone Fahan lighthouse and Downings and also Mr. A. D. Kelly, of Letterkenny, to see if the boat had gone there. Mr. Kelly, after going out to the channel, rang back to say that the "markers" had not been erected and that there was no sign of the boat. It had not been seen at Fanad Head or Downings.

NO SURVIVORS

"I got Charles Doherty, of Fahan, to come with me in my boat and we went to Fanad Head. Getting near the lighthouse we heard some person shout that the boat was ashore. We then saw it on the beach and though we went as close to the rocks as we could we could not discover if any of the men had been saved. We then returned to the lighthouse where, as far as we could gather from questions, there were no survivors."

Witness added that he could not land there and he had to put in at Portsalon Pier, where a man named Andy Gamble was waiting with a car. He was taken at once to Fanad where he saw that the boat had been smashed to bits.

Patrick Coll, Araheera, said he saw the wreckage on the rocks while out driving his cattle. The night before he had been out fishing for pollock and had seen the boat about forty yards out to sea. About 1.30 p.m., with two other men, he went to the shore and saw the body of James Brown lying in a pool. There was a gash on his forehead.

Dr. M. McMenamin, M.O., Tamney, said he heard of the tragedy from the Kerrykeel Gardaí about 4 o'clock. On the Gardaí there were a number of foreheads there were a number of fairly deep gashes. In his view, the cause of death was asphyxia from drowning.

"GREAT TRAGEDY OF THE SEA"
Returning a verdict of accident

tal death, the Coroner said this was another great tragedy of the sea. "Nearly every day we read of drowning tragedies all over the country since the heat-wave began, but this is one of a different type. It was obviously due to an accident, but unfortunately there is no one alive to tell us the full facts. These Brown brothers were well-known as the most experienced fishermen on the Donegal coast. They are known by fishermen in all parts of the country as the most competent and daring that ever went to sea in these parts. Their death will come as a great shock to all fishermen along our coast who knew them. I am sure had they been aware that the Browns were in trouble, everyone of them in the county would have launched his boat in an effort to save them."

The Coroner expressed his deep sympathy with the relatives of all four men, and Inspector P. Malone, on behalf of the Gardaí, and Dr. McMenamin associated themselves with the tribute.

Mr. William Brown thanked the Gardaí, lighthouse keeper and everybody in the district for their help and sympathy.

VICTIM'S FUNERAL

The interment of the remains of James Brown at Inch Presbyterian

Church burying ground was marked by scenes of widespread sorrow.

Hundreds of Donegal fishermen, some of whom acted as pallbearers, attended the funeral, at which every family on the island was represented. Members of the business, agricultural and industrial life of the North-West were also in attendance.

Office-bearers of the Louth Swilly Yacht Club which, as a mark of respect, suspended its activities, were almost among those present.

As the cortege passed along the four miles' route to the church, close to the shore, there were glimpses of boats belonging to the Borwn family riding at anchor in the sunlight.

The services were conducted by Rev. T. J. Holmes, minister of Fahan and Inch Presbyterian Church; Rev. Canon J. E. Doyle, Rector of Rathmullan, and father-in-law of Mr. Albert Brown, whose body has not yet been recovered; and Rev. J. Girvan, minister of Carlisle Road Presbyterian Church, Derry.

The chief mourners were: Mr. William Brown (brother); Mr. Wilson Gamble, Derry (father-in-law), and Mr. John Nevin (brother-in-law).

None of the bodies of the other three victims has yet been recovered.

Rector of Letterkenny appointed Archdeacon of Raphoe



The Ven. L. W. Crooks, M.A., Archdeacon of Raphoe.

THE Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, the Right Rev. R. MacNeil Boyd, M.C., D.D., in recent clerical changes, has appointed the Rev. L. W. Crooks, M.A., Rector, Letterkenny, to be Archdeacon in place of Ven. C. J. Homan, M.A., who becomes Dean of Raphoe in succession to the Very Rev. J. K. Beattie, M.A., Duntanagh, who has retired owing to ill-health.

The new Archdeacon is 43 years of age and was born in Port Laoighise, Co. Offaly. Educated at Campbell College, Belfast, and Trinity College, Dublin, of which he is a graduate, he was ordained for the curacy of St. Columb's Cathedral, Derry, where he served for four years before becoming an Army Chaplain at the outbreak of the last World War. During the war he saw service in the Middle East, North Africa and Italy. On leaving the army he came to Letterkenny eleven years ago.

He married the only daughter of Lieut.-Col. G. V. Harte, formerly of Kilderry, Muff, Co. Donegal.

A zealous and devoted worker, the new Archdeacon, since coming to Letterkenny, has won for himself the highest regard of all sections of the community. A gifted organiser, with a flair for orderliness and planning, he has worked

assiduously in his eleven years as Rector of Conwal and all his undertakings have invariably been marked with a high degree of success.

He has interested himself in all sides of life in the town and district, and his painstaking care of his parishioners, not alone in their spiritual needs but also in their temporal welfare, has won for him the highest esteem throughout the district.

In addition to his many duties he finds time to give attention to the furtherance of several clubs and societies to which he is attached, interesting himself keenly in the life of the town. An accomplished speaker, the new Archdeacon has frequently added to the enjoyment of public functions with an original and stimulating address.

The honour which has been bestowed on him on his elevation to the Archdeaconate, being the first Rector of Conwal to hold the Office since 1919, has been greeted with joy, particularly throughout the parish of Conwal. Since the announcement the Ven. Archdeacon Crooks has been the recipient of a growing number of congratulatory messages by telegram, letter, phone and personal call.

BOG FIRES RAGE THROUGH DONEGAL

WEARLY part-time fire-fighters in the different stations throughout Donegal were perhaps the most thankful group in the county for the fall of some heavy rain showers at the week-end. In almost all parts of the West and South-West the long drought with bogs tinder-dry sparked heath fires that brought many sleepless nights as firemen worked long night time and day time hours to quench the outbreaks.

Letterkenny, Falcarragh, Dungloe and Glenties brigades were among the most active being called to fires smouldering in several bogs right round the county.

Part-time firemen of the Letterkenny Brigade spent the week assisting the local brigade at bog fires near Falcarragh, returning to the station to have further calls that took them to Doon Well, Creeve, Rathmullan, Kindrum and Cashel, Fanad. An extensive fire at Maas had Glenties brigade on one of its longest jobs with Dungloe busiest at a large outbreak at Maas and Stubo Bog, Annagry. Falcarragh had frequent outbreaks all round the district and were in constant demand. A Horn Head outbreak lasted almost a week with much damage done to the area. Derryfad, Cresslough had another with local volunteers helping out. At times small plantations and even dwelling-houses were threatened.

Through sleepless nights fire-fighters were on the hoses until early dawn, returning to their stations fatigued. The shortage of water impeded fully effective work delaying the quenching of outbreaks. The heavy showers of Sunday morning were indeed a relief to Donegal.

Church body's claim at Donegal Court

AT Donegal Circuit Court, before Judge Finion Lynch,

The Representative Church Body of the Church of Ireland claimed £30 for the alleged malicious damage on the 17th December, 1956, and the 26th January, 1957, to windows in Killaghtee Church, Dunkineely and school, teacher's residence and Rectory.

Mr. Sean D. O'Hanrahan (instructed by Messrs. Reid and Sweeney) appeared for the applicants and Mr. B. J. McDermott (Messrs. V. P. McMullin and Son) for the Co. Council.

The Judge gave a decree for £27 and costs and £2 expenses, the amount to be levied off the former Donegal Rural District.

Mrs. Kathleen Thornton, Killybegs, claimed £34 damages for, as stated, to malicious breaking of a plate glass shop window on the 21st March last.

Mr. D. Mulrine (instructed by Mr. Louis Walsh) appeared for applicant, and Mr. McDermott was for the Co. Council.

A decree for £33.30 and costs and £1.10.0 expenses was granted, the amount to be levied off the former rural district of Glenties.

Joseph McDermott, Meenanaragh, Glenties, was an applicant in a claim for £50 for the malicious destruction of a stack of hay containing five tons on the 18th January, 1957.

Mr. O'Hanrahan (instructed by Mr. Walsh) was for applicant, and Mr. McDermott for the County Council.

The Judge gave a decree for £40 and costs and £10.7.0 expenses, the amount to be levied off the former rural district of Glenties.

James Costelloe, Glenties, claimed £25 for damage to a motor car as a result of a large stone having been placed on the centre of the road on the 14th May last.

Mr. O'Hanrahan (instructed by Mr. Walsh) was for applicant and Mr. McDermott represented the Co. Council.

The amount of the decree given was £24.5.2 and costs and £3.10.0 expenses, the amount to be levied off the former rural district of Glenties.

DONEGAL VOCATIONAL CHAIRMAN TOPPED POLL

Donegal Vocational Education Committee at its meeting in Lifford voted congratulation to their chairman, Very Rev. Canon Molloy P.P., on topping the poll for election on the Standing Council of the Vocational Education Congress, held recently, and their C.E.O. (Mr. M. J. Cryan) who was also elected.

The vote of congratulation was proposed by Rev. J. Sproule who stated that the appointment of their chairman was a great tribute to his popularity and sagacity and he was sure that educational schemes in Donegal would be well looked after by both him and their C.E.O.

Rev. Canon Devlin seconded the congratulation.

Replying, Canon Molloy said he felt honoured by his election and anything he and Mr. Cryan could do at the Congress would be done.

Letterkenny U.D.C. congratulates new Archdeacon

LETTEKENNY Urban Council voted congratulations to the Rev. L. W. Crooks, M.A., Rector, on his appointment as Archdeacon.

Mr. P. O'Donnell, P.C., said since coming to the town, Mr. Crooks had taken a deep personal interest in many activities for the welfare of the people of all creeds and classes.

Mr. McKendrick, Co.C., said the honour was well merited and the Council was delighted that it had been conferred on Mr. Crooks.

Other members joined in the tribute, Mr. McGlinchey saying: "The new Archdeacon is a neighbour of mine, and you could not possibly have a better one."

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