

The Murder Of The
Loughnane Brothers
In 1920

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Connacht

Vol. XXV. No. 1416

GALWAY, TU

Murder Of The Loughnane Brothers: Blood Lust In The Commons

BELOW we give the story of the murder of the Loughnane brothers after their arrest by British Crown forces. The report is taken from a December (1920) issue of "The Connacht Tribune." Other news items following are taken from November (1920) issues of that newspaper.

The dead bodies of Patrick and Henry Loughnane, Shanaghish, who were arrested while threshing corn at their home last Friday week, were found in a three-foot pool of water at Unyriste, Ardahan.

Sensational evidence was given at the military enquiry into the cir-

cumstances there. They were told the auxiliary forces carried off the brothers on the previous night. No further information could be had as to their whereabouts.

At about 12 o'clock on Monday night, the mother's house was raided by a party of auxiliaries who told them the brothers had escaped and that they must find them. They made a thorough search of the place. On Tuesday morning, after receiving a letter from home, Miss Loughnane called to Eglinton Street and was told the brothers had not come to Galway. She went to the prison but did not see them. On the following Saturday at the Taylor's Hill station she had an interview with the S.O. — where were her brothers? The officer was most courteous but informed them they were arrested on November 24th as wanted men. He added that there were twelve others arrested, eight of whom had escaped including the two boys.

One of the men was subsequently re-arrested but no trace of the others was found. The officer told her that he would let her know their whereabouts if he found out. During the interval between the arrests and finding of the bodies rumours ran riot. One stated a motor was heard coming from Moyvella Wood and one from Kinvara Road, halting there for about twenty minutes while shots were fired. On Sunday night residents in the neighbourhood stated that they again heard the motor at Moyvella but that they left after a stay.

Owing to the various rumours a search party was formed on Wednesday and a search made in the Ardahan and Kinvara districts. The gentleman who was supposed to have seen the bodies at Moyvella was interviewed but would not talk. The search was continued every day afterwards but no trace was found of the missing men until midday on Sunday, when a young man, a friend of the Loughnanes, who had dreamt every night since their arrest that they had been drowned in a certain place, walked directly to the pond and found the bodies there. Patrick



Harry Loughnane

circumstances of their deaths. An auxiliary officer and cadet gave evidence of their "escape." Enquiries by the Very Rev. John Nangle and their mother, Mrs. Loughnane, at Gort Barracks on Saturday discovered that the two men were taken away on the previous night by auxiliary forces. As a result of this information hopes were entertained that the men were safe in Galway prison or in some police or military barracks.

Miss Nora Loughnane, sister, made enquiries at Eglinton police station and at the jail but was told her brothers had not come to either place. On the following Saturday she enquired at the auxiliary barracks, Taylor's Hill, and was there informed by the C.O. that her brothers had escaped arrest and were supposed to be running south. There were several rumours



unarmed men on the fatal Friday if they were Sinn Feiners or volunteers—yes they were. The party next enquired of another boy, a first cousin, who assisted them at the threshing, was he a Sinn Feiner—he was. They then told him to clear off and when he did so they fired several shots after him but did not hit him. They arrested the Loughnanes, placed them in a lorry and headed for Tubber, Co. Clare. Here it was stated they arrested another man, Carroll. They then took the three prisoners back to Gort.

On the Saturday following Fr. Nagle and Mrs. Loughnane called to the barracks in the town, thinking the young men might be in

Pat Loughnane

was lying on his back about two yards from Harry who was lying on his right side. The place was about a hundred yards from the main road between Gort and Clarenbridge.

When the bodies were lifted from the pool they were hardly recognisable and the spectacle that presented itself to the searchers was gruesome in the extreme. The remains were charred and blacked, portions of the skulls were missing. Nothing else was found but a piece of Harry's boots; the rest of his

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