

FATAL OCCURRENCES IN LIMERICK—  
DEATHS BY DROWNING AND BURNING.

INQUESTS.

The city coroner, John Gleeson, Esq., held three inquests yesterday. The first, on the remains of a little girl of the name of Mary Harty, aged 5 years, and who resided with her mother in Anne-street, and the cause of whose death arose from being accidentally burned on the previous Wednesday, in the absence of her parent and which accident resulted in the death of the poor little sufferer on Sunday evening. The jury after hearing the facts deposed to, returned a verdict of accidental death, and recommended the coroner to give relief to the mother of the deceased infant as she was labouring under deep mental and extreme pecuniary distress, and which humane recommendation the coroner attended to by giving an order to the poor woman for ten shillings.

The second inquest was held on the remains of three young lads who were accidentally drowned in the river Shannon at Park, on Sunday morning at 8 o'clock, by the upsetting of a small boat in which they were proceeding up the river to fish. The names of these boys were—John Barrett, aged 17; John Connell, over 18, and Denis Bourke, 17. This inquest was held in the city court-house, and before the following jury:

Messrs. P. Verlin, Thomas McCormack, William Connell, John McCarthy, Michel Duggan, Thomas McMahon, Thomas Daly, John O'Brien, Thomas Behan, Michael Hall, John O'Dowd, and James Fitzgibbon.

The Coroner, addressing the jury, said he was exceedingly sorry that both he and they were called on to discharge a very melancholy duty, by holding an inquest on the remains of three young men, who were cut off in the very bloom of youth, by the upsetting of a boat in the Abbey river. They would now proceed with him to the late residences of these poor fellows, and view the bodies; and then, on their return, they would have to view the remains of an unhappy girl of the town, who was also drowned on the previous night, in the river at Russell's-quay, and whose body was then lying in the dead-house.

The Coroner and the jurors, attended by the police, and accompanied by a large concourse of people, then proceeded to view the bodies of the deceased—Denis Bourke, in Mary-street; John Connell, in Michael-street; and John Barrett, George's-quay; and then to the dead-house, to view the remains of Mary Hastings, after the discharge of which duties they returned to the Court-house, where the following evidence was gone into:—

Patrick Stundon, a little boy living in Mary-street, and going on 15 years of age, said—I knew these three young men, and on Sunday morning I saw them on the Sand-Mall; they asked me to shove out the boat; I did so; they were in it, and they asked me to put my leg into it, and go up the river with them; I got into it and went with them; we passed the Park-bridge, when I asked them to shove me out and they did so; they were not fishing, but going up to the weir for their rods, as they had put them there on Saturday night; the reason why I did not go with them was that I wanted to go to mass, and soon after I was landed on the bank I saw them change seats in the boat, which went on one side, and the three fell out into the water; I at once called out, but there was no help near; two sank and did not come up, but Burke rose and took the end of the boat, but I suppose he was not able to hold on, and let go; I then ran down the Mall, and, meeting three men, I told them of the catastrophe; two of them returned with me, and the other ran for the police; I did not see these boys that morning until I saw them in the boat; they had no appearance whatever of drink, and I would know it if they had; I did not see the bodies after they were taken up, as I did not wait; the crowd gathered and I went to prayers; I cannot tell the ages of these young men.

John Kerwick an engine driver in Messrs. Russell's employment, said—I live in the Abbey, and I was in the Island Gardens about half-past 7 or a quarter to 8 o'clock, and I saw two girls and a boy running up the bank roaring and screaming; I and another man jumped over the wall and got on the bank, and looking into the river I saw a boat upset and two caps floating on the water, and I saw another cap rise; I then called out to another boy to go and get a gaff; the boy that was with me (Mat Halloran) went and got a boat, into which we went and rowed towards where we saw the fishing rod over the water, and I got hold of it, and finding that there was something heavy attached to it I pulled it and raised Daniel Bourke, who was entangled in the line, and I put him into the boat we were in; I then got the gaff and put it down and lifted Barrett; the gaff caught him in the arm; Bourke was entangled in the wheel part of the rod; I then drew the line and found Connell with the bait-

hook stuck in his heel and I brought him up; the boy, Stundon, was quite mistaken about the fishing rods in the boat, because they were in it, but he may not have seen them; the bodies were over twenty-five minutes in the water, and had no life in them; there is a very stiff current in the river and it would take a strong man to push up a boat against it from the Sand-Mall in less time than twenty-five minutes; I knew Bourke, and he might be about 17 years old.

James O'Donnell knew Barrett, and assisted in carrying him to his father's house from the boat.

Ellen Keily saw John Connell dead; and I heard the people say that he was about 17 years of age. He was a cabinet-maker by trade.

The Coroner said that it was quite plain from the evidence that these poor lads met their deaths accidentally.

The Jury found a verdict of death by accidental drowning.

The Jury stated that Kerwick's conduct was exceedingly praiseworthy, and they regretted much that it was not in their power to mark their appreciation of it by more substantial tokens than mere thanks. The Jury also thanked Halloran for his praiseworthy conduct.

The Jury hoped that the Coroner would give, if in his power, something towards aiding the family of poor Connell in burying the deceased.

The Coroner said that he had already given 10s. towards burying an unfortunate woman who met her death by drowning on last night. Humanity dictated this course to him, and although he had put the board of superintendence to this expence, yet he felt that as the jury recommended this extra sum to be given for this charitable purpose he ought to make the additional order.