

Notable Limerick Pastor

Death of Rev M Hayes, P.P.

Rev Michael Hayes, P.P., Ardagh, Co. Limerick, died in a Dublin nursing home, aged 61. His death removed a notable figure for many years in county Limerick.

Born at Buncro, he was a son of the late Richard Hayes, Principal Brevet N.S., and later Principal of Rathmore N.S., where the family have been residents for fifty years. His brother, Rev James Hayes, was ordained in the Diocese of Limerick and later joined the Maynooth Mission at Omaha, and is now at St. Columbanus, Nebraska, U.S.A.

Other brothers are Dr Richard Hayes, T.D., who fought with Tom Ashe at Ashmunno, and Messrs R. Hayes, S.T.; J. Hayes, S.T. (retired); Joseph Hayes, S.T.; the late John Hayes, S.T. Rathkeale; and the late Garrett Hayes, S.T., Buncro, who had President de Valera as one of his pupils.

During the Black and Tans regime Father Hayes was a fearless champion of the people's rights, and with Rev T. Wall, P.P., Stunchall, incurred the displeasure of Gen. Sir John Maxwell. Gen. Maxwell's request to the Bishop, Most Rev Dr O'Dwyer, to check the political activities of the two priests, both then curates, brought from the Bishop a trenchant rebuke to the General.

The late Father Hayes formerly served as curate of St. Michael's, Limerick, and at Tournafulla, before his appointment as P.P. of Stunchall and Askerton, where he was transferred to Ardagh. He was formerly president of the Gaelic League in Limerick.

Co. Council's Sympathy

At the meeting of the Limerick County Council on Saturday, Mr M. Colbert presiding, sympathetic references were paid to the memory of the late Rev Michael Hayes, P.P., Ardagh.

Mr J. McCormack, proposing a vote of condolence with the relatives, said Father Hayes was an outstanding priest and patriot. In the dark days of the Anglo-Irish trouble he fearlessly championed the right of the people, on which side like the other members of his family—particularly Dr Richard Hayes—he took a firm stand. His unexpected demise would be regretted by everyone in the county and city, and in every part of the country where he was known and respected. He was a zealous priest, and his loss to the Diocese was a great blow to the Bishop and his brethren in the sacred ministry.

Mr D. J. Madden, in seconding the vote of condolence, said if there was one family in the county who had played their part in the fight for National independence it was the Hayes family. Father Michael Hayes, like his brother, Dr Richard Hayes, had been through the trouble from the outset, and had given of their best in the cause which they espoused. Father Hayes was one of the stoutest custodians of Irish freedom that the country had produced, and it was with the deepest sympathy he accorded the motion. His death was a great shock to the people of the county, especially to his parishioners, by whom he was beloved and revered.

Mr B. Magner associated himself with the resolution.

The Chairman said he was very closely associated with Father Hayes in the Sinn Féin movement, and he could say that in that movement Father Hayes was a tower of strength. His death was a distinct loss to the county.

The Secretary (Mr L. O'Donnell) and the County Solicitor (Mr P. J. O'Sullivan) joined in the vote, which was passed in silence.