

A Spartan Mother

Passing of Mrs. Catherine Daly.

Striking Funeral Tribute in Limerick.

It must be quite a long time since the citizens of Limerick witnessed such a striking demonstration of sympathy and respect as that which wound slowly its way through our streets on Sunday last on the occasion of the funeral of Mrs Catherine Daly, widow of the late Mr Edward Daly, of the Fenian Brotherhood, and brother of Commandant Ned Daly, who commanded the Church street area in the 1916 Rising in Dublin, and was subsequently executed by the British for the prominent part he took in that historic struggle of National Faith. She was mother in law of Mr Tom Clarke, the first signatory to the Proclamation of Independence issued by the Leaders in Easter Week, 1916, and who subsequently was also put to death by the British after a life spent most assiduously in the service of his country. Again, two of her sons-in-law, Messrs Seamus O'Sullivan and James Dowd, took an active and prominent part in the fight for the independence of their country, both prominent fighting in the 1916 Rising, in which Mr O'Sullivan was wounded.

Born in 1834, the deceased lady married Edward Daly, who, with his brother, John, joined the Fenian movement, and continued to be actively associated with it up to the time of his death. His brother, John, came early under the notice of the British for his patriotic activities, and served four years of the best years of his life in English dungeons because of his love of Ireland and his hatred of foreign dominations. A short time after his release his country city seized the first opportunity presented to liberate her Fenian son, and he was unanimously elected Mayor of Limerick—the first of a three-year period—in 1878. During his Mayoralty it was that the signal to cover of the Freedom of the City was conferred on Tom Clarke, who had been also incarcerated in Portland prison for a long number of years.

It was small wonder then that the memory of this Spartan mother should have been honored by the Nation on Sunday last. Mrs Daly was the mother of ten children, the youngest of whom was Ned. Her husband died while John was being pressed into the army. On his release John opened a bakery business, and at once set about to help the widow and orphans. With his own guidance, and the remarkable business ability of his nephew, the undertaking was at once a success, and thus continued, until it is now one of the most flourishing of its kind in the country.

Decendant's daughter, Kathleen, married Tom Clarke on his release from penal servitude. When Sean McDermott lay in his lonely cell waiting execution in 1916, he wrote a most noble and touching letter to John Daly. After the latter's passing in that year, Mrs Nedgo Daly carried on the family traditions, and kept open house for the I.R.B. and Volunteer organisations for the West and South-West of Ireland, and during the Anglo-Irish war giving into "no the gun" and embracing the hospitality of the Daly household. Regular meals and entertainments were made by English and Irish alike, and later by way of reprisal the family's residence then in the Cross Street was ransacked from top to bottom, the furniture removed and piled up on the road, where it was spoiled with petrol and set alight.

The remains of Mrs Daly were removed from her late residence, "Tivoli," N.G.R., on Saturday evening, and were accompanied by a large cortege to St. Munchie's Parish Church, where covered with the Union Jack and strewn with beautiful floral tributes, they rested overnight.

The funeral took place on Sunday at 1.20 in Mass at St. Lawrence Cemetery. Mass for the happy repose of the soul of deceased was celebrated at St. Munchie's at 12 o'clock before a crowded congregation, and was attended, in addition to the relatives, by President De Valera, Messrs P.J. Keefe, Minister for Justice; Seán MacBride, Minister for Finance; Gerald Boland, the Minister for Lands, and Frank Fahy, Cross Constable, etc.

[Funeral details next issue.]