

Painful Limerick Tragedy.

Aged Doctor Burned to Death

Three Firemen Injured

About 5 o'clock on Thursday morning Michael Russell, a nightwatchman, employed at Messrs Matternon's boot-making premises, Upper Cecil street, noticed the house, No. 8 Cecil street, ablaze, and at once gave the alarm. The City Fire Brigade, under Captain Hogan, were promptly on the scene, when they found dense clouds of smoke and flames issuing from the second floor of the four-story residence.

At that time there was no sign of anyone being on the premises when Fireman P. McNamora, after the door was un-bolted, mounted the stairs, but when he came to the landing, the floor gave way, and he was precipitated to the ground floor. He was rather seriously injured and conveyed to Barrington's Hospital.

Later Firemen Terence Kelly and K. Matheson were affixing the escape outside the house when they both struck contact with live electric wires and received severe shocks, which also necessitated their removal to hospital.

Despite the heroic efforts of Captain Hogan and his men the flames spread fiercely through the house, and it was then ascertained that Dr Butler, a 90 year old retired medical practitioner, lived alone in the house, and occupied a room on the second floor.

Efforts to reach this floor were made, and owing to the intense heat and the fact that portions of the floor had fallen in, they had to be abandoned until the play of the hose began to be effective, and in about two hours the fire was got under control and the adjoining houses saved.

The debris was then searched, and Fire Lieutenant Gough came upon the charred remains of the aged doctor just inside the door of his bedroom. The lower part of his body was wrapped in a blanket, and from its position it was evident that Dr Butler was over his in endeavouring to escape.

Dr Butler was L.C.M.P. and L.C.R.S., having taken his degrees in Edinburgh in 1872. In his early days he was attached to the old Limerick Union Hospital. Later he went to Bradford where enjoyed a large practice. Returning some 40 years ago, he came back to reside in his native Limerick twenty years back. He was a brother of the late Most Rev Dr Butler, Bishop of Chicago, and had two brothers priests.

The Inquest

An inquest, presided over by Deputy Coroner J. S. McNena, was held on Thursday evening.

Mr F. O'Connor, Denmark st., gave evidence of identification. He stated he was a grand nephew of deceased, who lived alone. Witness looked after him during the day, and left him at 9.30 the previous evening, with the electric heater lighting. He had also two oil stoves in his bedroom. He lived alone, and would allow nobody stay with him at night.

Dr O. J. Clonney stated death was due to asphyxia.

Captain D. Hogan, Fire Brigade, deposed to the finding of the body by Lieut. Gough. The captain added that he did not know how the fire originated, but was satisfied it broke out on the second floor.

The Coroner and jury paid a high and most deserved tribute to the great work of Captain Hogan and the members of the brigade.