

Appalling Tragedy

Askeaton Parish Priest Shot Dead

Man Surrenders to the Guards

The citizens of Limerick City and Co. and for that matter the entire country, were appalled when the news trickled through that the 70-year-old Parish Priest of Askeaton, Very Rev Patrick J Casey, was shot dead outside his parochial house.

The shooting took place about 8.30 p.m. when Father Casey went to investigate the cause of the dogs barking in the grounds. He had barely left the house when his housekeeper, Miss Hanna Curtin, heard a shot, and also heard the priest call out her name.

Going out she heard a moan, and found Father Casey lying unconscious on a cement path at the gable of the house.

Miss Curtin went for the curate, the Rev D. Hea, who lives nearby. She also sent for Dr M. Fitzgibbon. Father Hea administered the last Sacraments and had the dying priest brought into the parochial house. When Dr Fitzgibbon arrived soon afterwards he could only pronounce life extinct.

Father Casey was shot between the shoulders, and apparently received the full charge, not a single pellet being found by the guards in the wall or elsewhere in the vicinity of the shooting.

A man called at the local Garda Station later, and, handing a gun to Garda Kelly, is reported to have said: "I have shot the priest."

Man Charged at Special Court

At a Special Court at Askeaton on Monday, before Mr John Mulcaire, P.C., John Joseph Cullinan, 29, a small farmer, of Morgan North, Berrigone, Bynes, was remanded to a special court in Adare next Monday, charged with the murder of Rev Father Casey.

When accused was asked by Superintendent Cooney if he knew where he was now, accused replied: "I do. This is a Peace Commissioner, and this is a special court."

The Supt. made a deposition in which he stated that he had charged accused. Having administered the usual legal caution to him, the accused said: "I will make no statement until I will see my solicitor."

When asked by the Court Clerk if he wanted to ask any questions, accused said: "No, sir, but should I have a solicitor for this day, I would?"

The Supt. said this was a matter for himself, and the proceedings then ended.

The accused, when brought into the day room, was wearing a light raincoat. His face was pale and his hair somewhat unkempt. He took a proffered chair and listened attentively to the deposition of Supt. Cooney. In his general appearance he looked more youthful than his age.

Cullinan, who is unmarried, lived with his mother and brother in Berrigone, the parish adjoining Askeaton. He is deformed, and his deformity was aggravated some months ago as the result of an accident.