

The Fatalities of Bloody Sunday, Croke Park, 21 November 1920

By Michael Foley

These brief biographies of the Bloody Sunday Croke Park fatalities are published to mark the centenary of events a hundred years ago. Further details and sources may be found in Michael Foley, *The Bloodied Field* (Dublin, 2014).

JANE BOYLE, 26, Lennox Street, Dublin. Charge hand to a pork butcher

Jane Boyle left home near the canal at Portobello with her fiancé, Daniel Byron, their wedding set for the following week. When the firing began, they attempted to make their way towards the exit at the corner of the Hill 16 and Cusack Stand. "We were standing near the centre line of the ground opposite the grandstand," Byron told a British Labour party delegation who visited Ireland soon after Bloody Sunday. "The match had been in progress about a quarter of an hour when I saw an aeroplane approach, hover over the ground, and then go away. Almost immediately afterwards I heard the sound of shots coming from the direction of the bridge outside the ground, and my fiancée, who had hold of my arm, was shot dead."

JAMES BURKE, 44, Windy Arbour, Dublin. Employed by Terenure Laundry

As spectators rushed away from the source of the firing on the Canal Bridge at the corner of the modern Hogan and Davin Stands, James Burke was gathered up in the crowd near the corner of the current Hill 16 and Cusack Stand, and trampled. "He left on Sunday morning to see the football match," said his wife Annie when identifying his body. "It was two o'clock. We lived at 293 Cottages Windy Arbour, Dublin."

DANIEL CARROLL, 30, Templeberry, Tipperary, Bar manager

Dan Carroll lived in Dublin, splitting his time between work at Kennedy's bar in Drumcondra, his sister Mary and matches at Croke Park. He called into Kennedy's on the morning of Bloody Sunday, his day off, toying with the idea of the going to see the Tipperary footballers. When the firing started he escaped the ground but was shot in the leg as he rushed along Russell Street. His boss, Martin Kennedy, visited him in hospital the following day. "Wasn't it unfortunate that I went?" Carroll said.

MICHAEL FEERY, 40, Gardiner Place, Dublin, unemployed

For five days Michael Feery's body lay in Jervis Street Hospital, unknown and unclaimed. The newspapers carried intimate descriptions of the man lying in the morgue. He was small and frail, his dark hair turning grey. His moustache was sandy-coloured. He was

approximately 40 years of age, maybe 50? His teeth were rotted. He was underweight. He wore the army fatigues of a British army veteran. The number AF 192 was stencilled onto his shirt; the initials MF sewn on in red thread. His boots were dirty and worn down at the heels. He carried a pouch of tobacco in his pocket. He wore a cardigan jacket. His cap was soiled. On Thursday morning his wife Bridget formally identified him. Feery was buried in a common grave in Glasnevin, left unmarked for 99 years.

TOM HOGAN, 19, Tankardstown, Limerick, mechanic

When Tom Hogan was brought to hospital, doctors asked him what he could remember. Not much, he replied. He recalled the pain when he was hit by a bullet in the shoulder. He remembered the ambulance driver asking his name. After that, nothing. For five days he suffered. Gangrene set into his wounds. His arm was amputated. The Friday after 'Bloody Sunday' he became the last victim to die. He was buried in Dromin cemetery in Limerick the following week. Hogan had been an active IRA volunteer, and despite orders forbidding the families from flying flags, making any statements or allowing any shows of strength at the funerals, a group of IRA men fired a volley over his grave as an RIC inspector looked on from outside the cemetery wall.

MICHAEL HOGAN, 24, Grangemockler, farmer

As an IRA Volunteer, Michael Hogan instinctively threw himself to the ground when the shooting started. He was lying next to Frank Burke, the Dublin forward he was marking that day. It was nearly a year since Hogan had played his first ever game at Croke Park for Tipperary. Now the pitch around him was being cut to pieces by bullets. "They're shooting at someone in the crowd," Burke shouted. Hogan began wriggling towards the sideline. "We'll lie in here close," he said. "We might get some protection." Ahead of them was the cinder running track that circled the pitch, then a picket fence separating the crowd from the field. Another volley of fire rang out. Burke heard Hogan groan. "I'm shot". When it was all over Jim Egan, Hogan's team mate, went to see who was lying on the field in a Tipperary jersey. He returned to his team mates now corralled by Black and Tans at the Railway wall at the modern Hill 16 end, the blood on his hands glinting in the evening sun. "Mick Hogan is dead," he said. "Can we get a priest?"



*Michael Hogan's jersey
(County Museum, Clonmel)*

JAMES MATTHEWS, 38, North Cumberland Road, Dublin. Labourer

James Matthews was a day labourer in the docks with a young family of daughters and his wife, Kate, six months pregnant with their daughter Nancy. He bumped into a friend who invited him to the game in Croke Park and dropped in to see his mother on the way. When the firing started, Matthews was on the modern Cusack Stand side and made for the wall at the back of bank but was shot in the leg. He died there from his wound, people

clambering to safety around him. For 96 years he lay in an unmarked grave in Glasnevin cemetery until the unveiling in 2016 of a headstone in his memory. His youngest daughter Nancy lived to see it.

PATRICK O'DOWD, 57, Buckingham Street, Dublin. Labourer

When the firing in Croke Park was at its height, Patrick O'Dowd was on top of the seven-foot high wall running along the back of the modern Cusack Stand, separating Croke Park from the Belvedere College sportsgrounds. As people clambered up and braved the 20-foot drop on the other side O'Dowd paused to offer a helping hand. After he pulled one man over the wall, O'Dowd dropped from the wall onto the man below, blood seeping from the wound in his head. He was buried the following Thursday in Glasnevin, laid to rest in a grave left unmarked along with seven others for nearly a century.

JEROME O'LEARY, 10, Blessington Street, Dublin. Schoolboy

Just before the match began a spectator called James Evans saw Jerome O'Leary being lifted onto the wall at the back of the Canal goal. When the shooting began, O'Leary was the second victim, shot in the head. When it was all over, Major George Dudley, officer in charge of the Black and Tan forces, told Evans to take O'Leary's body away. He tried to flag down an ambulance but no one stopped. Later that week O'Leary, the youngest victim of the Croke Park massacre, became another victim buried in an unmarked grave.

WILLIAM ROBINSON, 11, Little Britain Street, Dublin. Schoolboy

Having walked up from home in the Ormond slums in the middle of Dublin, William Robinson climbed into a tree near the Canal Bridge, at the corner of the modern Hogan and Davin Stands. The game was on 10 minutes when he heard a rumble of trucks behind him. He looked back and a shot rang out. Robinson fell from the tree, shot through the shoulder and chest. A ticket seller, Thomas Doyle, picked him up and carried him away. He met an acquaintance, JJ Byrne, and handed Robinson to him. An RIC officer told Byrne to take him to hospital. "My name is John Byrne," he said. "What's yours?" "William Robinson," the boy replied. "Will you tell my Da I'm hurt?" Robinson clung to life till the following Tuesday morning.

TOM RYAN, 27, Glenbrien, Wexford. Labourer

As an IRA volunteer in Dublin, Tom Ryan had heard of the killing of British agents that morning by IRA squads across Dublin. He was advised to stay at home but his brothers were already in town for the game. His parents were from Tipperary. He couldn't stay away. That night he lay in a hospital bed, shot in the back. His brothers were with him for his final hours. A man in a Volunteer uniform entered the room and stood to attention at the end of the bed and saluted. "There's one man lying there," he said. "But there's hundreds more would fall for him tonight."

JOHN WILLIAM SCOTT, 14, Fitzroy Avenue, Dublin. Schoolboy

When the firing stopped, John Scott left his home across the road from Croke Park and went looking for his son, Billy. He was directed to Mrs Colman's house nearby on St James's Avenue. She told him how John William had been brought to the house suffering from a terrible chest wound. He was placed on the kitchen table. Mrs Colman and her

daughters said prayers for him and saw his lips move in response. He asked for his mother. He asked them to pray for him. He held on for 45 minutes before he died. But was she certain, Scott asked. How could Mrs Colman be sure it was Billy? Mrs Colman reached into her pocket and handed him his son's glasses and tiepin. Billy was gone.

JAMES TEEHAN, 26, Glengoole, Tipperary. Bar owner

James Teehan owned a pub on Green Street in the centre of Dublin, near William Robinson's home on Little Britain Street. He left for Croke Park at 2.30 pm that afternoon, leaving his brother John behind at home. When the firing began Teehan was caught in the crush and trampled, the cause of death recorded as shock and heart failure. On the first day of the military inquiries into the massacre held at the Jervis and Mater hospitals Christopher Friery, solicitor for the Teehan family, requested the release of his body. 'Teehan wasn't a member of any political organisation, Friery said. His family simply wanted to bury him quietly and in peace. Teehan was returned home for burial in an unmarked grave at Ballinalacken cemetery, hidden from the road near New Birmingham.

JOE TRAYNOR, 21, Ballymount, Dublin. Labourer

Joe Traynor had cycled to Croke Park from the outskirts of Dublin with his friend PJ Ryan. When the shooting began, Traynor scrambled over the wall at the back of the Canal goal, shot twice in the back. As he lay on the ground outside, members of the Ring family from nearby Sackville Gardens came up the canal seeking to help. They carried Traynor home and tended to him while they sought an ambulance. Fearful of police reprisals for taking in a victim, they carried Traynor to the end of a nearby laneway for the ambulance to collect him. He died shortly after the ambulance arrived at Jervis Street hospital.