

THOMAS BROWNE

3 OCT 1882

POFF + BARRETT

23 JAN 1883

1E-MOD/86/86.1

MURDER OF BROWNE 3 OCT 1882

FWD
99-100
1863

I shall here give a brief account of 3 murders that were committed in the days of the Land League in East Kerry. Two were official murders by the British, and one by hired assassins. At Dromultan Scartaglen, 3 families, neighbours, lived in the same townland. The man to whom they paid their rent was a direct descendant of the Geraldines, but he was only the middleman who had to pay a head-rent to the alien landlord. The middleman being a spendthrift was forced to sell his interests in the 3 farms.

One of the 3, whose name was William Browne, was a most industrious, hard working, farmer, a farmer of the very best type; frugal, sober, a good Catholic, and a splendid husband + father. Browne tried his best to get the other 2 to join him in the purchase of the middle-man interests, but they refused. Having the money, he bought himself. By so doing, he had no intention of interfering with his neighbours' possession of their farms. All their rights remained intact. If Browne did not buy, any stranger with the money could have bought. The only difference that it made to them was that now they would pay their rents through Browne.

They had the same rights as before; they could go to the Land Court, if they wished, to demand a reduction in their rent. I am assured by an old Scartaglen moonlighter - an honest, intelligent, decent man, who ought to know, that Browne had never any intention of grabbing his neighbours' farms. And if he had such an inclination, it could be stated at once that land-grabbing at that time was at an end - the moonlighters had made that certain. No one but a madman would then dream of grabbing his neighbours' farms.

Some one suggested that Browne should be shot. Two desperadoes were hired to do the job, at a price, it is said, under £10, but never paid.

Two innocent men, Poff + Bartlett, were hanged, in Tralee Jail, for the murder of Browne.

It is painful to recall this awful tragedy. A finer man than Mr. Browne I never knew. Physically + morally, he was a splendid specimen of an Irish farmer, a type of man that any country would be proud of.

He was murdered in the field by 2 hired assassins, and two beautiful, innocent, young men were hanged by the British instead of the real murderers.

Thus the assassins' bullet, and the police lust for a victim, caused the deaths of 3 fine Irishmen, ruined more than one happy home, soiled the souls of a few witnesses, and put 3 others under the risk of eternal damnation.

TUES
OCT 3 1882

DROMULTAN

MURDER OF ~~THE~~ BROWNE
OCT 3 1882.

RS1

- TF013
254
- Sylvester Poff + James Barrett
Thomas Browne
- Poff 36 a Tenant on the Glenkerkeset estate at Ballymacelligott
and Barrett his first cousin 26
- When the black flag was hoisted outside the jail indicating
that the 2 men had been hurled into eternity by due process
of English law, a number of soldiers belonging to the 80th
South Staffordshire Regiment cheered. Brave warriors.
- Perry
Doughue
- A public Testimonial was raised for the families of P + B.
The name of The Rev. M. O'Connell, C.C., Awascaul, appeared
among the subscribers.
- KOS 28
- In 1883 Sylvester Poff + James Barrett were executed on the
charge of Killip a man from Scataglin. The local newspapers
had doubts about the guilt of the men and felt that there
had been a grave miscarriage of justice. The executions
did not stop the disturbances - shootings, maiming of cattle,
and burning of houses all continued.

186.1 (3)

1883

254/5

After the execution of Poff + Barnett in Tiale Jail

a public testimonial was raised for their families.

Among the subscribers was Rev. M.° Canon C.C. Anascaul

TFOS

186.1 (4)

Michael Costello Kerry Co. Library Tralee
Where are Poff + Bennett buried?

Ballymulla Jail No identification

When was the monument put up?
Unmarked Grave

1998 Sunday March 1 unveiled
Where?

Dromulton

What is the nature of the monument?

Celtic Cross

Who erected the monument?

National Graves

Relationship to you (Tone)?

Great Grandfather

Michael Culloty, Bainsfield, Killarney
64804

186.1 (5)

Fri Dec. 22 1882

Sylvester Poff

James Barnett

Sentenced to death

Judge Barry

O'Keefe the Clerk of the Court

Thomas Browne

186-1 (6)