

The Addergoole Parish Loss

John Bourke, his wife Katherine, his sister Mary, Honora Fleming and Mary Mangan were from the townland of Carrowskeheen (quarter land of the little bush), Lahardane, Addergoole Parish, Co Mayo, Irish Republic. All perished. Data from the 1911 census shows that this was 8.2% of that townland (population 61); that 0.3 % of the whole parish (population 3,496) lost their lives, and three survived out of the group of fourteen steerage passengers who boarded at Queenstown (Cobh). This is the largest proportionate loss of any locality in the Titanic tragedy. The Western People newspaper of 4th May 1912 reported the impact as follows:

"One of the saddest sights ever witnessed in the West of Ireland was the waking of the five young girls and one young man from a village near Lahardane, who went down with the ill-fated Titanic. They were all from the same village, and when the first news of the appalling catastrophe reached their friends the whole community was plunged into unutterable grief. They cherished for a time the remote hope that they were saved, but when the dread news of their terrible fate arrived, a feeling of excruciating anguish took place.

For two days and two nights wakes were held. The photograph of each victim was placed on the bed on which they had slept before leaving home and kindred. The beds were covered with snow white quilts and numbers of candles were lighted around.

The wailing and moaning of people was very distressing and would almost draw a tear from a stone….."

Local folklore has it that Katherine Bourke was pregnant.

Acknowledgements

Castlebar Library, Co Mayo: Western People Article & Census Data

Courtesy of Mick Molloy

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