

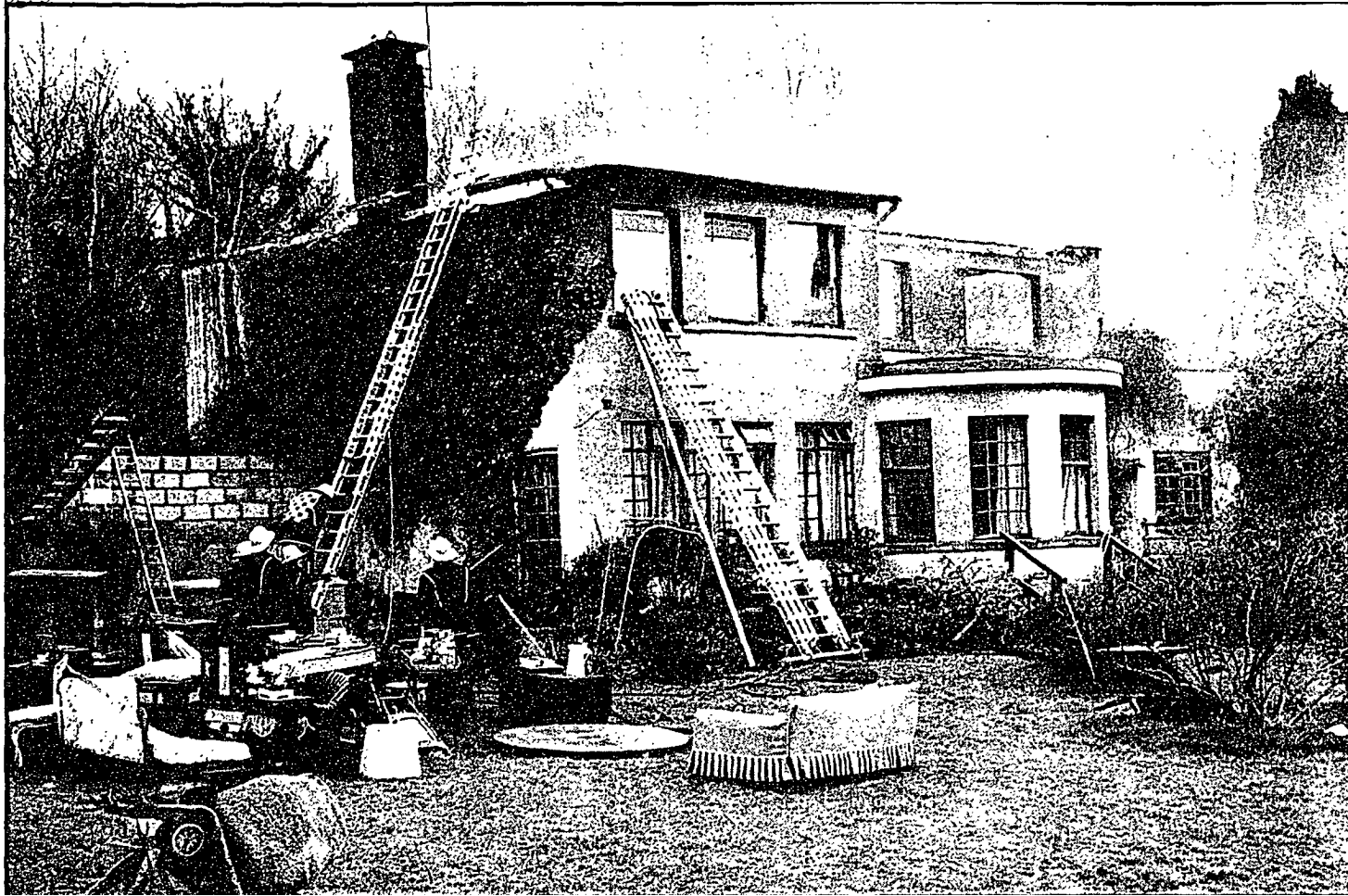
Elderly couple die in fire that destroys Co Limerick home

Quinlan, Arthur

The Irish Times (1921-); Feb 24, 1998;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Irish Times and The Weekly Irish Times

pg. 5



The Hewson home, Lough House, Ballyengland, Askeaton, Co Limerick, which was destroyed by fire in the early hours of yesterday morning. Mr Maurice Hewson and his wife, Pamela, died in the blaze. Photograph: Liam Burke/Press 22

Elderly couple die in fire that destroys Co Limerick home

By Arthur Quinlan, in Askeaton

SECURITY locks and chains on a farmstead in a remote part of Co Limerick impeded fire services reaching a house where a well-known elderly couple died in a fire in the early hours of yesterday morning.

They were Mr Maurice Hewson (85), a retired farmer and former District Commissioner and member of the Colonial Administration of the Gold Coast, West Africa, and his wife, Mrs Pamela Hewson (73), who lived at Lough House, Ballyengland, Askeaton.

Limerick county assistant fire chief, Mr Frank Dennison, said that a woman, believed to be Mrs Hewson, made a call to the fire brigade at about 5 a.m. "Just as she gave the address of the house," Mr Dennison said, "the line went dead."

He added that efforts to save the couple were hindered by heavy security. The entrance gates were padlocked and chained and the first unit of the brigade which got

to the scene within five minutes of the call was delayed in reaching the fire.

All the doors of the house were heavily locked. A total of 20 firemen from units at Newcastle West, Rathkeale, and Foynes fought the blaze which had taken a firm hold on the two-storey residence.

The body of Mr Hewson was found upstairs. His wife's body was found along with the bed which had fallen through to the ground floor.

Mr Hewson, who studied law at TCD, was an outstanding athlete. His cross-country record at the college for three years up to 1933 was unbeaten. He was a member of a TCD tennis championship team which played in Wimbledon and he was also a noted amateur boxer.

He went then to Nigeria where he was involved in the building of the Volta River Dam and the resettlement of the African people. He later went to the Gold Coast but returned to Ireland in 1957 when that country became the independent dominion of Ghana and took up residence in the family home, Castle Hewson, nearby.

His father, Gilbert Hewson, was a member of Limerick County Council and held the balance of power as an Independent in the 1927 government.

The entertainer Bono (Paul Hewson) who is a relative was stated at one time to be interested in purchasing Castle Hewson, which has now been taken into public ownership.

