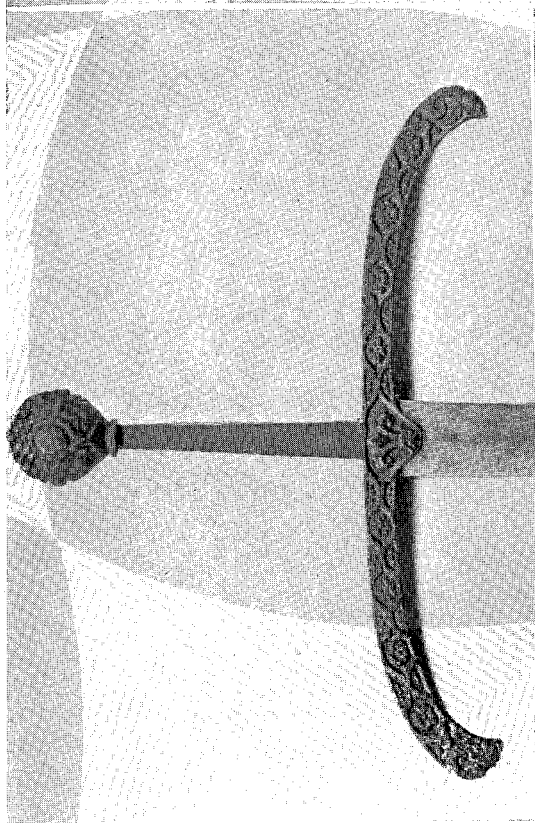
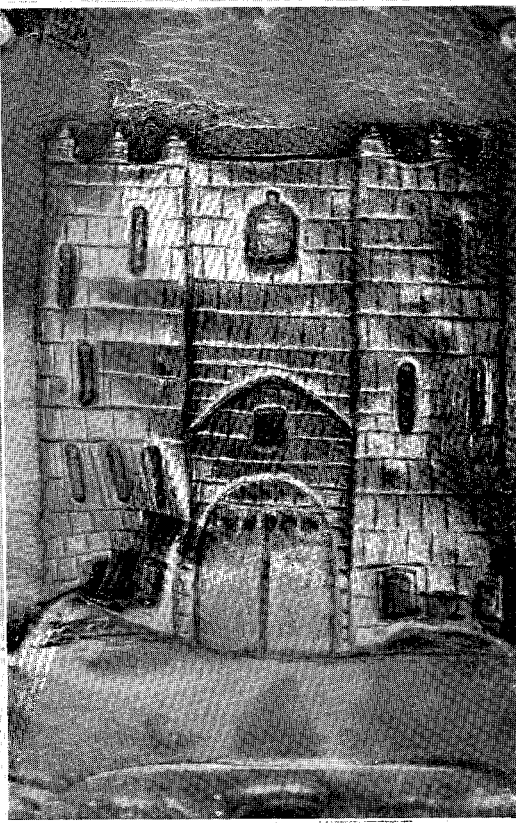


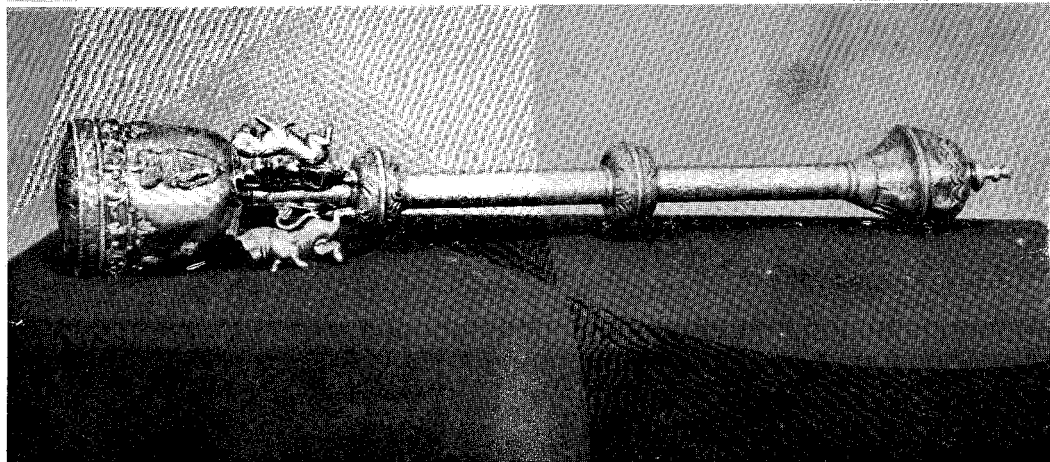
Mayoral Sword, 1575.



(above) Detail from Sword showing decoration of Pommel and Quillons.



Detail from Mace showing Arms of Limerick.



Mace, 1739.

NOTE—The authors of the various papers are solely responsible for the views expressed therein.

The Antiquities of the Corporation of Limerick.

ENGLISHTOWN.

As Caesar said of Gaul, so may it be said of Limerick. It is divided into three parts: the Englishtown, on the King's Island; the Irishtown and Newtown Pery. It is probable that there was some kind of Celtic settlement in the region of Limerick City from prehistoric times, but the credit for the formation of the original city must go to the Danes or Northmen. They occupied and fortified that part of the city then known as Inis Ibhton, and now as the King's Island, formed by the Abbey and Shannon rivers. In 969 they were defeated by Brian Boru and the Irish controlled the city until the coming of the Normans, who converted it into a strongly walled town. This was the original city of Limerick.

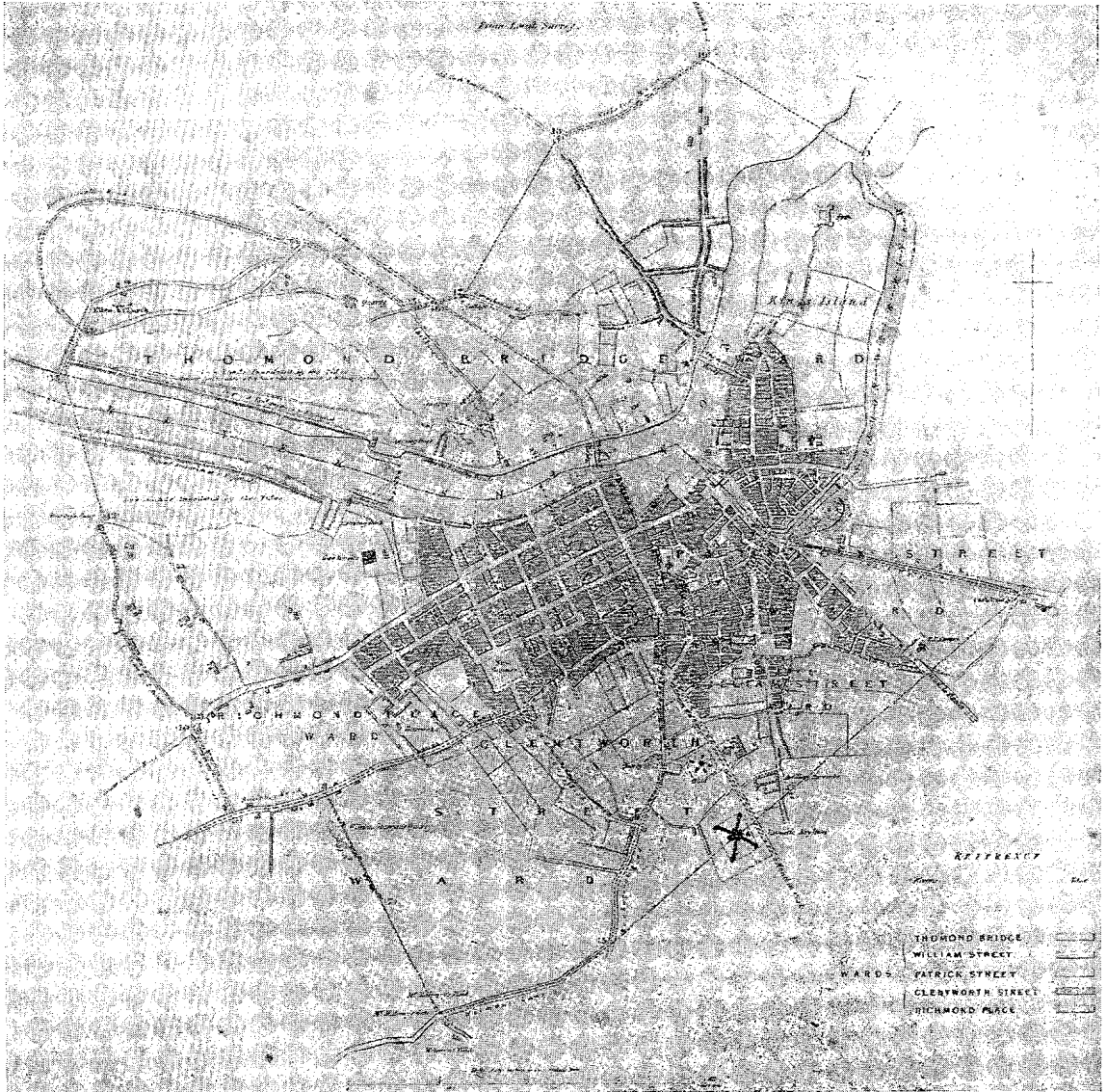
IRISHTOWN.

The Irish were driven out by the English, but, when religious and political fervour had died down, they returned and set up outside the walls, to the west of Ballsbridge. Thus was the Irishtown formed, and this in time became so large, that it was eventually walled in and incorporated in the city. At this time the city was entirely surrounded by walls, through which seventeen gates gave access to and from the city. In 1760 Limerick was declared an open city, the walls being demolished, and little now remains of them. Of the seventeen gates the only feature surviving is the inscribed stone which once stood over the Mungret Gate and is now built into old Plassy Mill. It is carved with the arms of Limerick and the inscription (as translated from the Latin). *In the Reign of Charles, Peter Creagh Mayor, 1643.*⁽¹⁾

NEWTOWN PERY.

In the late eighteen century Edmond Sexton Pery, then Speaker in the Irish House of Commons, developed the marshy land known as Prior's land, once the property of the Augustinian Canons Regular and granted by Henry VIII to Pery's ancestor, Edmond Sexton. The town was beautifully laid out for Pery by Davis Duckart, the designer of the Limerick Custom House, and such strict conditions were laid down in the leases regarding building, etc., that it may be said to be the first large attempt at town-planning in the British Isles. It was developed so fast that it was put under the rule of Commissioners in 1807, and in 1840, when the Corporation of Limerick was reformed, Newtown Pery came under its jurisdiction.

1. See Lenihan, p. 756, for reproduction.



City of Limerick, 1840.

COUNTY OF THE CITY.

In addition to these three areas, the Corporation also held sway over the Liberties which stretched on the North side from one to three miles from the city, and on the South side from four to five. It also had exclusive admiralty jurisdiction over the Shannon from three miles above the city to the sea.

RIDING THE FRANCHISES.

In order to maintain their rights over these territories, it was customary for the Corporation to ride the limits of their franchises. One such event,

which must have been most colourful, is described for the year 1765 :—" On Monday the 12th of August the franchises of the city were rode in the most magnificent manner ever known, all the corporations of the city having taken pains to provide the best horses, furniture, standards, music, etc. They assembled in the King's Island and proceeded in the following order: —Peace officers, with the City Regalia; Mayor,, Sheriffs, Aldermen and Burgesses; the Limerick Union, consisting of a hundred citizens in buff and blue; the Smiths, with Venus and Cupid in a phaeton; the Carpenters and Clothiers with Bishop



Blase; the Cordwainers, Tailors and Coopers; the Skinners, Tanners and Saddlers; the Bakers, Barbers and Surgeons; the Butchers and Chandlers. The Tobacconists with the King of Morocco closed the procession. They proceeded to the bounds of the City Liberties, viz: Ballinecourty, Shannavy, Ballyvarra, Scart, Ahabeg, Ballysimon, Carrickparson, Ballyneety, Friarstown, Barnacoula, Anaharosa, Barnakile Bridge, Clarina Bridge, Tirvoe Gate, from thence back to the city, and next day to Quinpoole Bridge, the Mayor's Stone, and Pass Bridge. On the 10th of September, the Mayor and Corporation went to Scat-

tery Island, then sailed to the mouth of the Shannon, where the Mayor threw a dart into the sea, as the last boundary of the Liberties of the City of Limerick." Incidentally, it was customary for the Mayor, in these perambulations, to level any encroachments that had been made on any of the public highways or commons.

CHARTERS.

The earliest charter known to have been granted to Limerick was that given by John, Earl of Morton and Lord of Ireland in the year 1199.⁽²⁾ From then until the year 1840, when all the Irish Corporations were reformed fourteen other charters were granted to the City.

Edward I.—4th February, 1291.

Edward I.—6th May, 1303.

Henry IV.—25th June, 1400.

Henry V.—20th January, 1413.

Henry VI.—27th November, 1423.

Henry VI.—18th November, 1429.

Henry VI.—1489.

Edward VI.—20th February, 1551.

Elizabeth 26th October, 1575.

Elizabeth—19th March, 1582.

James I.—3rd March, 1609.

"New Rules," 13th February, 1671.

James II.—1688.

"Limerick Regulation Act."—1823.⁽³⁾

These charters granted various increasing rights and privileges to the Corporation for the proper government of the city, but many of these were abused, particularly the one granting the right to all resident merchants, tradesmen, &c., to be freemen, that is, to exercise their franchise and thus take part in the municipal control. As a result, although there were only 271 resident freemen in the city in 1833, and the population of the county of the city was in the region of 70,000, the Corporation consisted of 44 paid officers as well as 15 aldermen and 69 burgesses. It was completely controlled by the Vereker family, of whom Lord Gort, the hero of Collooney was head; and it is certain that each one of these officers, as well as all the aldermen and burgesses, were either Gort's relatives, his friends or his henchmen. In fact the Corporation was so corrupt at this time that no resident merchant or tradesman was made free unless it was virtually certain that he would vote in the Vereker interests, and when election time came round, there were nearly as many voters from the Vereker estate at Gort in County Galway, as there were in the city itself.

OFFICERS.

In 1834 the following were, briefly, the mode of appointment, the functions, and the salaries of the various officers of the Corporation.⁽⁴⁾

MAYOR—Elected annually by Mayor and Burgesses. He was a Justice of the Peace, a Magistrate for the County, Admiral of the Shannon, Sole Judge of the Court of Conscience, Chief Judge of the Tholsel Court, Coroner, Clerk of the Markets, Chairman of the Common Council, &c., &c. He was paid £500 per annum, plus 80 guineas as coroner, plus one ton of coal and six hundred-weights of salt from each cargo of such imported; plus one salmon per week

2. See Fitzgerald & McGregor. Appendix I.-III.

3. Most of these charters will be found in Lenihan, or in the Report of the Shannon Fisheries Case, "Malcolmson v. O'Dea and Others," together with an almost complete history of the Lax Weir.

4. See Municipal Corporations (Ireland). Appendix to the Report of the Commissioners, 1835., pp. 343-412.



City Exchange, from an early nineteenth century oil painting.



Detail of illumination from Charter of Charles II to Limerick, showing miniature portrait of the king.

from the Corporation weirs; plus oysters from each oyster-boat coming to the quay; plus fees from the Tholsel Court; plus 10/6 for each affixing of the corporation seal to letters of freedom, &c.

SHERIFFS (2)—Elected annually by the Common Council. They were Judges of the Tholsel Court, Returning Officers at Parliamentary Elections, members of the Common Council, &c. They received £75 p.a. each, plus £20 for rent of office, plus £50 for clothing the bailiffs, plus £12 presentment from Grand Jury in lieu of fees, plus fees from the Superior Courts approximating to £200 each p.a., plus fees from the Parliamentary Elections.

ALDERMEN.—Elected by Common Council from among the Burgesses; an honorary title usually conferred on persons who had served the office of mayor. They were members of the Common Council and of the Admiralty Court, and from their number the Charter Justices were appointed. There was no salary or emoluments attaching to the post but the widow of an alderman was paid an annuity of £8 if her husband died in straitened circumstances. In 1834 there were fifteen aldermen.

BURGESSES—Elected by the Common Council. No functions except as members of the Common Council and no salaries or emoluments except that a burgess's widow received an annuity of £5 if her husband died in straitened circumstances. In 1834 there were forty-four burgesses.

COMMON COUNCIL—The Common Council consisted of the above sixty-two officers together with the Recorder.

RECORDER—A barrister, elected annually by the Common Council. He was a Justice of the Peace, a member of the Admiralty Court, the Assessor of the Tholsel Court, and Legal Adviser to the Corporation. His salary was £200 p.a., plus 5/- on each judgment of the Tholsel Court.

CHARTER JUSTICES (Four)—Elected annually by the Common Council. They attended the petty and quarter sessions and acted generally as magistrates without salary or emoluments.

TOWN CLERK—Elected annually by the Common Council. He acted as Clerk to Common Council, and also as Clerk of the Crown and the Peace, Registrar of the Tholsel Court, &c. His salary was £50 p.a., plus 10/6 for each freedom docket issued, plus £180 as Clerk of the Crown and Peace, plus various fees from same office.

CHAMBERLAIN—Elected annually by the Common Council from the burgesses. Acted as treasurer for all receipts and payments. His salary was £200 p.a. with no emoluments.

COMMON SPEAKER—Elected every two years by the Court of D'Oyer Hundred. He acted as President of the latter court and his salary was £80 p.a.

WATER-BAILIFF—Elected by Common Council and held office for life or during good-behaviour. Executed on the river the process of the Tholsel Court, kept bed of river clear of obstructions below low-water mark and kept Long Dock and Custom House Dock in repair, as well as 14 buoys in the Shannon. Salary obtained from port dues, and by the appointment of two deputies, became a sinecure worth between £200 and £300 p.a.

SWORD-BEARER—Appointed annually by the Mayor. He carried the sword before the Mayor on ceremonial occasions and acted as public appraiser, at a salary of £10 p.a.

HIGH-CONSTABLE AND SIX PETTY CONSTABLES—Appointed annually by Mayor. The High Constable acted as billets master and as conservator of the roads and streets. His salary for the former office was £10 p.a., and for the latter, £20 p.a. The petty constables acted as keepers of the peace, and, with the sergeants-at-mace, were the only municipal police. They were paid £8 p.a., and clothed at the expense of the Corporation.

SERGEANT'S-AT-MACE, or Mayor Sergeants were appointed annually by the Mayor. They were keepers of the peace, attendants on the Mayor, bailiffs of the Tholsel Court and of the Court of Conscience. There were four mayor's sergeants, each receiving £14 per annum, plus certain fees of the Tholsel Court, and they were clothed at the expense of the Corporation.

SHERIFF'S BAILIFFS—Appointed annually by the Sheriffs. They acted as assistants to the Sheriffs and received £11 5s. per annum and were clothed at the expense of the Corporation.

POUNDKEEPER—Not an official appointment, but probably in patronage of the Mayor. He took charge of all goods seized on Tholsel Court attachments, charging his own fees for this service.

WEIGHMASTER—Appointed by the Mayor and Aldermen for life. Weigher of all corn and butter coming into the city, with fees amounting to about £1,500 per annum and expenses of about £250.

CRANEMASTER—Appointed by the Common Council for life. His duties consisted of the examination and weighing of hides, and produced fees amounting to about £100 p.a.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE MARKETS—Appointed by Common Council for life. Assistant to Mayor as Clerk of the Markets. Acted as Inspector of meat, examined weights and measures, &c. His salary was £50 p.a.

RANGER OF THE EXCHANGE—Appointed by Mayor. Acted as Caretaker of the Exchange at £17 p.a.

BELLMEN—Appointed by Common Council at salary of £3 p.a.

ORGANIST—Appointed by Common Council to play at the Cathedral during Divine Service at which the Corporation attended. His salary was £10 p.a.

Most of the above offices were performed by deputies and thus became mere sinecures for the Vereker clique.

REFORM.

Independent citizens, represented by Thomas Spring Rice, later Lord Monteagle, and the Limerick Chamber of Commerce, endeavoured by legal means to wrest the corrupt power from the Verekers, and, in less than ten years, the Corporation spent over £10,000 in legal expenses resisting their efforts. Limerick was not alone in this corruption, for nearly every Corporation in Ireland was run for the benefit of the local ruling family and without any regard for the common good. A Government enquiry was held in 1833, and as a result, "An Act for the Regulation of Municipal Corporations in Ireland," commonly called the "Reformed Corporations" Act, was passed on 10th August, 1840, and was proclaimed by the Lord Lieutenant for Limerick exactly one year after this date.

Even then the Verekers resisted. The proclamation was premature, as a full year had not passed, in accordance with the provisions of the Act, from the certified date of the striking of a rate for the relief of the poor. The Hon. Charles Smyth Vereker, the Mayor of the old Corporation, declared the proceedings illegal, refused to give up office or to surrender the Corporation books and records. However, the new body proceeded according to the new Act and elected a New Corporation with Martin Honan as its first Mayor. With two Mayors in the city, there was a good deal of confusion until July in the following year, when an Act designed to legalize the acts of the new Corporation received Royal Assent.

Under the new Act strict rules were drawn up for the control of each town and borough in Ireland. In Limerick, the old liberties were put outside municipal control and the new city consisted of 816 acres instead of 14,825 as formerly. It was divided into five wards, Thomond Bridge, John Street, Patrick Street, William Street and Richmond Place, and each of these were empowered to elect two aldermen and six councillors. Every man of full age was given the right to vote at these elections. Thus the Council consisted of forty members thoroughly representative of the citizens and could elect a Mayor from its own body. His powers were considerably limited, but he was still to act as a Justice of the Peace, and as Returning Officer at the Parliamentary Elections. The municipal office of Sheriff was abolished, its place being taken by a Sheriff appointed by the Government. Offices retained under the new Act were those of Town Clerk, Treasurer, Clerk of the Markets, and Weighmaster.

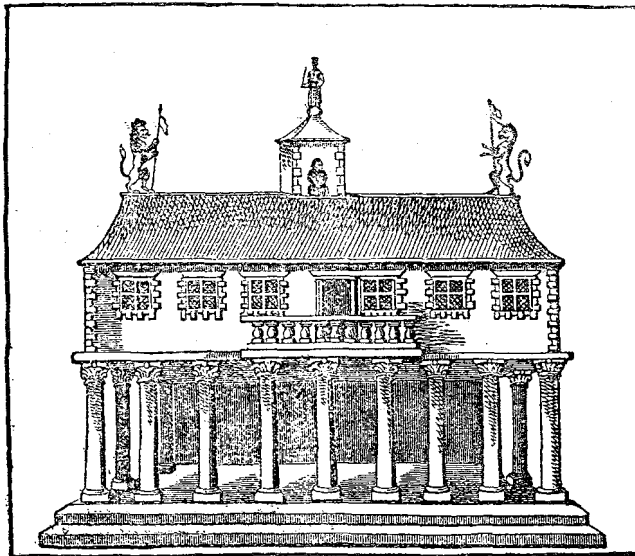
Under this new Corporation Limerick was, for the first time almost since the siege, under the control of a body interested in its advancement, and it advanced by leaps and bounds. A New Markets was built, the Island Fields were acquired for the citizens, a new embankment was built at Corkanree, the tolls were lifted from Thomond and Sarsfield Bridges, trade at the port was improved, &c. &c.,

CORPORATION PROPERTY.

King John granted forty ploughlands to the City of Limerick, but bit by bit, this was alienated to private persons, by the dishonesty of the Councils, until in 1840 the property still in the possession of the Corporation was negligible. In a subsequent paper, I hope to treat of this very large Corporate Estate and tell the story of its gradual confiscation and loss to the Corporation.

TOWN HALL.

The earliest known Town Hall or Tholsel was built in Mary Street in 1451, on the same site that was later used for the old City Gaol, itself erected in 1750 and taken down in recent years. From here the Corporation transferred in 1673 to the City Exchange erected at the sole expense of William Yorke, Mayor. This building which, with its tuscan columns, now forms part of the boundary wall of St. Mary's Cathedral, was rebuilt during the mayoralty of William Davis in 1702, and again in 1777 during the mayoralty of Thomas Smith. An inscribed stone referring to the last rebuilding can still be read on the exterior of the building.



The Tholsel, 1681.

The Corporation continued here until 1846 when they went to the present Town Hall, a building which vies with the more classical Custom House for the title of the most graceful building in Limerick. It was built in 1805 for the Mercantile Body (later incorporated as the Limerick Chamber of Commerce) and contained one of the most spacious coffee-rooms in Ireland. The Chamber of Commerce went to their present premises in O'Connell Street, once the town house of Mr. Gavin, in 1833, and their former premises was allowed to deteriorate, being used as a sugar store and a printing house, until it was taken over by the Reform Corporation.

ARMS AND SEAL.

The Charter of Elizabeth gave a seal to the Corporation and the power of altering, breaking or changing it. The earliest reproduction of this seal which I have been able to find is attached to a Certificate of freedom dated 1793. It bears the City Arms, "a castle, triple-towered, proper, the centre tower of a conical shape and terminated with a cross⁽⁵⁾ the portcullis of the entrance gate, elevated." The inscription runs "Sigillum Civitatis Limerick. G.R.," and the seal, therefore, was cut in the reign of the first George, that is, between the years 1714 and 1730.

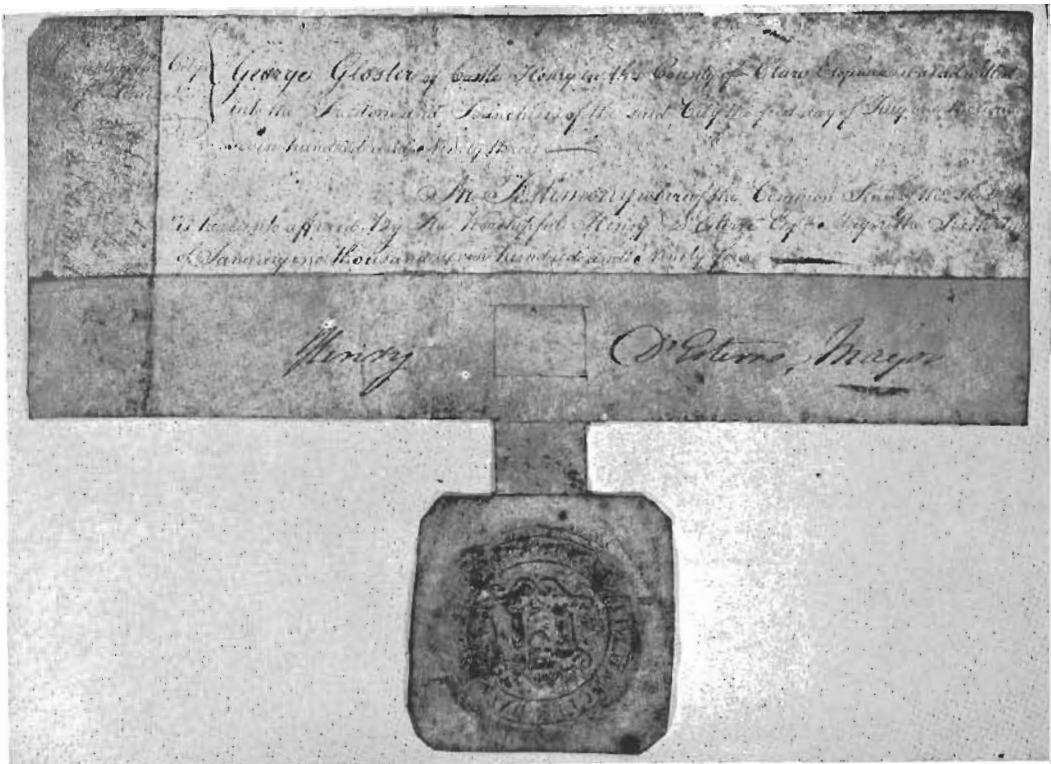
MAYORALTY SEAL.

This consisted of the three Royal Lions on a shield enclosed by the inscription "Sigillum Civitatis Limerick." These are not the O'Brien arms as is generally supposed, for the Mayor, being the representative of the King in the city, naturally used his master's arms.

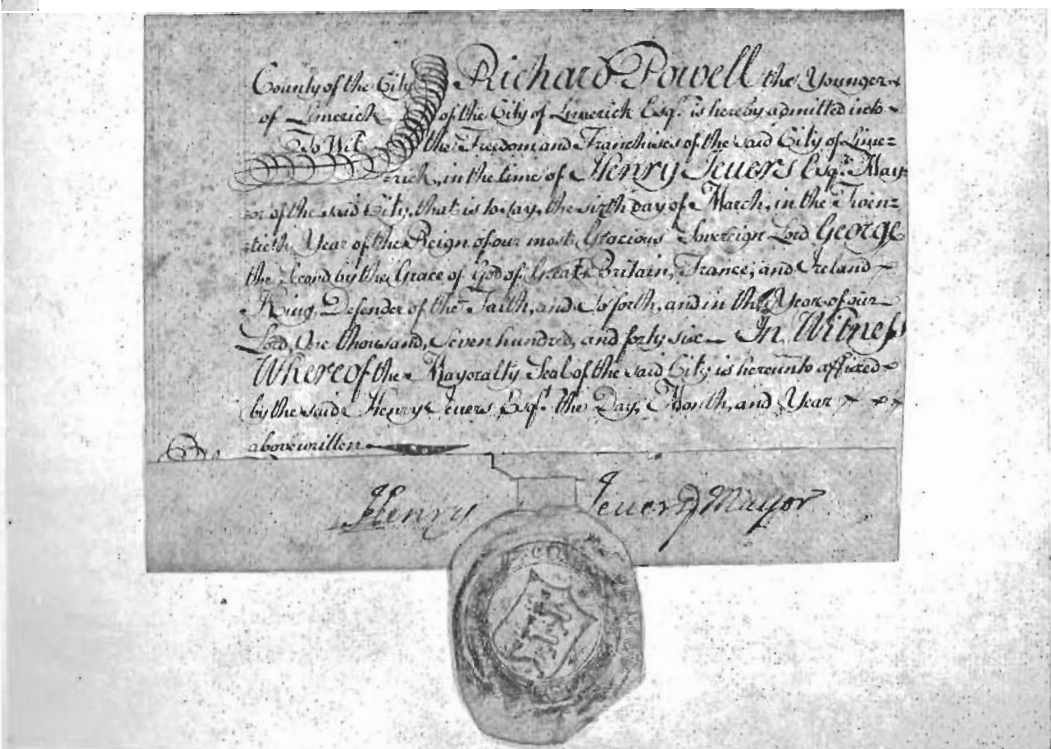
An impression of this seal may be seen on the freedom certificate of Richard Powell, dated 1746.

It seems likely that the mayoralty seal was often used when the City seal should have been, and vice versa.

5. See illustration of City Arms on Mace in which the central tower of the castle is not terminated with a cross. This was made in 1739.



Freedom Certificate, showing City Seal, 1793.



Freedom Certificate, showing Mayoral Seal, 1746.

CIVIC SWORD.

This, the earliest existing piece of the Limerick Corporation Insignia, is also the earliest Irish civic sword in existence. It was granted to the Corporation by Queen Elizabeth in her charter of 1575 and re-granted in a later charter. In the same year, Sir Henry Sidney, the Queen's deputy, personally brought the sword to Limerick and presented it to the Mayor⁽⁶⁾:—"The Charter reads: "And further, we, deeply considering the said laudable services always hitherto rendered to us by our beloved and faithful subjects the mayor, bailiffs and citizens of the said city, and being willing therefore, for those reasons, to bestow on them some royal gift . . . whereby they may be henceforth held in more honourable esteem, of our special grace, certain knowledge and mere motion . . . we do give and grant licence to our said liege subjects . . . in all places within the walls of the said city, the suburbs and liberties thereof, shall and may have a sword with fit scabbard and adorned with our ensign to be carried and borne before the mayor who now is, and before all other mayors for the time being . . . and we will that the swordbearer be adorned with a notable hat, commonly called a 'hat of maintenance,' when and where they shall think fit, for the reasons aforesaid."

The civic sword is supposed to indicate that the power of life and death was vested in the Mayor, and thus the form of the sword associates it with the office of executioner rather than that of soldier. It is double-edged and the large transverse guard, forming a cross, was often used to swear on. Many references to this old custom may be found in Shakespeare.

The original scabbard is missing as is the original grip, and these had been replaced by ugly nineteenth century substitutes. In addition the pommel and quillons had been painted so often that the design had become obliterated. These have now been removed and the sword is as nearly as possible, without restoration, in its original condition. The blade is 44in. long and is plain, having neither ornament nor maker's mark. The quillons are 15½in. across, are made of iron and are decorated with a cast pattern of roses and fleur-de-lis. They terminate in human faces with ram's horns. The hilt is 8in long and ends in an egg-shaped pommel, decorated with two laughing human faces, back to back. Lenihan states that the original scabbard was of crimson velvet with silver bands, &c.

HAT OF MAINTENANCE.

The hat of maintenance, also referred to in the charter of Elizabeth quoted above, is no longer in existence. Before 1914, the sword bearer wore a black cloak and a bearskin cap with a red bag hanging down from the top. It may be taken that this was the original hat of maintenance.

CHARTERS.

None of Limerick's fourteen charters are still in existence. However, many sovereigns granted documents known as "Inspeximus's," stating that the original charters had been inspected and that all the rights already granted were thereby confirmed. Two of these are still in the property of the Corporation; one, granted by Charles II, is beautifully illuminated and has an excellent contemporary miniature of the merry monarch; the other, a plain and sober document granted by Oliver Cromwell begins in English:—"Oliver, by the grace of God, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth, &c., &c. One of the original seals is still attaching to the Charter of Charles.

6. Arthur Mss.

ROYAL ARMS.

There is in the City Museum a beautifully carved coat of arms of Charles II. This was presented by William Yorke when he built the New Exchange in 1673 and hung over the entrance to the Council Chamber. On transfer of the Corporation to the present Town Hall it hung over the Mayor's Office until 1900 when John Daly, Mayor, ordered its removal.

THE NAIL.

In many old English "Staple" towns, particularly Bristol and Coventry, are to be seen curious objects known as "Nails." These stood in the marketplace and their purpose was that the merchants might make their payments on them publicly and thus be able to prove payment at any time; for receipts were not issued until some time in the 18th century. The Limerick "Nail," which is now in the City Museum, was presented to the city by the Mayor, Robert Smith, in 1685, and was set up in the Exchange. The "White" manuscript states that it was "intended for a public place for paying down money on, though not applied to that use." It is described as a "brass table standing on a short pillar," engraved by Smith himself with the inscription, as translated from the Latin:—"The gift of Robert Smith, Mayor, to the citizens of Limerick." There is now no sign of the inscription. There is a tradition that these objects were the origin of the phrase "to pay on the nail," but Samuel Johnson, in his famous English Dictionary, states that the phrase comes from an old Latin phrase "solvere super unguem," and therefore means "on the fingernail." As Johnson does not give the origin of the Latin phrase, it must remain a matter of conjecture as to which came first, the phrase or the object.

Most Limerick citizens will remember the verse from Garryowen referring to the old custom of "paying on the nail."

Insted of spa we'll drink brown ale,
And pay our reckoning on the nail,
No man for debt shall go to Gaol
In Garryowen na Gloira.

THE MACES.

Originally a mace was simply a hammer-headed weapon, but, as early as the stone age, as may be seen from examples in the City Museum, decorated maces were being used for ceremonial purposes. The first record of the right of carrying maces being granted to Limerick is in the charter of James 1st., granted in 1609, which enabled the Corporation to choose "as many aldermen, sergeants-at-mace and other officers as they had used to nominate, elect and choose," but as is obvious from this grant, the custom was used in the city before this date.

The duty of the mace-bearer was to execute the process of the Tholsel Court and of the Mayor's Court of Conscience. He also attended the Mayor and assisted him in the discharge of his official duties. There were originally four sergeants-at-mace in Limerick, but they were reduced to two in 1840. At that time, they wore a cocked hat with gold lace, a blue coat, trimmed with gold lace, &c., as may be seen in the painting of the City Exchange. Previous to that period, however, they wore a blue surtout and plain hats with orange and blue cockades. On certain public occasions they also wore large red cloaks, richly trimmed with gold lace.

There are now four maces, similar in size and design, and all dating from the year 1739. They are 34 in. long, and consist of a cup-shaped head, supported by four rampant lions; a stem with two knops; and a base. Lenihan states that they had eight lions wrought in silver supporting a crown on the top, and that these appendages were stolen previous to their coming into the possession of the Reform Corporation. This is most unlikely, but an examination of the head reveals that something was cut away. More than likely it was the cresting or coronet of the head formed by four fleurs-de-lis, alternating with four crosses pattees, with four arches springing from the latter and carrying an orb surmounted by another cross.

The flat of the heads is decorated with the arms of George II surrounded with a floral or shell-like circlet. The decoration on the bowl is both embossed and applied. The top of the bowl has two roped rings with a panel between, decorated with lozenges, ovals and beads. This is followed by an applied floral circle, broken by four cherub's heads, each with a stylized ox-head beneath it. The body of the head is embossed with—1, The arms of Limerick. 2, The rose and thistle on one stem. 3, The Harp, and 4, the fleur-de-lis. Each of these last three devices is surmounted by a crown.

The head is supported by four rampant lions, attached to the stem at two places by their tails, and resting one foot on the top of the knob. The two knops are ornamented with alternate embossed and engraved shell-like designs. The stem of the maces is engraved with spiral branches of a rose-tree, with leaves and flowers on them.

The base of the maces has also an embossed pattern and the following inscription:—"Geoe. Sexton, Esqr. Mayor. David Roche & Richd. Graves, Esqrs. Shers. 1739." One of the maces has the hall mark "I.R." in an oval stamped twice upon it, and it is probable therefore that John Robinson, a Limerick goldsmith who flourished about this time, was the maker of all of them.

The base of the maces can be unscrewed and the maces taken asunder.

MAYOR'S WAND.

The only historical reference to the Mayor's wand is for the year 1543, when it is stated that David White was the first Mayor to carry a wand.

CORPORATION RECORDS.

The Vereker clique destroyed most of the old Corporation Records at the beginning of the nineteenth century so that they could not be used as evidence of their corrupt rule, during their legal disputes with the Independents. The earliest is a minute book for the year 1672 to 1680 which is now in the British Museum. There is also a Minute Book for the years 1672 to 1690 in the National Library. The following are still in the possession of the Corporation and are now kept in the City Library:—

1. Minute Book, 1809-1823.
2. Minute Book, 1769-1796, a transcript of a much mutilated original.
3. Index of freemen for the years 1746-1836. (See appendix)
4. Index of freemen for the years 1719-1817.
5. Register of Freemen, 1823-1841.

6. Register of the Court of Claims. (That is, of those claiming the right to be made free of the city), 1823-1841.

No. 5 contains a transcript of the freeman's oath which reads: —“, A.B. of X., in the city of Limerick, or in the Liberties thereof, do swear to be true and faithful to our Sovereign Lady the Queen, her heirs and successors, and, to the utmost of my power, to aid and assist the Mayor, Sheriffs and Citizens of the said city, as they shall lawfully and reasonably require me to do. I will also well and truly observe, perform and fulfil and keep all such orders and rules as have been, or shall be made and established by lawful authority for the good government of the said city, and in all matters and things relating to my duty as freeman. I will not refuse or delay to any man his right, or sanction any expenditure of the tolls and customs of the corporation save for the public use of the said city, and I will not, by colour of my freedom, directly or indirectly, or by equivocation, or mental reservation cover or bear out any foreigners' or strangers' goods or merchandise, but that I will, according to the best of my skill and knowledge, wit cunning and power, uphold and maintain all the liberties, franchises and customs, lawful orders and usages of this city and corporation. So, HELP ME GOD.”

The oath, taken about the year 1780, as may be seen from a printed leaflet in the City Museum, differs in no important detail from the above.

CHAINS OF OFFICE.

There are at present four chains of office. These were purchased about the year 1820 and cost, together with boxes for complimentary freedoms, a portrait of Lord Gort, costing 200 guineas, and the gilding of some pictures, a total sum of £337 0s. 10d. There is no historical reference to the use of a mayoral chain before this date.

The chains were made of gold and were intended for the use of the Mayor and two sheriffs. Later the sheriffs' chains were used by the town clerk and the treasurer.

The principal mayoral chain has eighty-one links. From the year 1822 it became customary, but not obligatory, for the Mayor in office to add a flat ring or roundel, engraved with his name and his year of office. After the Reform of the Corporation, inscriptions were added on the reverse of the roundel, recording various local, national, and even international events. In order to make room for these inscriptions, the rings became larger and larger until eventually they were no longer rings but medallions. Even then the mayors were at a loss to record fully the important happenings during their year of office, and some of the medallions have the inscriptions running on to the edge. Fifty-seven additional links in all have been added to date, and, in order to keep the chain balanced these have been attached, more or less, to alternate sides of the chain in alternate years.

The following is a complete list of the additions with their inscriptions. They are listed consecutively, and are, therefore, not in chronological order: —

D. F. G. Mahony, Esqr. Mayor. Year 1822.

Nichs. Mahon, Esqr. Mayor. Year 1826.

Vere Hunt. Mayor of Limerick. October 1st 1828.

John Crips, Esq. Mayor of Limerick. 1831.

Alderman John Vereker 1833.

Garrett Hugh Fitzgerald, Esqr. Mayor of Limerick, Octr. 1t. 1838.

Honble. Charles Smyth Vereker—Mayor 1841.

Pierce Shannon, Corbally House, Mayor. Jany. 1st 1844. Died in his Mayoralty June 6th. 1844.

Edmd. F—G. Ryan. Mayor 1846. Floating Docks commenced. Total failure of potatoe crop. £5,000 collected in the city for the poor.

Michael Quin, Mayor. 1848. Got possession of the Island Bank for the citizens. Railway communication opened 9th May between Dublin and Limerick.

Laurence Quinlan, Esqr. Mayor. 1850 Presided at banquet of the citizens to Genl. Lord Gough on his Lordship's return from India 16th May. Attended Lord Mayor of London's Banquet to Prince Albert and the Mayors of the United Kingdom in furtherance of the Great Industrial Exhibition of all nations.

Henry Watson, Esq. Mayor. 1823. 1824. 1825. 1854. War against Russia declared. Irish Militia embodied. The Mayor this year traversed land and water boundaries of the Corporation Municipality.

James Spaight, Esq. Mayor 1856. Visit and entertainment of the Earl of Carlisle, Lord Lieutenant. Laid foundation stones of St. John's Cathedral and Sailor's Home. Peace with Russia. 1877. Opened People's Park. Reformed Night Watch.

Edmond Gabbett, Esq. Mayor 1858. Visit of H.R.H. Prince Alfred. 26 June. James Spaight, Esq. returned M.P. for Limerick. Russian guns placed on Wellesley Bridge.

Alderman William Fitzgerald, Mayor. 1860. Died during his Mayoralty. 26 October, aged 34 years.

John Kerr. 1907. Opened All Ireland Industrial Conference in the Town Hall. Nov. 28. Opened the Tuberculosis Exhibition in the Athenaeum. Nov. 30. Attended the consecration of the Most Rev. Dr. Boylan as Bishop Kilmore in Cavan Cathedral with sword and mace bearers, also Alderman McNeice & J. H. Roche Esq. J.P.

Alderman William Lane Joynt, Mayor 1862. Appointed Clerk of Crown for County Limerick. Great distress in Lancashire consequent on the Civil War in America.

Eugene O'Callaghan, J.P. Mayor of Limerick 1861. Presented address to Lord Wodehouse on his assuming Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland. Birth of a son to Prince of Wales. The Corporation Gas Works renovated. Bill for Corkanree Embankment promoted by the Corporation.

Thomas Joyce, J.P. Mayor of Limerick 1869. The Judges of Assises attended Mass in state at the Cathedral with the Mayor and Corporation in their robes, being the first occasion of the kind since the Reformation. Election petition against City members defeated. The Protestant Church disestablished in Ireland.

William Spillane, Esq., J.P. Mayor 1870. President of the Limerick Athenaeum and School of Art, Public Free Library and Limerick Boat Club. unanimously elected to each office. Declaration of war between France and Prussia. July 15th. Irish Land Act became law. Aug. 1. Corkanree Embankment opened Oct 14. First Public Free Library in Limerick opened. Dec. 15.

(A hanging medallion). *Crest.* Martin Honan, Mayor for the years 1842-1843. *Arms of Limerick.* The Municipal Reform Act became law in Limerick, November 9th 1841.

J. J. Cleary. *Crest.* Mayor of Limerick. 1872. Visit of Earl and Countess Spencer, Lord Lieutenant. Address presented from the Corporation. Resignation of Ministry. Formation of Conservative Government by Mr. Disraeli.

S. O'Mara, Mayor of Limerick. Elected M.P. Queen's County Ossory Division. Home Rule Bill introduced by W. E. Gladstone. Right Rev. Dr. G. Butler, Bishop, died. Rev. Dr. E. T. O'Dwyer consecrated Bishop.

S. O'Mara, Mayor of Limerick, 1885. Failure of Munster Bank. Visit of Prince of Wales to Railway Station. Not received in City by Mayor or citizens. Resistance to Police Tax brought to a successful issue. First Mayor elected as Nationalist.

J. J. Cleary, Mayor of Limerick. Re-elected for the third time. 1874. Mayor attended the banquet, June 3rd. of the Lord Mayor of London. Gladstone Ministry resigned. First Parliamentary election under Ballot Act. Isaac Butt, Q.C., Richard O'Shaughnessy returned Feb. 8th. Address of congratulation to his Grace the Duke of Abercorn presented by the Mayor and Deputation for the Corporation at the Viceregal Lodge. First sod of the People's Park raised by Mayor Oct 26. Silver spade and trowel presd. Silver cradle presented to Mayoress by the Corporation & citizens, value 250 guineas.

Ambrose Hall declared Mayor for year 1875 by Right Hon. Justice Keogh after trial on petition in Court of Queen's Bench. International rifle match between America and Ireland. Frightful inundations in France, Hungary, Englaand, Ireland &c. International Municipal Festivities in London. O'Connell centenary celebration. Fancy charity ball organised by Mayor, by which £120 was realised for the poor.

John Francis Walker, Mayor 1876. Thomas E. O'Brien Esqr. South Hill, First High Sheriff elected by the Reformed Corporation. Opening of Catholic Institute. The laying of the foundation stone of the Tower and Spire of the Redemptorist Church, Mount St. Alphonsus, which is to be furnished with a grand peal of bells. All being the gift of Alderman John Quin, ex High Sheriff.

Alderman Jerome Counihan, Mayor. 1882-1883. Address of welcome presented by Mayor and Corporation in Dublin to Earl Spencer on appointment as Lord Lieutenant. Opening of Dublin Exhibition attended by Mayor and Mace Bearers. New Church of St. Michael's built and St. John's Cathedral Spire finished. Most Rev. Dr. Butler,

Lord Bishop. First tree of Military Road planted by Mayor. Wellesley Bridge opened free of toll. Gold key presented to Mayor by Harbour Board. Royal Agricultural Society Show and Art Exhibition opened during visit of Lord Lieutenant and Countess Spencer. Bill passed to free Atlunkard Bridge from toll. Water Works purchased and taken over by the Mayor.

Seaghan O Dalaigh dō daoradh than ceann treasuin cumh braigdeanas pionuis le linn a saoghail. 1884. Do sgaoileadh saor as carcar Phortland 1896. Do toghad d'eanguth na Meire e 1899 agus 1900. Do bhuadhuigh ar an d-teoruidhe an Ridire Tomas de Cliobh 1901. *Circle of Shamrocks with, in centre, rising sun, pair of handcuffs, and rifle and pike crossed.*

P. F. Quinlan, Mayor 1933-1934. ARMS. Co. P. F. Quinlan elected Mayor of Limerick 24th June 1933. Inaugurated poor children's excursion to Youghal 30th July 1933. Pres. de Valera opened Civic Carnival 2nd Oct. 1933. Entertained Atlantic flyers, Capt. Pond Lieut. Stabelli 17th May 1934, who conveyed Mayor's Petition to Holy Father. Pope Pius XI. Turned sod Limerick's largest housing scheme (380 houses) Island Field. 7th June '34. Messrs. P. Molloy & Sons and M. Doyle & Son. Builders. Entertained French Engineers 3rd July 1934. Unanimously re-elected Mayor 9th July '34. Apostolic Benediction received from Holy Father Pope Pius XI. 13th July 1934. Mayoral Banquet 25th Oct. '34 to Limerick's team on victory All-Ireland Hurling Final. G.A.A. Jubilee year. Limerick City Management Act became Law, 6th Sept. 1934.

D. F. MacNamara, Mayor 1892. *Crest.* Cardinal Manning died. January 14th 1892. Gladstone elected to power on the Home Rule Ticket.

Wm. J. O'Donnell, J.P., Mayor 1890. Sheriff 1889. The youngest Mayor of Limerick on record. 1890. *Wreath of shamrocks and crest.*

Stephen Hastings, Mayor 1878. Elected unanimously 1st Dec. 1877. Death of His Holiness Pius IX in the 32nd year of his Pontificate. Congratulatory address to Leo XIII on his accession. Treaty of Berlin signed July 13th. Invasion of Afghanistan.

James F. Barry 1902. Seamus F. de Barra, I. na S. abhi 'na Ard Sirriam Meire Luimnighe 1902.

Francis A. O'Keeffe, Solicitor. Mayor of Limerick for three years. 1887, 1888, 1889. Elected Member of Parliament for the City of Limerick, 18 April 1888. Introduced Public Libraries Act into Limerick. Turned first sod of new Waterworks 5 Sept 1888. Corporation Artisans dwellings first erected. Re-elected M.P. for the City at contested Elections 1892, 1895.

William M. Nolan, High Sheriff 1890. Mayor 1896. *Crest.* Chairman, Committee "Garryowen" Fete, opened by Countess of Dunraven, and realised £3,000 for Barrington's Hospital. Mayoress presided at "Colleen Bawn" Stall. Nolan's cottages built. Scheme for Technical Instruction for City initiated. Mayor went with deputation to Lord Lieutenant re endowment for Technical Instruction. Trade & Labour Congress in Limerick attended by Mayor in state. Band Stand in the People's Park inaugurated by Mayor. Garryowen Football Club won Munster Cup. Presented by Mayoress.

Alderman P. Riordan, Mayor, 1891. *Treaty Stone with surrounds of Shamrocks*. The Leader of the Irish people, Chas. S. Parnell died Oct 6th 1891. *Head of Parnell*.

1879. St. Alphonsus Tower completed & bells blessed. Mayor & Corporation attending ceremony. Isaac Butt, M.P. for City died. Prince Imperial of France killed in Zulu War. Waterworks arbitration held in Limerick 1880. Limerick Gas Company's Works acquired by Corporation. General Election. Resignation of Lord Beaconsfield. Gladstone appointed Prime Minister. Address of welcome to His Excellency, Earl Cowper, Lord Lieut. presented by the Mayor & deputation of the Corp'n. Foundn. stone of Clock tower at Dock layed by Miss O'Gorman, daughter of Mayor. Great agtn. for Reform of Land Laws thro Ireland. Michael O'Gorman, Mayor 1879 & re-elected 1880.

J. J. Cleary. Unanimously re-elected Mayor 1873. Vote by Ballot Act became law in Ireland. Opening of Graving Dock by Earl Spencer, Lord Lieut. May 14th. Over 300 citizens invited by Mayor to accompany his Excellency and Countess Spencer to Scatterry Island. Dejeuner on board steamer. Ashantee war broke out. Irish Eight won shield at Wimbledon.

Robert MacDonnell Esq. J.P. Mayor of Limerick, 1871. *Crest*. Siege and surrendered of Paris and termination of Franco-Prussian War. Visit of H. E. Earl Spencer, Lord Lt. 10 June and presentation of address at Town Hall. Presentation of address by Mayor and Corporation to Col. W. Monsell, M.P. for Co. Limerick at Tervoe, Jan. on his appointment as Postmaster-General. John MacDonnell, J.P., Father of Mayor, High Sheriff, City of Limerick 1870-1.

Alderman John R. Tinsley, J.P., Mayor, 1865. General election, Russell & Gavin re-elected for the City. £3,000 expended on sewerage—Distress among working classes and outdoor relief obtained—£500 expended on City Gaol—£500 obtained for Corkanree Embankment and work began—Ancient Treaty Stone raised on pedestal Jubilee Fountain erected in St. John's Parish. Tait Testimonial Tower begun.

Robert MacMahon, J.P., unanimously elected Mayor 1 Dec. 1862, for yr. 1863. New Church of St. Alphonsus dedicated 7th same month. Prince of Wales married 10th March 1863, & address of congratulation presented by Mayor at Marlbro' House. Mayor presented at Queen's Levee, St. James' Palace, 8 June. Slob lands of Corkanree transferred by the Crown to Corporation 20 Nov.

John Thomas MacSheehy Esq., J.P., Shannon Lawn, Mayor of Limerick for the year 1861. Presented by the citizens with a valuable silver testimonial on leaving office. Civil war broke out this year in the hitherto United States of America—Prince Consort died 14th December in this year. £1,100 collected for the purchase of fuel for the poor of the city.

Michael Robert Ryan, Esq. J.P. Mayor 1859. General election 4 May. F. W. Russell elected 3rd time, Major Gavin elected 2nd time, Members of Parliament for the city. Silver cradle presented to Mrs. Ryan, by Town Council & Corporation Officers in accordance

with ancient custom of the city, to commemorate the birth of a son and heir, on 30. January in year of mayoralty.

Thomas Kane, J.P. M.D. Mayor 1852-7. General election. Robt. Potter & Frans. Wm. Russell Esqrs. returned members for Link. Genl. Electn. statue inaugurated 15th August.

Henry O'Shea, Esq. Mayor 1855. Public fountains erected for the poor of the city.

Wm. Henry Hall. Mayor 1853. Great Munster Fair, new Corn Market & Floating Dock opened by the Earl St. Germans.

Thaddeus Mac Donnell Esqr. J.P. Mayor 1851. The Earl of Arundel and Surrey elected M.P. for the city.

Aldn. Jno Boyse J.P. Mayor 1849. Presented the Corporation Address to His Majesty at Levee Dublin. Laid the Foundation Stone of the Floating Docks. On which occasion he was presented with a silver trowel.

Thos. Walnutt, Mayor 1847. the liberator died at Genoa 15th May. Genl. Election. John O'Brien & John O'Connell, the son of the Liberator, returned.

William J. Geary, M.D., Mayor of Limerick 1844.5. First arch stone of the Abbey River Bridge laid 29th Novr. 1845.

Sir Richard Franklin, M.D. Mayor 30th September 1839,
Alderman John J. Piercy 1834.

The Honble. J. P. Vereker. 1832-1833.

Henry Rose Esq. Mayor. Year 1829.

Thomas Jervis, Esq. Mayor. 1st of October 1827.

Henry Watson Esqr. Mayor. Years 1823-1824-1825.

2ND MAYORAL CHAIN.

The secondary mayoral chain is made up of fifty-one plain gold links. It is the one generally worn by the mayor, the more important chain, on account of its weight and cumbersomeness, being retained for state occasions.

SHERIFFS' CHAINS.

Of the two sheriffs' chains one consists of 56 plain links together with one engraved link and three engraved rondels as follows: —

George Lloyd and Wm. Piercy, Sheriffs 1830.

Samuel Watson and Wm. Piercy, Sheriffs. 1833.

Richard Franklin, Sheriff 1827. 1833. George Sexton Sheriff 1833.

A. J. Watson, Sheriff 1822, 1826, 1831. Henry Mahony, Sheriff 1831.

The larger chain consists of 55 plain links as well as the following engraved links, rondels or medallions. There is no order in the affixing of the additions.

H. Mahony Sheriff 1831. A. J. Watson. Sheriff 1822, 1826, 1831.

J. P. Gaffney, Town Councillor. Sheriff 1896. Financial Relations Meeting, Earl of Dunraven in chair. Thomond Fete for the benefit of St. John's Hospital and Magdalen Asylum. Opened by Lady Emly.

Stephen O'Meara. 1888.

Robert MacDonnell, Fairhill. 1874.

John MacDonnell. Fairhill. 1876.

Thomas MacMahon Cregan. Sheriff 1892. J.P. for Clare.

Seumas F de Barra. Ard Sirram 1901. Mayor 1902.

Michael Spain. 1893. Home Rule for Ireland passed Sept. 1. 1893.

Alderman Patrick McDonnell. 1903.

Alderman Charles McDonnell. 1912-3.

In Memoriam of W. L. Stokes. Sheriff 1909-1910. died 18th April 1910.

Alderman Patrick Kenna, High Sheriff. C. H. Fitt, Under-Sheriff. 1894-5. consecration of St. John's Cathedral. 1895. Garryowen Fete. Conservative Government returned.

Patrick G. Bourke. 1891.

William M. Nolan. 1890.

Stephen Dowling. 1884-5.

W. J. O'Donnell, 1889.

Lawrence O'Keeffe. 1886.

Richard Franklin. 1827-1833. & George Sexton 1833.

Sir Thomas H. Cleeve. Visit of Members of House of Lords and Commons. 29th May 1899. Visit of Queen Victoria to Dublin 4th September 1900. Address from loyal citizens of Limerick presented at Viceregal Lodge. Knighthood conferred. Death of Queen Victoria 22nd January 1901. Accession of King Edward VII proclaimed in Limerick by High Sheriff 30th January 1901. General election Oct. 1900. Unionist Government returned.

Stephen B. Quin. 1897. 60th year of Queen Victoria's reign, 7th centenary of City of Limerick.

James O'Mara. First National High Sheriff wearing this chain. C. H. Fitt. Under-Sheriff 1887. Met Davitt in Cork on his return from America. 1st February. Meeting against coercion, 17th April. Pope's Jubilee Aug. 9th. Return of Wm. O'Brien from Canada concerning Luggacurran tenantry 18th June.