

Throwing the Dart

Fr James White

To soothe the wounded feelings of . . . litigants and to restore peace and good-fellowship among the citizens, the mayor, Thomas Smyth, on the 5th September, 1764, invited all the populace to ride round the franchises of the city and the Liberties of Limerick. The procession is thus described by Father James White . . . the accomplished annalist of the diocese: —

Servants, bailiffs, and mayor's sergeants proceeded on horseback with blue cockades in their hats, the bands of music belonging to the army, the sword-bearer and water-bailiff with their proper ensigns, the two sheriffs with their rods, the mayor richly dressed, with the rod in his hand, rode; after them followed the rest of the corporation, John Quinn, Esq., carrying the blue corporation standard; and then followed numbers of other gentlemen well mounted, all having blue cockades in their hats. Then fourteen of the trades or corporations rode after them, each trade according to the antiquity of their charters, and each was headed by their respective masters and wardens. Each trade had a standard according to the colour of their trade, with the arms of the trade in the centre, and cockades peculiar to the trade, and after their masters and wardens followed the principal of each trade well dressed, well mounted, and accompanied with drums and music. On Thursday they rode from the King's Island through the city and visited the south-east of the Liberties of the city. On Friday in like manner visited the south-west Liberties, returned through the city and visited the north Liberties but never broke down any walls or regulated any encroachments. On Saturday the corporation and the aforesaid trades with their standards and cockades in their hats walked with the mayor from the square behind St John's Church to St Mary's Church, and returned with him in the same order to the said square, where he treated them with wine and had the masters and wardens of each trade to dine with him that day. The Thursday of the following week the mayor, sheriffs and the rest of the corporation in the King's yachts went down the river in order to assert and make good his right of being admiral of the River Shannon. When they arrived at Scatterry Island the mayor held a court of Admiralty, and the next day set sail for the mouth of the Shannon, where he threw a dart into the sea to point out the limits of his jurisdiction; at the same time it happened that a sloop of war entered the river, whom the mayor compelled to lower her colours and her fore top-sail in acknowledgement of his power of Admiralty in the said River Shannon. The mayor and corporation returned to Limerick on Saturday with the ringing of bells, etc.