Sarsfield Bridge

The westward expansion of Limerick and the growth of its commerce made the Shannon and the improvement of the harbour facilities a vital necessity. Accordingly, the people of the City petitioned Parliament for a new bridge and floating dock.

The decision to build the bridge was taken in 1823 when the Wellesley Bridge Act was passed at Westminster.

The bridge was modelled on the Pont Nevaly which spans the Seine. Its foundation stone was laid in 1824 and it was completed seven years later. In 1883 the Corporation held a meeting and changed the name of the bridge from Wellesley to Sarsfield and erected a plaque in the centre of the east parapet giving the new name.

Thomond Bridge

King John caused a bridge to be erected about 1210 A.D. As our annals agree that King John's Castle was of stone we can assume that the bridge was of stone also. It was very narrow and so could not be used for vehicular traffic. All goods coming over this bridge into the City were subject to tolls. The money thus collected went to keep the bridge in repair.

There was a fortified gatehouse at the city end and a castellated gateway or drawbridge at the seventh arch (there were fourteen arches) and this was called Thomondgate. That gate led out to the North of Munster or Thomond. Although this bridge cost only £30.00 it lasted 600 years. It was taken down in 1838 and the new one erected on the same site in 1840 at a cost of £10,000.

Ball's Bridge

A charter was granted in 1340 for the building of Balls Bridge. Irish people call it Drogheda Maol i.e. the bald or bare bridge, meaning one without battlements or parapets. This bridge connects English Town or Irish Town. After the sieges of Limerick Houses were built on each side of it. But in 1775 a high tide damaged the bridge and several of the houses fell.

The present Baal's Bridge was erected in 1831 by the direction of Thomas Spring Rice.
Matthew Bridge

For some time before its erection there was a ferry between Bank Place and Quay Lane. In 1762 a bridge of three arches was erected in place of the Ferry: But it was dangerous to traffic so was re-built between 1844 and 1864 and sometimes referred to as New Bridge. It was however called Matthew Bridge in honour of Father Theobald Matthew, the great apostle of Temperance.

Athlunkard Bridge

Athlunkard Bridge spans the Shannon at the City’s North Eastern boundary. The building of Athlunkard Bridge, which is of five arches was commenced in June 1826 and finished in December 1830 at a cost of £7,000. It had a toll gate at the City side.

It is also the link between the counties of Limerick and Clare. In this connection, it is worth noting that Sarsfield and Thomond Bridges do not connect the adjoining counties. They connect what is territorially Co. Limerick. It is close to the ford which King William’s army crossed in 1690 and 1691.

Park Bridge.

Park Bridge was built about the year 1798. It was a plain structure of three arches, which crossed the Abbey river a short distance above the Abbey Slip. Park Bridge was originally a private entrance to the corbally and Park Estate of Colonel Maunsell of Tervoe. The only approach to the bridge from the City side was by Sir Harry’s Mall, as Athlunkard Street was not constructed until 1824. Park Bridge was demolished and replaced by Bishop O’Dwyer Bridge in 1931.

O’Dwyer Bridge

O’Dwyer Bridge spans the Abbey River and connects the Kings Island with the Corbally and Park district of the City. It is named, as it's inscription tells, after a former Bishop of Limerick. Whatever may be its structural excellence, its appearance is not enhanced by the strictly functional concrete. It was built in 1931.