

HISTORY: MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES PROJECT TO BRING HOME THE BACON ON LIMERICK INDUSTRY

# Pigtown to be focus of new archival research project

ALAN OWENS  
e-mail: alan.owens@limerickleader.ie  
Twitter: @alanowens\_limk

**A NEW heritage project will examine the impact of the bacon industry on Limerick.**

The city's lengthy association with the industry, which was a key employer for over a century, will be examined by the Museum and Archives, in tandem with MIC.

The public are being invited to an open night in City Hall on December 3 to share their memories of and connections to the bacon factories as part of the project team's social research on the industry.

City archivist Jacqui Hayes explained that the bacon industry was "part of the fabric" of the city, as pigs were not only delivered but also killed in the city centre.

"The bacon factories were critical to the city's economy by the turn of the century and were Limerick's biggest employer. The factories also provided cheap food for the



Bacon industry: Above, pigs on Parnell Street circa 1900, from the Ludlow Collection

city's populace for many decades and pigs heads and crubeens were essential to the Limerick diet. Many Limerick people kept pigs in their backyards."

As well as Shaw's on Mul-

**The bacon industry was part of the fabric of Limerick**  
Jacqui Hayes, archivist

grave Street, there was also Matterson's and O'Mara's on Roches Street and Denny's of William Street and Mulgrave Street. Such was the fame of the produce that English bacon

curers recruited butchers and Limerick ham was sold at a premium internationally.

Researcher Ruth Guiry said the open night would "offer an opportunity to

former workers to meet and share their memories. We are keen to capture the heritage of this industry which tells us so much about the history of Limerick as a hive of industrial activity".



The O'Byrne Brothers shop c 1920, courtesy Limerick Museum



A worker at O'Mara's bacon factory in the 1960s