

# THE DISTRICT OF THOMONDGATE

**T**homondgate takes its name from the ancient territory of Tuath Mhumha (North Munster), an area still well defined in the diocese of Killaloe. Long after the county system was introduced by the Normans, County Clare was known as 'Thomond'. The name 'Clare' was intended as a memorial to Richard de Clare, who, in turn, took his name from the delightful village of that name in Suffolk.

Before the building of John's Gate in 1494, Thomond Gate was the most important portal in the city. It was the gateway to the western part of the country and was well protected by the Shannon River and King John's Castle.

How prophetic the words of Tom Glynn's famous anthem, 'Old Thomondgate is nigh well gone from what it used to be'. If he were alive today, he would surely have more reason for his lamentation. The face of the old place is undergoing a radical transformation. In a few years, some of the road patterns will

BY KEVIN HANNAN

be the only links to connect us with the Thomondgate of yesteryear. Almost everything else will have been obliterated. The Quarry Road has disappeared; the Cross Road has all but lost its two rows of early nineteenth century cottages, and the High Road is slowly giving way to a modern format. Only the New Road (230 years old at the time of writing) retains some of its former character: but, like other close-knit communities, Thomondgate has retained some, at least, of its historical connections and folklore.

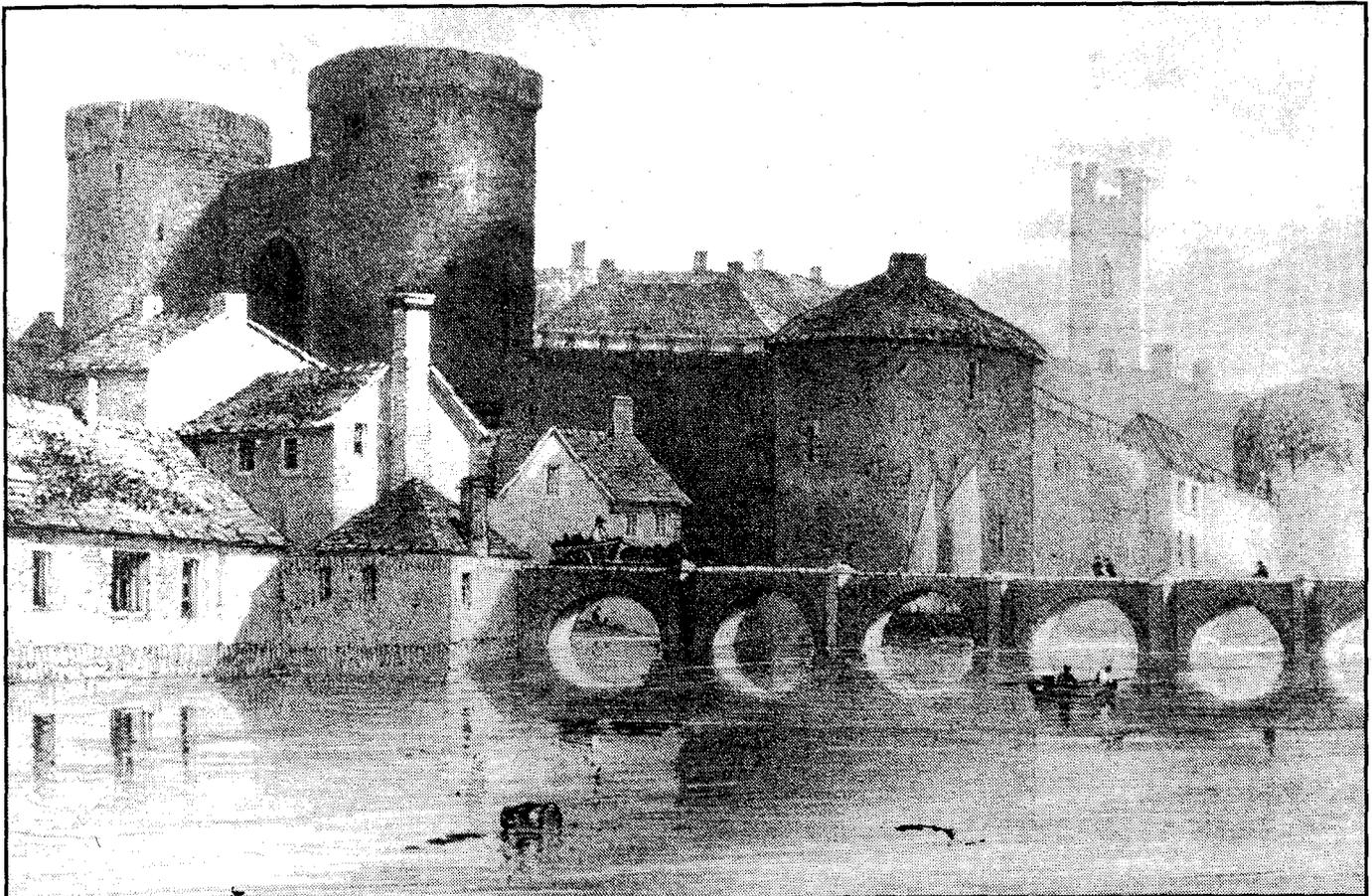
## THE CHURCH

St. Munchin's church, a well known landmark by the river, is likely to stand through the next century, and well into

the one after. It was built in 1922 close to the site of the little penal church, which had been erected in 1774 and which, in turn, had replaced the crumbling old mass-house in which the people of Thomondgate often worshipped at the hazard of their lives and freedom. The old parish church of Killeely was in ruin at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

## 'SODACAKES'

While the people of St. Mary's parish had some initial difficulties in accepting those who settled in the Island Field as bona fide residents of the 'Parish', the people of Thomondgate made little or no objection to admitting the 'settlers' in Killeely in 1941 as 'Sodacakes'. Up to the middle of the last century, the people of Thomondgate were known as 'Munchins' and thereafter as 'Sodacakes'. Tom Glynn noted this in his anthem, 'Dear Old Thomondgate': 'Some people call us "Munchins", others call us "Sodacakes".'



*Old Thomond Bridge and King John's Castle.*

Of all the stories of the origin of this strange name, I find the following the most plausible. In the old days, the housewives of Thomondgate were very proud of their baking talents and were wont to exhibit their best efforts in their open front windows during summer time, ostensibly to cool the cakes but, at the same time, showing off their skills and their prosperity, especially if there were a number of cakes on display.

## THE WEAVERS

There was no mistaking the meaning of the names the weavers of Thomondgate carried for over sixty years after about 1770 – 'Warpers' and 'Winders'. This was the time when home-weaving was the main occupation of the families of the district – an arduous avocation that brought with it modest prosperity. Besides the weavers, an army of workers was engaged in preparing the raw flax for spinning; this entailed harvesting, washing, scutching and bleaching. The latter treatment was usually carried out on fairly level areas adjoining streams or small rivers and were known as 'bleaches', or bleaching greens. The bleaching area mainly associated with Thomondgate was situated in the townland of Cappantymore, in the parish of Meelick, and is still known as the 'Bleach'. This romantic spot was frequented by the people of Thomondgate for two hundred years as a recreational and picnic area. Flax was also bleached along the banks of the Avondoun River (Captain Kane's Creek), near the Longpavement.

The trade was finally wiped out in 1835 as a result of competition from England. The end was sudden, although not altogether unexpected. At that time, the Limerick Corporation voted fifty pounds towards the travelling expenses of those who wished to go to England to continue working at the trade. A large number of Thomondgate weavers availed of this opportunity, as did many from Garryowen, where the effects of the tragedy were felt with equal severity.

This loss of the weaving trade was really history repeating itself. Shortly after the Williamite occupation of 1691, Dutch weavers introduced the art of weaving to Limerick, especially to Garryowen and Thomondgate. This trade involved the weaving of woollen thread into serges and friezes, and was carried on mainly by Protestant families, as, under the new Penal Laws, Catholics were not allowed much more than was necessary to keep them alive. At that time, as the historian Maurice Lenihan tells us, the weavers and combers were the strongest trade guild in Limerick.

The weaving trade flourished to such an extent in Ireland that parliament, pressurised by the English weavers, introduced an act increasing the duty on



*'Dear, old Thomondgate', from a drawing by P. O Ceallachain.*

woollen goods exported from Ireland. This was the swan-song of the Irish trade. The manufacturers, predominantly Protestant and facing poverty, 'threatened to transfer their allegiance if they did not obtain protection'. At this, some measure of relief was given, but the trade in Thomondgate died out after a short time. In the whole country – at that time with a population of less than one million – Sir Robert Southwell stated that 30,000 weavers were in a state of absolute want, if not of starvation.

## THE FISHERMEN

The only other home industry which flourished in Thomondgate was fishing. In the 1850s, six boats fished out of Barrack Lane, as many more out of the Strand. In those days, Barrack Lane was a mini-Claddagh, with every cottage tenanted by a fisherman and his family. The lane was a fairly long boreen before the New Road cut through it in 1757. Tom Glynn marked the imaginary liquidation of its feline population in his rousing 'My Dog Brann', a clever piece of doggerel which sets out the story of an errant canine who '... devoured all the cats in auld Barrack Lane'.

The Wallace family were the last to take a boat from Barrack Lane to the

fishing grounds in the Shannon Estuary, and Paddy King is the last solitary representative of the Strand fishermen.

## EARLY DAYS

Some years ago, I came across a document which described the action of the people of Thomondgate in assisting a number of fatherless Protestant families who had been burned out of their homes in the Meelick area. (The menfolk had probably been murdered). At least one of these families had been turned away from Limerick Castle in Mary Street by Mayor Dominic Fanning, where the desperate plight of the mother and children had driven them in the hope of exciting the sympathy of a fellow-Christian. This was in 1646, when the Confederates held the city. It was a virtuous act by the people of Thomondgate, at a time when helping Protestants was regarded as treachery. It will be recalled that Fanning was hanged by the Cromwellians five years later. Our school histories told us that he was a 'good and saintly man'.

There may be still families in Thomondgate who are descended from the Gaelic stock who were squeezed out of the old city after the Norman occupation and who settled on the Clare side of the Shannon. Most of the other

displaced citizens settled in the southern suburb, which was afterwards known as the Irishtown.

Before the city was besieged by General Ireton, those living in the suburbs were brought inside the walls for their protection. The homes of the inhabitants of Garryowen and Singland were demolished to deny shelter to the besiegers – a kind of scorched earth policy that caused great hardship; but the protection of the river saved the homes of Thomondgate, and kept them standing for almost 40 years. Then William of Orange besieged the city. Once again, Garryowen and the scattered cottages of Park and Singland were razed to the ground, and, on this occasion, Thomondgate suffered the same fate. We are fortunate in having a first-hand account of the destruction of Garryowen and Thomondgate from one of the Williamite scribes, John Stephens:

*Though the buildings of the suburbs were not for the most part equal to those within the walls, yet all these at our first coming, except that small part about St. Francis Abbey in the Island, were laid level with the ground for the better defence of the place, and all the gardens and orchards utterly destroyed.*

Thomondgate was restored again after the Treaty and, in due course, was to have a constant remainder of that fateful event set up on a pedestal beside Thomond Bridge.

Originally, Thomondgate had one great street – the High Road – and two smaller roads running from that to the river. The nearest thoroughfare to the bridge was named the Cross Road, after the New Road was laid out in 1757. The other was known as the Quarry Road, after the limestone quarry at the New Road end. The quarry at Altamira opened afterwards. This yielded a special type of stone, which was much in demand for burnishing and sharpening metal. Up to 1847, all the stone quarried there was exported to England.

## JOHN BUCHANAN

Of the few eighteenth century houses in Thomondgate, perhaps the most notable is the 5 bay, 3 storey, gable-ended house built of rough cut stone close to Thomond Bridge. This fine old building is reputed to have been the home of John Buchanan, the first to organise a regular coach service between Limerick and Dublin. This was the first service of its kind anywhere in Ireland, and was set up as a commercial enterprise that survived all the difficulties that such a revolutionary undertaking entailed, not the least of which was the danger of encountering highwaymen on the long, dark road.

Buchanan's headquarters were at the

Head Inn, Cornwallis (now Gerald Griffin) Street, where many of the famous theatrical celebrities performing at the nearby Heapey's Theatre stayed. This building was afterwards the home of the poet John Francis O'Donnell; the reconstructed house is now the home of the Griffin funeral undertaking family.

The journey to Dublin took four days, and those who may be inclined to complain about faulty independent suspensions or sticky shock-absorbers should give a thought to the poor tortured eighteenth century coach-passengers. The coach, known as the Fly, was heavy and cumbersome, and it was some time before improvements were made. A new and much lighter coach – the Balloon – was later introduced, and a much less cumbersome and complicated system of harness lent further refinement to the venture. Perhaps one of the best improvements in the service resulted from the construction of the road between Lock Quay and Pennywell Lane (Clare Street), and afterwards in the continuation of this road to Singland Cross. These improvements cut out the great roundabout route to Nenagh, through Broad Street, John Street, Mary Street, Nicholas Street, Old Thomondgate, New Road, Monabraher, Parteen, Killaloe and on to Nenagh.

These changes cut the journey to two days, and finally a one day trip was achieved; but the passengers had to be on the road with the lark and were not in ideal shape as they staggered onto a Dublin street around midnight, cramped and bleary-eyed.

## THE DISTILLERY

Perhaps the most important event in the history of Thomondgate was the establishment of the distillery towards the end of the eighteenth century. The buildings covered six acres, and the enterprise gave employment to 75 workers for more than a century, and produced 300,000 gallons of the best 'Pot-Still Real Irish Whiskey' annually. Inspectors visiting the distillery in 1887 described it as '... probably the finest undertaking of its kind in the four kingdoms'. They remarked upon the excellence of the malting and barley lofts, the malting floors, kilns (4), mash house and mill, with its six pairs of stones, and the 30 horse-power steamengine which provided the power. They also described the cooperage and the shops of the carpenters, engineers, coppersmiths and brass-fitters.

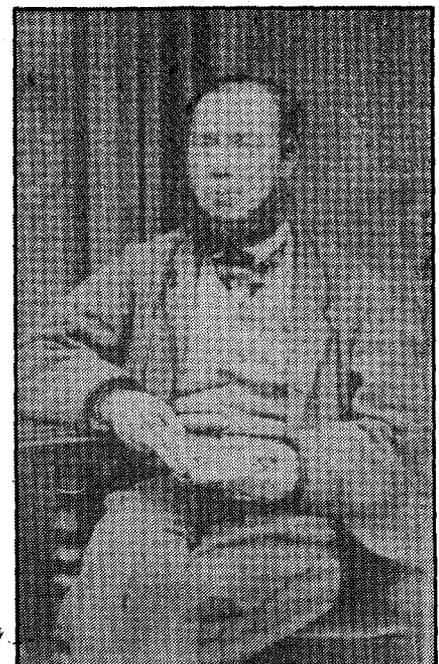
In the 1860s, the complex came into the part-ownership of Archibald Walker, a Scottish entrepreneur who also owned the Adelphi Distillery in Glasgow and the Vauxhall Distillery in Liverpool. The Limerick manager was H.M. Lefroy. We find a notice in the local papers, a few years afterwards, announcing that the



Dr. Sylvester O'Halloran.

distillery was being managed by Walker's partner, W.B. Langwill, and that Lefroy was no longer in the company's employment – a nice way of announcing that he had been fired. Walker died at his home in Crown Terrace, Downhill, Glasgow, in 1880.

Production at the distillery was maintained uninterrupted until into the twentieth century, except for a short period after the big fire which damaged the premises in 1880. In 1904, the budget duties on whiskey were increased. With ever-increasing difficulty, the business was carried on until the years of the First World War, when the excessive duties nullified any hope of a revival of the



An early picture of Michael Hogan, the Bard of Thomond.

trade. The distillery went out of production shortly afterwards and finally closed in the early 1920s. In 1929, the buildings reverted to the ground landlord, the Earl of Limerick. Thus, Thomondgate lost an industry which had given good employment to its people for more than a century. The excessive duties that brought about its demise would not have really mattered if the Limerick whiskey had found a market at home; but the 'patriotic' Irish allowed it to go the same road that Halpin's Tea was later to go.

It is not generally known that the well-known saying 'Happy as Larry' may have had its origin in Thomondgate. Larry, who lived in the High Road, was a cooper employed at the distillery. He was such a happy and jovial character, always smiling and saluting everyone he met on his way to and from work, that his name became a byword. His surname is unknown.

## DR. SYLVESTER O'HALLORAN

One of the most illustrious sons of the parish of Killeely was Sylvester O'Halloran. The great man was born on the New Year's Eve of 1728, and became an outstanding ophthalmologist and surgeon. He was a noted antiquarian and historian, being the author of a monumental *History of Ireland*. He is credited with creating the germ of the idea of a College of Surgeons, and, when that great institution was founded, Sylvester was elected one of its first members.

With a colleague, Giles Vandeleur, he founded Limerick's first hospital in St. Francis Abbey, where he made revolutionary advances in the study of head injuries. In this work, he was greatly assisted by the numerous faction fighters, who guaranteed him a constant supply of broken craniums!

Sylvester O'Halloran died at his residence in Merchant's Quay on 11 August, 1807, and the following death notice appeared in *The Dublin Journal*, on Saturday, 15 August, of that year.

*Died - On Tuesday night at Merchant's Quay, Limerick, in the 80th. year of his age, Sylvester O'Halloran, Esq. M.R.I.A. and Member of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. A gentleman of great eminence, not only as an author in his professional line, but in politics and history. Dr. O'Halloran's fame has spread itself all over the Continent in consequence of his surgical works, and his name has been mentioned by the professions with the greatest respect. At home he was a most cheerful and pleasing companion and will be long held in remembrance by those who have enjoyed his society and intimacy.*

He was buried in the family vault in

Killeely churchyard. Also interred here are his wife (Mary O'Casey), who died in 1782, his eldest son, Michael, who died as a result of a fall from a horse, his only daughter, Catherine, who died at an early age, and his baby son, Thomas. The tomb was refurbished more than a decade ago by St. Senan's Historical Society, and the following epitaph inscribed thereon:

*Sylvester O'Halloran  
1728                      1807*

*Patriot                      Historian  
Surgeon                    Antiquary*

*His country's honour and good name  
ever found in him a ready  
and unflinching champion.*

## FR. JOHN KENYON

Another noted patriot was John Kenyon, who was born at No. 5, Old Thomondgate in 1812. His father, Patrick Kenyon, was a stonecutter, and supervised the ornamental stonework during the construction of Sarsfield Bridge.

John was ordained in 1836 for the diocese of Killaloe - it is not known why he was not ordained for his own diocese, but the late Monsignor Michael Moloney suggested that it may have been over some family affiliations. His undying fame rests on his courage and sincerity as one of the leaders of the Young Irelanders. With John Mitchell and John Martin, he made up the historic alliance of 'the Three Johns'. His denunciation of the law that condemned a million of his fellow-countrymen to death by disease and starvation, and his avowed leadership of the Young Irelanders in armed rebellion, caused his suspension by his bishop, Dr. Kennedy. This was to be the turning point in his career, a choice of leading the Young Irelanders into battle or following his clerical vocation. He chose the latter, and no one will ever know how difficult this decision was for him - the proud priest who was never known to flinch in the face of danger. He was to intimate that if a rebellion took place, he would be found in the ranks with his old friends.

Fr. Kenyon died in 1858 while making a retreat in the Christian Brothers house in Ennistymon. He left his father's houses in Thomondgate to the Christian Brothers, who received the rents of this property until 1937, when it was demolished to make way for the O'Dwyer Villas housing estate. His only memorials are a simple slab over his grave in the church in Templeberry, an avenue called after him in Killeely and a street in Nenagh; but the old warrior, Charles Kickham, did not forget 'Father John', in his writings. Recently, the Limerick Civic Trust erected a plaque to his memory in old Thomondgate.

Despite many protests, his house in Templeberry was demolished in 1988 to make way for a new 'development'.

## MICHAEL HOGAN

One could hardly write an article on Thomondgate without referring to Michael Hogan, the self-styled Bard of Thomond. He was a popular hero who had many admirers, but few benefactors. His witty epigrams were on everyone's lips and were recited in pubs all over the city. To the people of Thomondgate, Hogan was the greatest litterateur ever to come out of the city. More polished performers, like Gerald Griffin and John Francis O'Donnell, were unknown to most of them, but Hogan, the rumbustious versifier, who came from the teeming working classes, was their hero. This was their poet who had emerged from the floury turmoil of the Lock Mills to watch-and-chain respectability in a few years. Even if he sometimes pretended not to know some of his former workmates, he might be excused: perhaps he thought it would not go down too well for a poet, whose patrons included Lord Adare and the Marchioness of Queensberry, to be seen to be making 'too much free' with the *hoi polloi*.

Though there is some doubt about the date and place of the Bard's birth, it is generally accepted that he was born at the New Road in Thomondgate on 1 November, 1832. This is the time and place given by the Bard himself, but other authorities have expressed their doubts about this date. In the course of a lecture at the Limerick Technical Institute in 1935, the well known authority on Hogan, A.J. Eakins, stated that the Bard was born in Thomondgate on 31 March, 1828.

The late A.J. O'Halloran failed to find a record of his baptism in any of the city churches for either of these dates and, thinking that the poet's parents may have been residing in one of the Co. Clare parishes adjoining Thomondgate, he unsuccessfully searched the registers at Cratloe and Parteen. However, it was not uncommon to have such omissions in parish registers at that time, as babies were often baptised at home, and the keeping of proper registers was sometimes slipshod.

The poet's father, Arthur Hogan, was a struggling wheelwright and general carpenter, and his mother, according to the Bard himself, was '... descended from the Cromwellian settlers of Co. Clare, and was like them, ill-tempered, tyrannical, hardhearted, spiteful, covetous, treacherous and fond of backbiting her husband and his relatives'. Unfortunately, we never got the mother's side of the story. We only have her son's continual condemnation of her, and even his wife, did not escape

a long-lasting and uncalled for public lambasting.

Even if he did not disclose, in his autobiography, his hatred of almost everyone he ever met, his work reveals, here and there, his inherent bitterness and animosity towards those who had more of the world's goods than himself.

He was a born poet, but his work was trammelled both by a cantankerous temperament and a stunted elementary education: but judging by the strength and range of his vocabulary, his education began – and continued – long after he left school. Considering the monumental results he achieved with such poor preparation for a literacy life, it is a pity that his potentialities were never fully realised.

The story of his life – too long to be set out here – is a sad succession of frustrations, disillusionments and disappointments. He found poetry a simple commodity to produce, but very difficult to sell, and many of the citizens who gloried in his clever lampoons and epigrams were too poor to buy anything.

The happiest years of his life were spent in the garden of Thomond Cottage (now Whelan's public house). He was in occupation there for nine years, from 1870 until he was turfed out on foot of pressure from his creditors – all due, according to the Bard, to the fiddling of his 'trusted' barman, 'Whopper' O'Brien.

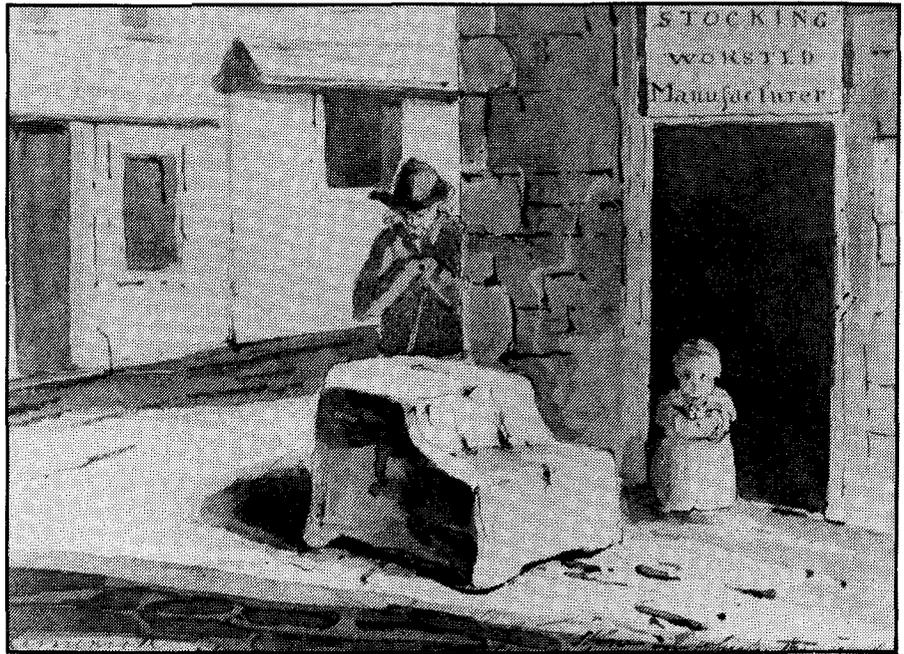
His trip to America in 1886 was intended to arrest his flagging fortunes and establish his financial independence for good. Again, he was doomed to disappointment: he learned that nothing short of live leprechauns was marketable in New York. He also found the Yanks far more insensible to the charms of his over-embellished war poems than the 'rascally Irish'.

Writing from New York, he described the Irish as

*... the meanest pack of dogs in America. They deceive and betray each other more than they do at home. Every nationality here, Dutch, Jews, Germans, Danes and Italians, stand loyally to each other but the rascally Irish. They are the only black spot on the human page, and such of them that have anything of the world's goods above another to boast of, their staggering insolence is something abominable.*

Ironically, it was a 'rascally Irish' family that maintained him in indolence and ease for most of his three years in New York, and it was some compassionate Limerick citizen who provided for his passage home.

With his ever-increasing disappointments, and surrounded by 'enemies' on all sides (everyone was his enemy), he embraced every provocation and incentive to anger, and released the venom, long engendered, in his satires. In these works he assuaged at least some of his frustrations by lampooning those on higher perches than himself.



*'Long before the stone was raised on its pedestal, it rested on the footpath at the corner of old Thomondgate, beside Murty Egan's tavern'.*

However, because of its scurrility and invective, the poetry became sheer doggerel.

The most endearing aspect of the Bard's character was his extraordinary ability to rise above the sea of bitterness that enveloped him so completely to produce works of a singular degree of elegance and grace, and with great depth of emotion and sincerity. While the woes of his domestic life are vividly reflected in much of his work, verses of the sweetest beauty show up like tulips in a garden of weeds.

In reality, Hogan had only one enemy – himself. He tells us that he lived the years of his life in solitude in the midst of a crowd. He was to join a far greater crowd in 1899, from the cellar in Rutland Street where he spent the last years of his life.

## THE TEMPERANCE HALL

The old Temperance Hall on the High Road, long-time meeting place for the men and boys of Thomondgate, figured in a dramatic incident at the time of the Clare elections of 1852. This was the time of open voting, when those few entitled to vote were bullied and intimidated by their landlords and their agents, and made to vote, on some occasions, on pain of eviction. Eighteen freeholders who had agreed to vote for Colonel Vandeleur were assembled in Meelick by Henry Keane, brother of the notorious Marcus Keane, in the home of a bailiff named Collins. A number of Liberal supporters from the city raided the house and brought the freeholders to the Temperance Hall in Thomondgate, where it was said by the Vandeleur supporters that

they were imprisoned, despite the closeness of the police barrack, which was right across the road from the hall. In the meantime, Keane sought the assistance of a magistrate, John Delmege, of Castle Park, who immediately harnessed the help of Captain Eager of the 31st. Regiment, who, with twenty or thirty soldiers, accompanied Keane to the Temperance Hall, where a great crowd had gathered. But, as they were preparing to force an entrance, the door was opened from the inside and the freeholders walked out. The whole party then left for the hard slog over the Windy Gap to Sixmilebridge. The seat for Clare was won by Sir John Fitzgerald, the best of a bad lot where the common people were concerned. The other candidate who contested the election with Fitzgerald and Crofton Vandeleur was Cornelius O'Brien.

A sad climax to this affair was the murder of five people in Sixmilebridge on the following day. The same John C. Delmege gave an order to his troops to fire into the assembled peaceful crowd in the square. Although Delmege denied he gave the order to fire, the following verdict was recorded by the coroner at the inquest into the deaths of the five persons killed:

*We are satisfied that John C. Delmege, J.P., James Postings, John Gleeson, William Barrrens, John Thompson, John Dwyer, James Shorten, Thomas Larkin and John Carter, soldiers of the 31st. Regiment, are guilty of the murder of Jeremiah Frawley.*

They were later charged, but, of course, acquitted.

The name Delmege was known and spoken of with disgust and odium long before this incident and long after it.

There were no tears shed by the people of Thomondgate at the passing of the last of the breed from Castle Park, but the Limerick Corporation's Street Naming Committee, in their blissful ignorance, saw fit to have the family commemorated in an estate in Moyross!

## WRITERS AND SPORTSMEN

Thomondgate has produced many notable writers, sportsmen and characters too numerous to document them all here: suffice to say that the cultural, social, political and commercial life of the city has had many able representatives from 'across the bridge'. In the field of sport, Treaty Sarsfields and Thomond have shown themselves to be forces to be reckoned with down the years, while in the earlier part of the century, the name of the Irish champion handballer, J.J. Bowles, was known in every town and village in the country.

Thomondgate can be proud, too, of the late Dick Naughton, who will be remembered for his valuable contribution to our study and understanding of local history while serving as a journalist with the *Limerick Chronicle*. His splendid articles were much appreciated by his many admirers, and his 'Memory of the Past' selections are now treasures in many a scrapbook.

We must not neglect the beautiful poetry of T.J. Dunbar. His long out of print book, *A Garland of Verse*, is now a collector's item. Tom Glynn, the gentleman, poet and folklorist who loved Thomondgate so well, has left us some of his gentle poetic musings, including the evergreen anthem 'Dear Old Thomondgate'. The man and his work will never be forgotten in his native place.

## THE TREATY STONE

A big question mark hangs over Thomondgate's and Limerick's most



*Fr. John Kenyon.*

famous monument – the Treaty Stone. Was the Treaty of Limerick really signed on the great, big stone on the pedestal in Thomondgate? The answer is still the same – we have no definite evidence.

From the beginning, it was said that the historic document was signed at Redgate, not far from Thomond Park. Wherever the signing took place, it is highly unlikely that the leaders of two opposing armies would be in want of a table on such an important occasion.

Even the Celtic gift of improvisation would hardly account for the use of a large stone to complete a document on which the destiny of a nation depended.

Then there is the story of Miss Dobbin, of Cork, who was said to have had in her possession the table on which the treaty was signed. This lady died in 1914, and the table was auctioned off in a clearance sale on her property, and has not been heard of since. Some well-known local antiquarians, including the late Dermot Gleeson, were afterwards impressed by the claims for this table.

Long before the stone was raised on its pedestal, it rested on the footpath at the corner of old Thomondgate, beside Murty Egan's tavern, 'The Black Bull'. It was used as a mounting-block – a device in common use throughout the country by those travelling on horseback. One illustration shows the stone as it was in August, 1836. This is an important picture because it gives the size of the stone in relation to an old man and a child, and also shows a weaver's shop alongside. It will be noted that the present shape of the stone bears only a little resemblance to its former shape; in fact, it is little more than half its original size – the missing parts having been dispersed as souvenirs all over the United States and other countries in tiny chips.

The Treaty Stone was placed on a pedestal beside Thomond Bridge in 1865, during the mayoralty of John Rickard Tinsley. Because of damage to the pedestal from passing traffic, the monument was dismantled in October last year and has now been re-erected on a more secure site, a short distance further along Clancy's Strand.

Whatever may be said about its role, the stone has assumed an importance all of its own; whether it had any connection with the signing of the treaty or not is now of little concern: the monument has come to symbolise the broken treaty and a century and a half of persecution by the English. With the historic and picturesque backdrop of Thomond Bridge and King John's Castle, the Treaty Stone still presents a scene to gladden the hearts of Limerick folk at home and abroad.



*The High Road, Thomondgate, in the 1960s.*