

O'Brien's youth was very Bohemian. Although educated at Trinity he never graduated, and on receiving a legacy of £8,000 he went to London, where he ran through the money in two years. With no money left, he turned to journalism and spent several years on the London newspapers before emigrating.

NICHOLAS THOMAS ARTHUR.

Nicholas Arthur is included among the Worthies of Thomond, not so much for his fame as for the fact that he was a typical Limerick merchant of the fifteenth century, and his life gives us many intimate details of the Limerick of that period.

He was born about the year 1405, and followed his family's trade in "being engaged in respectable mercantile transactions." He was an exporter of horses of "generous" breed, hounds, falcons, scarlet mantles, and otterskins; martens, squirrels and other soft-furred animals; pillars and tables of polished and variegated marble.

In 1428 his vessel was raided by the pirate subjects of the Duke of Brittany, he was robbed of 700 marks worth of goods, his ship was taken and sold off at St. Malo, and he himself was imprisoned at Mont san Michele. He was released only on payment of 400 marks ransom. He appealed to the King of England and was allowed to take reprisals from the Duke's subjects to the value of £5,332 13s. 4d., and these he "bravely, energetically and perseveringly levied even to the last farthing." As a further sign of royal favour, Henry VI. granted him the right to construct a weir for his own use at Farranshone.

He was the progenitor of a prominent Limerick family. He married Katherine Skiddy of Cork, an immensely wealthy woman, and had six sons. Four of these became Mayor, one Sheriff and one,

Thomas, Bishop of Limerick. Nicholas himself was Mayor seven times, and for a long period held the custodianship of the Castle of Limerick, and with it, the military control of the city.

In return for these royal favours—or in expectation of them—he sent Henry gifts “suitable to his rank, falcons and large dogs fit for hunting, black marble sculptured with a team of leopards, Spanish steeds ambling with equal steps, pearls which Eleaunius had produced.

“At length, yielding to fatal necessity, having made his will on the vigil of the nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, A.D., 1465, and having received the Holy Viaticum of Our Lord’s Body, and being fortified by the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, he fell asleep in the Lord. Katherine survived him full ten years and seven days, devoted to works of piety and mercy, and at length departed this life for a better on the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, on the 13th Kalends of October in the year of Our Lord’s Incarnation, 1475; and her body was laid with that of her husband in the ancestral monument at the left wing of the altar of St. Catherine, Virgin and Martyr, in the Church of St. Mary’s, Limerick.”

EDMOND SEXTON PERY.

Edmond Sexton Pery, Speaker in the Irish House of Commons, was born in Limerick on 9th of April, 1719, the son of Rev. Stackpole Pery, of Stackpole Court, County Clare. Through his grandmother, he was descended from Edmund Sexton, who was granted so much religious property in Limerick by Henry VIII, and through him, Pery inherited the Prior’s land, outside the Walls of Limerick, now known as Newtown Pery.

Pery was a barrister by profession and was elected Member of Parliament for Limerick City in