The Organisation of Pre-Railway Public Transport in Counties Limerick and Clare

PATRICK F. WALLACE

While attempts at organising public transport services on a local level may have been made in Dublin as early as 1688, it was not until the end of the first quarter of the eighteenth century that the first stage coaches commenced running from Dublin to provincial centres, Kinnead, Drogheda and Kilkenny being the earliest. These were slow-moving, cumbersome vehicles which were so badly suspended that the unfortunate inmate could feel every vibration on the contemporary pre-macadamised road surface. An improvement in road surfaces was accompanied by advances in coach-building techniques as the century wore on; these, coupled with a concomitant improvement in stage facilities and a reduction in their distances from one another contributed to make stage coaches the popular public transport conveyance on the main roads to and from Dublin in the decades before and after 1800. They were joined, towards the end of the eighteenth century by a fleet of mail coaches which ran daily, placed much emphasis on speed and adhered to strict time schedules. Together, the stage and mail coach effected what was a revolution on Irish roads in that they provided a communications network which made the country much 'smaller' than it had been before. They were, however, rarely viable on the less populous and prosperous cross-routes where they were soon threatened by the economically more appropriate jaunting-car.

The present paper attempts to describe the growth of horse-drawn public transport services in Limerick and Clare during the century or so before the establishment of the railways. Happily, the material divides itself into three main categories of study which will be tackled and presented in roughly chronological order: (1) the establishment of transport services between Limerick city and Dublin; (2) the growth and development of public transport facilities between Limerick and Ennis and the larger towns of Munster; (3) the organisation of public transport services on a local level linking the small towns of counties Limerick and Clare.

While the first Irish stage coaches commenced running from Dublin to Kilkenny,

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1 Edward A. MacLysaght, *Irish Life in the Seventeenth Century*, Dublin, 1948, p. 244. Place of publication of all subsequent references is Dublin unless otherwise stated.
2 John Watson, *The Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanack*, 1737, p. 5, represents the earliest extant record of these earliest stage coaches. While the earlier almanacs, including those published by Watson since 1730, do not include coach schedules, it is probably fair to assume that the three coaches in question were established before 1736, when the data for the 1737 almanac would have been collected, and probably as early as 1730. This almanac was published for over one hundred years, the head of the publishing house at various times being John Watson, Samuel Watson, and John Watson Stewart. It will be hereafter cited as Watson's Almanack, together with the relevant year and page reference.
Kinnegad and Drogheda as early as 1730, it was not until some time later that Limerick came to benefit from such a service with the capital. This was in 1751 when what Samuel Watson styled simply as ‘The Limerick Stage Coach’ departed on Mondays at 7 a.m. from the Hog in Armour Inn, James’s Street, Dublin, and returned on Saturday. The hopeless condition of the roads at the time inhibited any chance which this vehicle might have had of completing its journey in Winter, and initially it seems to have been billed as a Summer only service. This pioneer vehicle ran from 1751 to 1757 after which it disappears from the almanac lists. It became a Winter and Summer service in its second year, and set out earlier in Summer than in Winter (4 a.m. and 7.30 a.m. respectively) because of the extended daylight of Summer. Its departure point in Dublin was changed twice during its short lifetime, an unhealthy symptom with which the reason for its cessation may not be unconnected, though the exact reason for its failure after a period of seven years must remain unchronicled.

It seems likely that it was too early for such a long distance service to survive considering the vehicular and road conditions which obtained in the middle of the eighteenth century. It is also plausible to suggest that the regular and substantial patronage which such a service would have needed to make it viable was not, as yet, available. Nevertheless, the establishment of this service between Limerick and Dublin appears to have been bold, adventurous, and historic, as it was by far the longest coach journey then being attempted in Ireland—Kilkenny, Mullingar, Athlone, Kells, Drogheda and Newry being the other centres then being served from the capital. It was also the first such service to link the West Coast with Dublin, Athlone and a couple of short-lived Co. Offaly services of the mid-1740s being the most westerly coaches up to that time.

Another fifteen years elapsed before a renaissance of any public transport activity occurred on this line of road. This was in 1772 when a coach commenced setting out from “Mr. Jenkinson’s in Bolton Street [Dublin] on Thursday and from Limerick on Monday.” The same year heralded in the ‘Roscrea Spring Stage Coach,’ a once a week service to and from Dublin which bears further witness to an apparent upsurge of traffic activity along the Limerick-Dublin artery at this time. By 1774 the Roscrea service was ended and the Limerick service doubled, for now coaches set out “from Thomas Taylor’s at the Square in Limerick on Monday and Thursday.” While it is virtually impossible to be certain how long these coaches took in the performance of their journey or how many vehicles were employed in the service, the fact that two vehicles would have been able to do both return trips in six days each, may indicate that the single journey was done in three days and that only two vehicles were, in fact, employed in the entire operation.

These Limerick stage coaches, or the Limerick Stage Coach as the service was to be styled from 1783 onwards, were to have a long and unbroken history, from the time of their inception to the Mail Coach era. It seems that Francis Jenkinson was the proprietor. The frequency of the service was reduced to once weekly in each

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3 Watson's Almanack, 1752, p. 100.
5 Ibid., 1773, p. 41.
6 Ibid., 1775, p. 41.
7 Ibid., 1776, p. 41; ibid., 1777, p. 41; ibid., 1778, p. 41; ibid., 1779, p. 41; ibid., 1780, p. 41; ibid., 1781, p. 41; ibid., 1782, p. 41; ibid., 1784, p. 33; ibid., 1785, p. 33; ibid., 1786, p. 33.
8 Ibid., 1783, p. 33.
direction about 1787 after which the proprietors seem to have changed its eastern terminus from Dublin to Monasteravan, Co. Kildare, where, presumably, it was fed from Dublin. Francis Jenkinson had a depot at Monasteravan where the Limerick Coach came and went, though his headquarters were at no. 7, Bolton Street, Dublin, as before, where "places" (i.e. seats) were to be "taken" (i.e. booked) on this coach. Perhaps it was found that the long haul to Limerick was too much and that it better suited the regulation of horse changes as well as the reliable adherence to a fairly strict time schedule to draw the principal termini of the service closer together. It is perhaps not coincidental that one of the Kilkenny-Dublin stage coaches was also re-routed at precisely this time so that it served the Kilkenny-Monasteravan road, meeting the Grand Canal which had reached south-westwards from Dublin to Monasteravan. Perhaps it was that just for these few years the canal made severe encroachments on at least two of the stage coaches from the capital. Perhaps, too, the new mail coaches then being established caused the hitherto unchallenged stage coach proprietors to anticipate their speeds and economy by reducing the amount of their times on the road to a minimum.

The first mention of the Limerick-Dublin Mail Coach appears in 1794 when 12 Dawson Street is cited as its Dublin terminus. It does not appear in Watson's Almanack for 1794 but is listed among the coaches set out in the ensuing issue which almost certainly means that it was established in 1794; a gap of five years therefore, separates it from the establishment of the first Irish mail coaches—the Northern to Belfast and the Southern to Cork. It seems as though the terminus of the Limerick Stage Coach was shifted back to Dublin from Monasteravan by 1794 when

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9 Ibid., 1787, p. 33; ibid., 1788, p. 33; Irish Merlin or Universal Almanack, published by Alexander Stuart, Dublin in 1787, p. 37. Curiously, the Limerick-bound coach is conspicuously absent from Wilson's Dublin Directory, 1788, pp. 191 ff., which may support the terminus shift to Co. Kildare especially as Wilson's very complete list of coaches are headed—"stage coaches that leave Dublin ..." to which the compiler must have adhered literally as the Limerick coach was a de facto link with the capital. Anyway, the terminus alteration seems confirmed by Watson's Almanack for the subsequent years.

10 Watson's Almanack, 1789, p. 45.

The "boat coach" between Kilkenny and Monasteravan was conducted by Messrs. Stokes and Reynolds; it was advertised in Kilkenny as the "Monasteravan Stage" and commenced running on 11th August 1788. It ran via Ballyroan and is important in that it is the first Irish stage coach, to the writer's knowledge, to have definitely transported both inside and outside passengers, inside travellers only having been catered for up to then. It is interesting also in that it was one of the earliest coaches to run between two centres outside of Dublin. Its establishment appears to have been the result of a spirited article in a local paper which pointed out the need for such a service. This link between the establishment of a coach service and an editorial in a local paper mirrors the experience of the "The Fish Coach" which shall be adverted to infra. See Finn's Leinster Journal, No. 3110 (28 of Vol. 23), 2-5 April, Kilkenny 1788; ibid., No. 3148 (57 of Vol. 23), 12-16 July 1788; ibid., No. 3157 (66 of Vol. 23), 13-16 August, 1788; and Patrick F. Wallace, "The Development of Organised Public Transport on the Roads of Co. Carlow in the Pre-Railway Age," Carlowiana, 2:21 (1972), 92-6, esp. p. 93. See also "Canal Chronology" in Grand Canal, Robertstown 1906, p. 22, and Ruth Delany, The Grand Canal of Ireland, Newtown Abbot 1973, passim.

11 Watson's Almanack, 1790, pp. 603-4; ibid., 1791, p. 104; Stuart's Irish Merlin or Universal Almanack, 1791, p. 31; Watson's Almanack, 1792, p. 108; ibid., 1793, p. 108; ibid., 1794, p. 115.

12 Watson's Almanack, 1794, p. 115.

13 ibid., 1795, p. 154.
it was termed "an elegant post coach carrying only four inside and two outside, passengers." It was then a thrice weekly service, and "slept" (i.e. spent the night) at Mountrath on its up and down journeys. The six-day-a-week mail coach and the thrice weekly post coach continued to be Limerick's public transport links with Dublin for the period 1794 to 1806. In 1806 the Limerick Post Coach was changed to a daily service, thus linking the two cities with two public transport vehicles every day, except Sunday. This frequency was to continue during the succeeding years and, while we shall return to take up the story again in 1806, it is timely to pause and note a couple of locally documented vehicles which never appeared in the notices of the Dublin based sources upon which this paper has been almost totally dependent up to now.

It is both interesting and peculiar that Ennis and Co. Clare were first linked to Dublin not via the now principal south-western artery from Dublin to Limerick but by the western route from Dublin to Galway or, more precisely, from Dublin to Ballinasloe. Ballinasloe, having a stage coach service of its own to and from Dublin, soon became a traffic focus in its own right when a feeder-link was forged between itself and Gort. This feeder was known as the 'Gort Fly Coach' and was owned by Copperthwaite and Meehan who, advertising from their Loughrea office in 1789, styled their vehicle as "an elegant new coach." This coach ran from Hynes' Hotel, Gort, to Cuff's of Ballinasloe, thrice weekly commencing on the 5th of March, 1789 "being the first ever attempted here." The Gort-Ballinasloe venture must have proved successful, for after a couple of months it was extended southwards as far as Ennis. In the Ennis Chronicle of 8th June, 1789, we read that "this day Copperthwaite and Company commenced running a coach from this town to Dublin . . . three days a week." If the editorial which pronounced this to be "a mode of travelling which a few years since would have been deemed totally impracticable" is anything to go by, the citizens of Ennis must have welcomed its establishment. This was not a direct Ennis-Dublin service but rather a link which fed the Ballinasloe-Dublin stage coach. It was known as the "Ennis Fly Coach," and it set out from Ennis at 6 a.m. on three days of the week, the complete fare to Dublin being 15. 14. 0.

So highly did the people of Ennis value this link with the capital that a letter,

16 City and County Calendar or Irish Court Registry, 1785, p. 229; Watson's Almanack, 1786, pp. 153-4; Stuart's Irish Merlin or Universal Almanack, 1788, p. 84; the City and County Calendar or Irish Court Registry, 1786, p. 193; Watson's Almanack, 1797, p. 154; ibid., 1799, p. 115; ibid., 1800, p. 146 and p. 155; ibid., 1801, pp. 145-6; ibid., 1802, p. 143; ibid., 1803, p. 141; ibid., 1804, p. 145; ibid., 1805, p. 160; ibid., 1806, pp. 166-73.
17 Ibid., 1807, pp. 173-4.
18 John and James Copperthwaite appear to have been the most expansive stage coach proprietors in the country in the two decades before 1800. John Anderson of Fermoy running the greatest number of mail coaches. In 1788 they were the proprietors of the "Athlone Fly," the "Ballinasloe Fly Coach" and the "Longford and Mullingar Stage" in addition to the "Gort Fly" which later became the "Ennis Fly." They were almost certainly not resident in Dublin as their coaches all originated from John Cooke's, No. 2 Smithfield (See Wilson's Dublin Directory, 1788, pp. 131-134). They may not be unrelated to the Mr. Copperthwaite of Kinneogad who was attacked on May Day, 1786, by "a most audacious mob" who attempted to erect a may-pole in front of his door; Copperthwaite, having reminded them of the illegality of reviving such a custom, was "compelled to take refuge in his own house and to stand for two days on the defensive." See the Freeman's Journal, No. 3081 (No. 114 of Vol. 22), May 10, 1788. It is not impossible, because of the comparative rarity of the name and because all their coaching ventures were west-bound and via Kinneogad, that the Co. Westmeath town was, in fact, the home of this coach owning family.
19 Ennis Chronicle, Vol. 6, No. 585, 19th Feb., 1789.
20 Ennis Chronicle, Vol. 6, No. 566, 8th June, 1789.
21 Ennis Chronicle, Vol. 6, No. 567, 11th June, 1789.
underscored by eighty-eight of them, soon afterwards appeared in the Ennis Chronicle publicly thanking “Messrs. Copperthwaite, Gunning, Meehan and Company . . . for their spirited exertions in running an excellent coach and good horses three times a week to Dublin and back again and as we experience the great utility of the undertaking, so we are determined not only to give every support and encouragement in our power to the proprietors but pledge ourselves to discountenance any attempt that may be hereafter made to set up a carriage in opposition to them.”22 This statement not only bears eloquent testimony to the effect which the inauguration of a stage coach service had on the inhabitants of the town but indicates, in its innate protectionism and patronage for the original proprietors, that perhaps a second and rival service was being planned at this time. Whether or not this was ever set up the records do not tell us.

Returning to Limerick city, it is interesting to note that apart from the stage coach which, as we have seen from our Dublin published sources, was owned by Francis Jenkinson of Dublin, Limerick also appears to have had what was termed a stage waggon service, to and from Dublin. This is more than significant; it is almost unique, for stage waggons are never listed in eighteenth century almanacs and directories. The waggon was the poor relation of the stage coach and was commonly employed for the transportation of second class passengers (i.e. poorer merchants, traders and craftsmen who with their goods could not avail of the more expensively priced stage coach) along the contemporary English road. Irish references to such vehicles, however, are virtually non-existent23 and, hence, are very valuable from the social historian’s viewpoint. This type of vehicle was developed out of the box-like, four-wheeled English agricultural/farm waggon and it, in turn, was the direct ancestor of the nineteenth century caravan, in which were incorporated some of the sophisticated technical refinements of its own age.

According to the Limerick Chronicle, Andrew Buchanan was the proprietor of such a service to Dublin in March 1784, when he was severely challenged by the Dublin firm of Foster & Osborne who advertised their vehicle as “a broad wheel, stage waggon erected on the best English modell . . . for the carriage of goods and passengers” from Dublin to Limerick in five days. The company had agents in Limerick, Nenagh and Roscrea, and stages at Limerick, Nenagh, Roscrea, Maryborough (i.e. Portlaoise), and Newbridge. It was due to make its first appearance in Limerick on Wednesday, 24th March, 1784. Merchants’ goods were to be charged at the rate of 3/6 per hundredweight; small packages or parcels under fifty six pounds were to be charged at the rate of ½d per pound, while “passengers with 14 lbs. of luggage through all or any part of the road” were charged at 1d per mile24 which was considerably cheaper than the £1.4.0 a traveller on the “Ennis Fly Coach,” for example, would have to pay to get to Dublin.

It would appear that Buchanan and his staff of car-men threatened to counter with violence this intrusion into their monopolist sphere of activity, if we choose to read between the lines in Foster & Osborne’s announcement in the Chronicle of the follow-

22 Ennis Chronicle, Vol. 6, No. 578, 20th July, 1789.
23 The only representation of such a vehicle known to the writer appears in a chartreuse depicting Maynooth on the Royal Canal, in Alexander Taylor’s A Map of the County of Kildare, 1788.
24 Limerick Chronicle, 26th March, 1784.
ing week which declared that "a bill is now going through parliament and will immediately pass into law which effectively secures the said waggon and all the goods contained therein, to the owners, and for punishing all persons attempting to impede same. . . ." Foster and Osborne added fuel to fire by declaring that not only would they "have another waggon erected shortly" but that they also required "a resident partner in Limerick immediately." The upshot of this was that a Tipperary-man, Benjamin Meredith, came to Limerick with his family and was taken into the partnership, the company having set up in "a commodious concern . . . . with convenient stabling and stores." Buchanan countered this in a mildly worded advertisement which claimed the accession to his stable of "an additional number of stout horses," while boasting of "the sobriety of his drivers" as well as the moderation of his prices.

The Foster and Osborne versus Buchanan rivalry went on unabated in the cutthroat atmosphere of September 1784 when the former, or perhaps more likely Meredith, their deputy, promulgated a smear campaign which claimed that Buchanan's vehicles were in bad luck and were, furthermore, badly protected against robbery (which some of the patrons had sustained). Buchanan publicly announced that this report was without foundation and calculated to injure him. Buchanan finally prevailed, and by the end of October, 1784, Benjamin Meredith had pulled out of the partnership and Foster and Osborne put an advertisement in the paper which read: "To be sold . . . . the remarkable large new waggon which lately ran from Dublin to this city; it would answer well for drawing turf, corn etc. . . . . and will save the purchaser in the carriage of such articles 16 or 18 horses a day . . . . it will be sold for less than half the original cost . . . ."

Apart from the stage coach and the waggon just discussed, an attempt was also made in July 1784 to link Limerick with Dublin by means of "a post-chaise with able horses" at "any time agreeable to passengers." John O'Halloran was the would-be proprietor of such a service. This was the oldest known method of arranging potential passengers for a projected coach journey, and in an era when the stage coach idea had matured, with organised services and regularised time schedules becoming the order of the day, it could hardly have hoped to be attended upon by any degree of success. At any rate, we hear no more of it.

Returning to the Dublin-originating stage and mail coach services on the Limerick route, it should be mentioned that, by 1806, a mail coach plied every day between the two centres, in addition to the Limerick Post Coach which had been developed into a daily service in that year. This arrangement persisted in the subsequent years of the Napoleonic Wars which proved economically beneficial to Ireland. A second Limerick-Dublin daily stage coach was inaugurated in 1815, stopping at Parsonstown (i.e. Birr) on its way. Unlike the Mail Coach and the Limerick Stage/day coach, both of which travelled from Dublin via Naas, Kildare, Monasterevan, Port-

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25 Limerick Chronicle, 29th March, 1784.
26 Limerick Chronicle, Bi-Centenary Issue, 12th November, 1966.
27 Limerick Chronicle, 15th September, 1784.
28 Limerick Chronicle, 25th October, 1784.
29 Limerick Chronicle, 11th November, 1784.
30 Limerick Chronicle, 22nd July, 1784.
32 Ibid., 1808, p. 173; ibid., 1809, p. 48; Ibid., 1810, p. 48; Ibid., 1811, p. 86; Ibid., 1812, p. 81; Ibid., 1813, p. 77; Ibid., 1814, p. 77; Ibid., 1815, pp. 83-4.
laise, Mountrath, Roscrea and Nenagh, the new coach travelled on a more northern route, coming by Monasterevan, Portarlington, Parsonstown, Modereeny and Nenagh. While the new service seems to have begun as a daily service and to have been run as such for a couple of years, its frequency appears to have been reduced to thrice weekly in 1818, thereafter running three times weekly in both directions, being known as the "two day Dublin Stage Coach," the latter being an indication of the time it took in the completion of its journey.

A "caravan for passengers" ran between Dublin and Limerick in 1824; it travelled daily and took thirty hours to complete its journey as it "slept" at Mountrath, a far more nonchalant pace than that of the Mail Coach, which did the same journey in nineteen and a quarter hours. It should be noted that all "caravans for passengers" in 1824 originated from no. 19, Cornmarket, Dublin, and all—the others ran to Maryborough, Mountmellick and Roscrea—travelled the same road, which may indicate a common proprietor. These caravans were the vehicular descendants of the more cumbersome waggons of the late eighteenth century which have already been mentioned in the context of the Buchanan versus Foster and Osborne transport rivalry in the Limerick of 1784. While they still transported goods in the 1820s and, presumably later, as the term "goods caravan" is even applied to such a vehicle as that which, for example, transported goods from O'Connor's, Thomas Street, Dublin, to Tullamore, these latter day caravans were not primarily engaged in the overland shipment of goods, a function fulfilled by the hosts of slow-moving cars which travelled the roads, the lives of whose waggons-masters and car-men have been described by Patrick Kennedy, the mid-nineteenth century Wexford folklorist. Caravans, in their updated nineteenth century version, first appeared on the Dublin-Blackrock-Dunlaoghaire route about 1820, after which their circle of influence spread to centres like Navan-Kells, Mountrath, Roscrea, Trim-Athboy, and Portarlington, by 1823. The caravan soon caught on in areas outside of Dublin and became a popular conveyance between towns, among them Limerick and Ennis between which two such conveyances were in operation by 1824, which was about the time caravan traffic reached Limerick from Dublin.

At the close of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Limerick city and Dublin were linked daily each way by a mail and a stage coach, in addition to the thrice weekly "two day Dublin Stage Coach" and the caravan just described. This frequency of public transport services between Limerick and the capital persisted un-

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32 Ibid., 1816, p. 82; ibid., 1817, pp. 83-4; ibid., 1818, p. 85.
33 Ibid., 1818, p. 86; ibid., 1819, p. 57; ibid., 1820, pp. 78-9; ibid., 1821, p. 70; ibid., 1822, p. 76; ibid., 1823, p. 79; Brett Smith, City and County Almanack, 1821, p. 69; ibid., 1823, p. 54; J. Pigot and Co's Commercial Directory of Ireland 1820-22, Manchester 1820, p. 69 and p. 208 (hereafter cited as Pigot, op. cit., 1820).
35 Patrick Kennedy: Legends of Mount Leinster, 1855, pp. 120, 122, 206 and passim; Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts, London 1866, pp. 157-158 and passim; Evening in the Dufferen, 1869, passim.
36 Pigot: op. cit., 1820, p. 90.
37 Brett Smith's City and County Almanack, 1823, p. 55; Watson's Almanack, 1825, p. 212; ibid., 1827, p. 221.
changed during the late 1820s and into the early years of the succeeding decade. By the mid-thirties, when the mail and stage coaches were each performing the journey in about fourteen hours, the caravan and the “two day Coach” services were dispensed with. There appears to have been a reduction in the numbers of passengers travelling between Dublin and Limerick by about 1835, which caused the deletion of these two services. This thesis is probably acceptable if the descending graph line of the volume of passengers who used the mail coach in 1834 and 1835 can be taken as indicative of a trend, for while 3,809 patrons availed of this service in 1834, the number dropped to 3,678 during the following year. Even the only stage coach which was operating on this route in 1835 was not overbusy, as it transported only nine passengers on average though its permitted carrying capacity was fifteen. It should, however, be noted that this figure more or less approximates to the national average for stage coaches at this time.

Mail and stage coach transport continued to operate unchanged until the railways replaced it in the 1840s, despite which a caravan was inaugurated as far south as Nenagh in 1843, the latter becoming a thrice weekly day coach by 1844. The stage and mail coaches serviced the route up to 1847 when the railway began to be extended westwards, the only noticeable changes being that Nenagh and Roscrea both became important traffic centres for Limerick horse-drawn transport until their role became obsolete when the railway finally reached Limerick.

The Great Southern and Western Railway reached as far South as Kildare in 1847, with the result that mails and passengers from Dublin now reached Limerick in eleven and a quarter hours. Kildare Railway Station became the new terminus for the Limerick Day Coach. By 1848 the railway had reached Roscrea, so that by then the journey had been cut to ten and a quarter hours. The process was completed by 1849, when the entire journey could be done by rail, taking seven hours and twenty minutes. The stage and mail coach were dispensed with the same year, though a caravan continued to service the Limerick-Roscrea road until 1849. The reason for its unexpected longevity in face of the all-conquering railway probably being that it linked that part of Co. Tipperary with Limerick which was formerly served by the Limerick Stage and Mail but which was not then being traversed by the more southerly-

41 Watson’s Almanack, 1829, p. 223.
43 Second Report of the Commissioners appointed to consider and recommend a general system of railways for Ireland, Parliamentary Papers, H. C. 1837-38 (146), XXXV, pt. II, Appendix B, No. 3, pp. 34, 37, 40 and 45.
44 The New Triennial and Commercial Directory 1840-42, Limerick 1840, pp. 77-78; Moore’s Almanack, 1843, p. 28; ibid., 1844, pp. 40-41.
45 Brett Smith’s City and County Almanack, 1843, p. 70.
46 Moore’s Almanack, 1844, p. 41.
47 Moore’s Almanack, 1845, p. 40; ibid., 1846, pp. 32-3; Thom’s Directory, 1840, pp. 460-463; ibid., 1845, pp. 471-8; ibid., 1848, pp. 473-470; I. Sleater’s National Commercial Directory of Ireland, Manchester 1846, pp. 244 ff.
48 Thom’s Directory, 1847, pp. 432 and 435; Dublin Almanack, 1847, pp. 75-77.
49 Thom’s Directory, 1848, pp. 439 and 442.
50 Thom’s Directory, 1849, pp. 438 and 442.
routed railway. It seems not to have survived the establishment of the railway by more than a year, and had vanished by 1850.a

Mail and stage coach fares are almost totally lacking for the Limerick-Dublin route. We know, however, that in the first year of its service, 1794, the Dublin-Limerick mail coach charged £1. 2. 9. from Dublin to Roscrea, £1. 8. 8. from Dublin to Nenagh, £1. 12. 5. from Dublin to Kilmastill, and £1. 14. 1. from Dublin to Limerick, which compares well with the £1. 14. 0. charged for the full journey on Copperthwaite’s ‘Ennis Fly Coach’ of a few years earlier. In 1835 the average charge per mile on the Mail Coach was 4d. inside and 2½d. outside (Irish miles), that is about £1. 11. 0. for an inside seat for the full journey, while the average charge per mile on the Dublin-Limerick Stage Coach was 3½d. inside and 2½d. outside. Canal fares between Limerick and Dublin in 1838 were 13/6 (first cabin), 9/6 (second cabin), and were much cheaper than the then mail and stage fares. In 1849 the railway fares to Limerick were 22/16/6, and 10/9, for first, second and third class respectively.

It should not be forgotten that in addition to its road and, later, its rail links with Dublin, Limerick passengers and goods were also catered for by canal. For example, in 1820 George Smith and Cornelius Nash each operated a weekly boat to Dublin on the canal, while Thomas Goodbody had three boats every week on the same route. By the late 1830s, Fly and Steam-boats served Dublin every day from Limerick. These took twenty-nine hours to reach their destination, which compared unfavourably with the twelve and fourteen hours, respectively, then taken by the mail and stage coaches in performing the same journey. The canal boats did, however, offer more leisurely and comfortable travel, and with their first and second class cabin arrangements catered for a varied social clientele.

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Turning to the second part of our threelfold task, the development of horse-drawn public transport between Limerick and Ennis and the larger centres of population in Munster, we find no evidence of any organised inter-town public transport before 1800. A commercial directory published in Limerick in 1769 (which must rank amongst the earliest of provincial directories) makes no mention of any transport services in the area, though its inclusion of a number of coach-builders as resident in the city infers that there were, then, a sufficient number of privately owned vehicles in its environs to warrant such a body of craftsmen. This conflicts with Arthur Young’s observation that there were only four carriages ‘in and about Limerick’ between 1740 and 1750. The absence of source material published outside of Dublin handicaps any search for early coach services between provincial centres.

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a Thom’s Directory, 1850, pp. 436 ff., Brett Smith’s City and County Almanack, 1850, pp. 102 ff.
b City and County Calendar or Irish Court Registry, 1794, p. 193.
f Pigot, op. cit., 1824, p. 221.
g Deane, op. cit., pp. 62-6.
h Limerick Directory, Limerick 1769, passim.
i Arthur Young, A Tour in Ireland, Vol. II, Dublin 1780, p. 6

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While Limerick was the third city to be served by mail coach from Dublin, so the Cork-Limerick Mail Coach was amongst the earliest of mail coaches running on the cross-routes of Ireland. This coach commenced running on the 5th of April, 1803, going on alternate days through Fermoy and Mallow, an hour longer, fourteen hours in all, being allowed for the Mallow journey. John Anderson of Fermoy owned the coaches travelling by his own town, and Henry and William O'Shea owned those running via Mallow. Anthony O'Connor was the proprietor of the Mallow Coach after 1811. In common with all the major mail coaches from Dublin, both were drawn by four horses and neither was to exceed four inside and one outside passengers. The fares on both coaches between the two Munster cities, in 1812, were one guinea and 15/6, for inside and outside seats respectively, seven pounds of luggage being allowed free to each passenger and 2d. being charged for every extra pound. Five years later the fares had jumped to £1 5s. 3d. and £1 8s. 8d. respectively, though luggage allowances had improved. Fares were reduced again by 1820 to £1 2s. 9d. and 17/6, and still further to 18/- and 12/- respectively by the late 1820s. By 1844-45 the fares on the Cork-Limerick Mail Coach had been reduced to 15/- and 8/6, but by that time the mail coach was well challenged by cars on the shorter routes, four cars plying daily from Cork to Limerick city and county. It was not until the early 1830s that the Limerick-Cork Mail Coach settled for the more direct route to Cork, via Mallow. Curiously, the new thrice weekly Day/Post Coach, which was set up between the two centres at this time, travelled the other route, via Fermoy. Perhaps the new service was inaugurated in a compensatory capacity to offset the loss of the mail coach along this route, either to "buy-off" certain influential people and their vested interests and/or to service a possibly genuinely large number of passengers who lived along this stretch of road. The coach seems to have been taken off the road by the mid-1830s when Limerick had a daily-except-Sunday stage coach to Charleville, and Cork a similar service to the same town so that the function of the Limerick-Cork Day Coach continued to be met, though the Cork-Charleville coach travelled by Mallow and not by Fermoy as did that which it appears to have replaced. Cork also had a stage coach link with Fermoy, so perhaps it was found that the area between Fermoy and Charleville was not a viable stretch on which to run a coach. Anyway, Bianconi was servicing the old Fermoy route to Cork from Limerick in the 1830s.

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60 An Abstract of the Contracts which have been made by His Majesty's Post Masters General in Ireland . . . . Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1818 (425), XVI, pp. 2-3 (hereafter cited as Mail Coach Contracts). See also Watson's Almanack, 1805, p. 100; ibid., 1810, p. 48, and Mail Coach Contracts, Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1818 (425) XVI, pp. 8-9.
66 Pigot, op. cit., 1824, passim, and p. 271. This coach probably dates from late 1823 or early 1824 for while it is listed by Pigot in his 1824 opus, just noted, it does not figure in Thomas Holt's The Cork Almanack, Cork 1823, p. 47. It occurs in the post-1824 Cork published almanacs, among them Conner's Cork Directory, 1829-37, p. 34 and Finny's Royal Cork Almanack, Cork 1827, pp. 76-8, both of which cite fares etc. for it.
68 Deane, op. cit., p. 63, inter alia.
A daily stage or day coach was established between Limerick and Cork in 1837 or 1838, but it seems to have been short-lived and hardly survived beyond 1843. The numerous cars which serviced the Limerick-Cork road will be treated of together infra.

A thrice weekly stage coach ran between Limerick and Ennis from 1809, performing the relatively short journey in five hours. While the Limerick-Ennis Mail Coach officially commenced running on the 5th of July, 1815, its proprietor being William Bourne, it was listed as a mail coach by Watson since 1813 when it appears that the stage coach became a daily service, probably in anticipation of the official sanction which recognised it as a mail coach. Like all the mail coaches of its time, the Sligo-Kinnegad coach excepted, it was drawn by four horses. Unlike most, especially those on the main trunk roads from Dublin which were debarred from conveying more than four inside and one outside passenger, this coach, like many of the newly established mail coaches on the cross-routes, was enabled to exceed that capacity, being allowed six inside and three outside passengers. This allowance probably confirms that the former Limerick-Ennis day coach was the direct ancestor of the new mail and, therefore, likely explains the confusion about when exactly it changed status from stage to mail. By 1824 two caravans travelled the Ennis-Limerick road, in addition to the mail coach. The caravans ran every day except Sunday, departing from Limerick at 2.30 p.m. and arriving in Ennis seven hours later, which was two hours slower than the Ennis-Limerick Mail Coach when it was established a decade or so earlier, though it should be remembered that both went the circuitous route via Sixmilebridge and Newmarket-on-Fergus. One of the caravans was known as Tierney’s and had its Limerick terminus at Patrick Coleman’s, Francis Street, its Ennis office being at Chapel Lane. The other, appears to have run from the Mail-Coach Office, George’s Street, Limerick, to the Coach Office, Church Street, Ennis.

The Ennis-Limerick Mail Coach was extended to Galway in 1834, to become the Galway-Limerick Mail Coach, a Bianconi enterprise. Ennis’ communication with Limerick at this time was intensive, a daily coach serving the route in addition to two other coaches which ran every day except Sunday. All three coaches were five seater, and the average number carried on each was ten, which was much higher than the national average and which contrasts with the average passenger load of three on the Galway-Limerick Mail Coach, the carrying capacity of which was eight. Should it be noted that all the Limerick-Ennis and Limerick-Galway traffic travelled by Cratloe, Bunnarty and Newmarket in the 1830s, the old deviation via Sixmilebridge having been by-passed at that stage. There appears to have been a cut-back in the number of coaches on the Limerick-Ennis road by 1840 when only two coaches

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61 It is not listed in Alexander Aldwell’s comprehensive list in The County and City of Cork, Post Office, General Directory 1844-45, Cork 1844, p. 8, nor in the equally exhaustive J. Sleator’s National Commercial Directory of Ireland, Manchester 1848, either under Cork (p. 223) or Limerick (p. 279).
62 Watson’s Almanack, 1810, p. 48.
64 Watson’s Almanack, 1814, p. 77; ibid., 1815, pp. 83-4.
65 Rowland’s Commercial Directory of Ireland, 1829.
66 Watson’s Almanack, 1824, pp. 288 and 291.
ran daily between the two towns. In the mid-forties, at the close of the period under consideration, Ennis and Limerick were linked every day by two cars, a coach and an omnibus/caravan, as well as by the Limerick-Galway Mail Coach.

The Limerick-Tralee Mail Coach, like the Limerick-Ennis Mail, commenced running on the 5th of July, 1815, and like the latter its proprietor was William Bourne. The permitted maximum passenger capacity of the Tralee Coach was six inside and two outside passengers. The journey to Tralee was undertaken via Rathkeale, Tarbert and Listowel. It is interesting to note that it was at this time also that Tralee was linked to Cork, via Killarney, by Mail Coach. When the Post-Office later came to standardise the size of mail coaches, and when, in 1833, Bourne was refused to reduce his passengers on the Tralee Mail Coach to a limited number, Bianconi reluctantly substituted one of his mail cars for Bourne's coach on the understanding that it was the Post-Office's intention "to discontinue the mail-coach whether I [i.e. Charles Bianconi] took the contract or not." Bianconi claimed that he "was enabled to deliver the mail much quicker than the coach had done it previously" and that his car "delivered the letters in Tralee some hours before they had been delivered by the coach." Subsequently, when it was decided to re-establish the mail coach between Tralee and Limerick, Bianconi lost the contract to Bourne "who was interested in having the mail at any price, for the sake of sustaining his coach against my car (then running for the vindication and sustainment of the Post-Office) ...." Bianconi lost the mail but kept his car running on the road, the result being that "we [i.e. Bourne and himself] have for several years lost some thousands of pounds." The Italian, in his own words, preferred losing money than "giving up the line of road." In 1835, when the Tralee-Limerick Mail Coach was an eight-seater and the Tralee-Limerick car a six-seater, both were running, on average, half full. The contrast in price between inside and outside fares per mile is obvious from their being 32d. and 2d. respectively, while the equation in price of the outside seat of the mail coach to a seat in Bianconi's car is revealed by their both being priced at 2d. per mile. The coach and car continued to run between Limerick and Tralee until 1853 when Bianconi who had, by then, taken over Bourne's interest, disbanded the coach service, the car continuing on until 1866 when his own interest in the establishment came to an end.

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78 Kinder, op. cit., pp. 77-8; Deane, op. cit., p. 62, lists three stage coaches daily between Limerick and Ennis; this may mean that one of the services was terminated in 1839.
79 Sleater, op. cit., pp. 236 and 270, in which the Limerick account includes as an "omnibus" what in the Ennis account is termed a "van"; this may show that both terms were interchangeable, locally, for the same type of vehicle which appears to have been related to the caravan of two decades earlier.
80 The Galway-Limerick Mail Coach which travelled at 10 m.p.h. was admitted to be "one of the quickest in Ireland" by its proprietor, Charles Bianconi, in evidence to the Select Committee on Postage published as Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Postage, Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1837-38 (112), XXXV, p. 285.
82 Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Postage, Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1837-38 (112), XXXV, p. 291.
84 Deane, op. cit., p. 62; Kinder, op. cit., pp. 77-8; Sleater, op. cit., pp. 279 and 324; M. J. O'Connell, op. cit., p. 94.
85 M. J. O'Connell, op. cit., p. 95.
Waterford was the last of the larger Munster towns to be linked by public transport with Limerick. The first transport link to be forged between the two centres was a thrice-weekly day coach which commenced running about 1819. This was a slow-moving vehicle, taking twelve hours to reach its destination at a time when the Dublin Mail Coach to Limerick took nineteen hours and the mail to Cork took eleven and a half hours to reach its destination. It should be remembered that Bianconi had had a car running from Clonmel to Limerick since 1815, so that the Waterford-Limerick route was not fully without a public transport service until comparatively late in 1819. The Day Coach was taken off the road in a couple of years in favour of a mail coach which commenced running between Waterford and Limerick about 1822. The new coach was probably an extension of the Waterford-Clonmel Mail Coach of 1820—itself in existence since 1809—which travelled ‘at the rate of five m.p.h. including all stoppages,’ was drawn by four horses, and was permitted a maximum load of six inside and four outside passengers by the Post-Master General. The Mail Coach which was owned by Messrs. Purcell and Co. in 1835, and which was three-quarters full on average, was, by then, joined on the Limerick route by a Bianconi car, one of the ten-seater “faugh a ballagh” long-car variety which averaged six passengers. In 1836 the Waterford-Limerick Mail Coach travelled at 7½ m.p.h. which was relatively speedy for a cross-route, with four inside and four outside passengers being allowed on board; its charge of 4½d. per mile to the Post-Office for the transportation of the mails was one of the most expensive of any mail coach in the country. In 1838 the fare to Waterford on Bianconi’s car from Limerick was 10/6, which was exactly the same as that on the outside of the mail coach; this is a recurring analogue in the context of Bianconi whose policy it must have been to equal the fare-level of a mail coach where such a vehicle ran parallel to one of his cars. A mail car was inaugurated about 1834 between Limerick and Clonmel. This pattern of mail coach and car between Waterford and Limerick and mail car from Limerick to Clonmel on

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84 Pigot, _op. cit._, 1820, pp. 208 and 242.
85 M. J. O’Connell, _op. cit._, p. 95.
86 Pigot, _op. cit._, 1824, p. 323. The Waterford section of this directory lists a “telegraph car” as travelling to Limerick from Cummins’ Hotel, Waterford at this time. This, undoubtedly, was a Bianconi car, because of its departure place. The Limerick section of the same _opus_, p. 279 ff., lists Bianconi’s car as running to Clonmel and not to Waterford, a fact borne out by Bianconi’s timetables and by his daughter’s biography, p. 95. It was Bianconi’s practice to run his cars to meet another so that a traveller patronising one of his cars could travel, virtually non-stop, for a much greater distance than would seem from the destination of the car he first boarded.
87 This type of arrangement probably caused the discrepancy, just noted, in Pigot’s directory. 
88 Return of the Number and description of Mail Coaches in Ireland, Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1820 (451), IX, pp. 15-18.
90 Return of Relative to Mail Coaches etc., Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1836, (364), XLV, p. 4.
91 Deane, _op. cit._, p. 63.
92 T. S. Harvey’s _Waterford Directory and Almanack_, Waterford 1839, p. 145; Deane, _op. cit._, p. 164.
the Waterford road, both the cars being Bianconi enterprises, continued up to the end of the time being treated of here.  

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Before turning to the third and final part of the examination, that is the organisation of public transport facilities on the immediately local level, it is appropriate to treat of the three aspects of our subject which do not readily fit into the threefold division of the topic proposed on p. 34. These are, firstly, a brief sketch of water transport in and about the Shannon estuary, secondly, a closer look at the part played by what could be termed the Bianconi Empire in the public transport story of this part of Ireland, and, thirdly, an examination of the organisation and impact of the Post-Office's Mail Cars in the region. The two last-mentioned aspects are inseparable, because Bianconi contracted for so many of the mail car services. Furthermore, because Bianconi and, to a lesser extent, the mail cars, span two of our three divisions as they operated both on the greater Munster level and on the immediately local scene, it is necessary that they be singled out for particular examination in any survey such as this.

In the 1820s Kilrush was served twice weekly from Limerick, "on days uncertain," by two boats which plied along the Shannon estuary. 96 In 1838 the Limerick-Kilrush Steamer was known as the "Garryowen" and started for Kilrush three times a week, with stops at Begg Castle, Foynes Island, Glin and Tarbert, en route. The "cabin and after deck" approximated to inside travel on a coach, while the "fore-cabin and after deck" were on a par with outside travel. 97 However, the cabin rates compare favourably with those charged on the road. The journey between Glin and Limerick cost 5/- on Bianconi's car to Tralee, 98 though the same journey cost only 2/- on the car which plied to Glin from Flannery's in William Street, Limerick. 3/- was the cost of a cabin seat in the steamer, but a place on the fore-deck cost only 1/6 being, thus, the cheapest available fare to Glin from Limerick in 1838. 99 The "Dover Castle" steamboat joined the "Garryowen" on the route to Kilrush by 1846, thereby providing a daily service during the Summer, though the frequencies were reduced to three times a week during the Winter months—evidence that the infant tourist traffic was already making its impact on South-West Clare. Kilkee had two packet-boats running to Limerick every day except Sunday (as well as a steamer to Portumna), timed to meet the packet for Dublin, in the mid 1840s. 100

As early as 1812, economist Edward Wakefield was struck by the "little intercourse and communication in the interior of the country." 101 It is Charles Bianconi's achieve-

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96 Pigot, op. cit., 1842, p.
98 Bianconi wall-chart advertisement, 2nd edition, Clonmel 1833—this sold at the various car offices as well as in Dublin and London; Bianconi advertisement in Pettigrew and Culton, op. cit., 1835, n.p., advertisement section; Bianconi advertisement in Post-Office Directory, 1834, pp. 471-4; Bianconi advertisement in Post Office Directory, 1837, n.p. advertisement section; "Mr." Coffey, Bianconi's Car and Coach Lists, 1838, passim; John Conway, Bianconi's Car and Coach Lists, 1842, passim.
100 Slater, op. cit., p. 60.
ment that almost single-handed he righted that situation by the provision of cars which opened up the roads of Ireland on a grand scale. He brought public transport facilities to the cross-routes which were tangential to the main mail/stage coach traffic arteries, beginning in South Munster and gradually expanding his "royal mail" and day cars into the South-East, north-westwards into North Munster, northwards through Tipperary to the Shannon Basin, and later into the Midlands and Western Connacht, and finally into Donegal and the North-West by the 1850s.

Bianconi commenced running his first car to Cahir from Clonmel in 1815. By the end of 1815 he linked Clonmel with Limerick, among other places, by car. This service lasted until 1849, the year in which another Bianconi long car, the Limerick-Cork service which had been established in 1831, was taken off the road. The Tralee-Limerick car and the Tralee-Limerick Coach, referred to supra, were both instituted in 1833, the car lasting to the close-down of the concern in 1866 while the coach was phased out in 1853. The Limerick-Galway Mail Coach was Bianconi-owned since 1834 and was part of his fleet to the end. The Limerick-Killarney Car (1839-1853), the Ennis-Ballinasloe Car (1844-1849), the Limerick-Tipperary Car (1851-1861), the Limerick-Ennis Mail Car (1852-1865), the Limerick-Ennis Day Car (1854-1865), and the Ennis-Oranmore Car (1859-1865), were all Bianconi enterprises operating from North Munster bases.

The planning of his services on such a complex and researched scale not only explains Bianconi's facility for meeting exact requirements and the avoiding of unnecessary duplication, but also shows why his cars enjoyed such success throughout the western half of Ireland. His institution of a network of branches and feeder-eroute must have seemed baffling in its bewildering synchronisation of time-schedules to his would-be rivals. The Limerick-Tralee car serves as an example of the intricacy of the organisation. On leaving Limerick during the 1840s it travelled westwards via Adare to Rathkeale; there, the passengers newly arrived from Limerick either continued on to places west or alighted and boarded the Tarbert-Rathkeale branch car, the arrival of which in Rathkeale was timed to meet that of the main car. This feeder enabled travellers from and between Tarbert, Glin, Foynes and Rathkeale, to journey to Newcastle West and places connecting with Limerick-Tralee as it proceeded westwards, or to Adare, Limerick and all the centres for which the latter was a gateway on the return car from Tralee. Leaving Rathkeale, the Tralee-bound car set off through Newcastle West to Abbeyfeale where it met its second branch, the Abbeyfeale-Listowel car. Farther on, the Limerick-Tralee car had a timed rendezvous at Castleisland with the Castleisland-Killarney branch car. Thus it often

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102 Thomas P. O'Neill, "Charles Bianconi" in Kevin B. Nowlan (ed.), Travel and Transport in Ireland, Dublin 1972, pp. 82-95, gives the most comprehensive recent assessment of Bianconi's importance in nineteenth century transport and communication.

103 While Bianconi was almost certainly not the first proprietor of a fleet of jaunting cars in Ireland, his name has become synonymous with the car and with horse-drawn public transport in general because of the success which attended upon his huge car-fleet, the activities of which he meticulously supervised. Warburton, Whitelaw and Walsh in their History of Dublin, Vol. II, Dublin 1818, p. 1006, show that jaunting cars were involved in the transport of passengers in and about Dublin and the towns within a twenty-mile radius of it at about the same time as Bianconi commenced operations.


105 The contrast in the standards employed by Bianconi as against those of his rivals was noted by many commentators, among them diarist John Keegan in 1840; cf. Wallace Clare (ed.), A Young Irishman's Diary, March 1928, p. 51.

48
happened that by the time it arrived in Tralee many of the passengers on the Limerick-
Tralee car were from places as far apart as Foynes-Glin, Abbeyfeale-Listowel, Kill-
arney-South Kerry, as well as from Limerick and places linked by public transport
with it. Similarly, the Limerick-Waterford car was timed to meet the Cork-Killarney
bus at Clonmel, thereby enabling a traveller who left Limerick at 9.30 a.m. to be in
Kilkenny by 2.30 p.m. the same evening. At Kilkenny, Bianconi had an arrange-
ment with a coach proprietor who ran the stage coach to Dublin on which his car patrons got
preferential treatment. The Bianconi fleet never served Dublin directly, though his
establishment had booking offices in a Dawson Street hotel.

Apart from the drivers and maintenance staff which kept the cars on the roads,
there was a host of other personnel behind the scenes without whom the organisation
could not have operated so efficiently. These included stable-hands, forage providers,
hotel-keepers and, not least, the agents which Bianconi appointed to service his
interests in various centres. The names of many of the latter have survived. For
example, in 1833, along the Limerick-Tralee route the agents included J. O’Shea at
Limerick, J. Fitzgibbon at Rathkeale, R. Cussen106 at Newcastle West, J. Fitzgerald
at Abbeyfeale, P. Dinehy at Castleisland, W. Kennedy at Glin, M. Langan at Tarbert,
G. McElligott at Listowel, and J. McCarthy at Tralee. Five years later T. Collopy
was appointed to Listowel, W. Langan to William Street, Limerick, and P. Brick
to Tralee. There were no other changes up to 1842 except that N. Shallow succeeded
to the Limerick city agency. Other Bianconi agents in the Limerick-Clare region for
whom we have names are E. O’Keefe at Bruff, who was replaced by R. Fogarty about
1840, T. Hussey at Kilnallan, and R. Archer at Ennis.107

Post-Office mail cars commenced running on an expanded scale in the 1830s, and
played a great part in opening up the Irish countryside. Their impact was com-
paratively greater in Co. Clare than in Co. Limerick because of the existence in the
latter of a closer network of locally based public transport services prior to the
establishment of the mail cars. Pallaskenry and Newcastle West appear to have been
the first local centres which had mail car service links with Limerick city—that to
the latter being daily from the G.P.O., and that to the former being thrice weekly
from Sheehy’s of Roches Street.108 The five years after 1831 reveal how intensive
was post-office activity in the area during the early 1830s: in this period a mail car
was established between Clonmel and Limerick, and a mail coach between Limerick
and Tulla, while the Castleconnell-O’Briensbridge, Charleville-Drumcolliher, Kil-
mallock-Kilfinnane, Limerick-Barringtonsbridge and Kilrush-Kilkee foot-posts were
inaugurated. Penny-posts were established at Ardfagha, Barringtonsbridge, Drum-
collieher, Kilfinnane, Kilkee, Labasheeda, O’Brien’sbridge and Patrickswell in the
same period, while Askeaton, Burrin, Caherconlish, Croom, Pallaskenry, Pallaskeen,
Scariff and Shanagolden were reduced to the status of sub-office, Abbeyfeale being
downgraded from post-town to penny-post.109

106 This was Robert Cussen—spelled Cushin in 1833. Cussin in 1838 and Cussen in 1842—who
married the heiress to the Courtney Arms Hotel, Newcastle West and is a kinsman of Dr. Robert
Cussen, Vice-President, Thomond Archaeological Society, to whom I am indebted for this informa-
tion.
107 As fn. 98 above.
109 Returns Relating to the General Post Office, Ireland, Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1836 (260),
XLV. pp. 3-4.
Clare had two mail cars in 1835—one, a six-seater between Ennis and Kilrush which ran half-full on average, and the other, a four-seater between Ennis and Miltown-Malbay via Ennistymon, which followed a route afterwards followed by the far-famed West Clare Railway! Only one mail car originated in Limerick at this time, the Limerick-Clonmel car, a four-seater which was generally half-full. The Rathkeale-Tarbett mail car commenced running during the following year; this was another four-seater as were all the mail cars in Limerick and Clare by 1836, except the Ennis-Miltown-Malbay car which was an eight-seater. The new car travelled at 6½ m.p.h. which was the same average speed as that attained by the Ennis-Kilrush and Ennis-Miltown-Malbay cars. This was ¼ m.p.h. less than the national average for the time, but was considerably more than 5½ m.p.h. which was the national slowest and less than the 7¾ m.p.h. which was the national fastest and which was matched by the other mail car originating in the region, the Limerick-Clonmel car. The considerable discrepancy in speeds at this time between mail coaches and mail cars is worth noting. The slowest speed of any mail coach in the mid-1830s was 6½ m.p.h. which was the speed of the Galway-Tuam pair-horse mail, the normal mail (and stage) coach being drawn by four horses. The slowest mail coach then coming into Limerick was the 7¾ m.p.h. Waterford Mail. The national highest average mail coach speed of 9¾ m.p.h. was equalled by the Limerick-Dublin Mail coach. The Limerick-Tralee mail travelled at 9 m.p.h. which was very fast for a secondary service. The Limerick-Galway mail averaged 8½ m.p.h. and the Limerick-Cork mail averaged ¾ m.p.h. less.

Three new mail cars were added to those already in existence in counties Limerick and Clare by 1838, when the Dublin-Limerick mail coach had increased its average speed to 9½ m.p.h. These were the Limerick-Tulla (replacing the horse-post established earlier in the same decade), Patrickswell-Ballingarry, and Rathkeale-Listowel mail cars, the latter supplanting the Rathkeale-Tarbett car which was established two years before; Tarbett had by then mail car link with Tralee. Only two of the forty-one saddle- or horse-posts then in existence in Ireland operated in the area under discussion in 1838. These were the Killaloe-Scariff and Sicary(?)-Kildysart posts. Thirteen of the one hundred and ninety-three foot-posts were based in the area, viz.—Adare-Pallaskenry, Bruff-Hospital, Castleconnell-O’Brien’s Bridge, Charleville-Drumcullen, Cross-Road-Caherconlish, Cross-Road-Castleconnell, Kilmallock-Kilfinnane, and Limerick-Barringtonsbridge, all in Co. Limerick, and also Killaloe-Birdhill, Cratloe-Cross-Sixmilebridge, Fountain Cross-Corofin, Kilrush-Kilkee, and

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110 It should be noted that this service is noted in the Second Report of the Commissioners . . . . of Railways for Ireland, Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1837-38 (145), XXXV, pt. II, Appendix B, No. 5, p. 34, but that this seemingly geographically impossible service which would have to by-pass the county capital was in error seems to be confirmed by the evidence of other and subsequent official returns including Returns of Mail Coaches and other Conveyances for Mails, Rates of Travelling, Mileage Paid etc. in England, Ireland and Scotland. Parliamentary papers, H.C. 1836 (364), XLV, p. 7, Report of the Select Committee on Postage, Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1837-38 (112) XXXV, Appendix, p. 250, and Number, Names and Wages of Mail Guards Employed by the Post Office, Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1841 (431), XXVI, pp. 15-18, all of which show this as the Ennis-Miltown-Malbay mail car.


112 Returns of Mail Coaches and other conveyances for mals, Rates of Travelling, Mileage Paid etc. in England, Ireland and Scotland, Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1836 (364), XLV, p. 4 ff.
Newmarket-on-Fergus-Quin, all in Co. Clare. \textsuperscript{113} The Kilrush-Kilkee foot-post was superseded by a mail car service by 1841. This was the only apparent alteration to the above organisation during the intervening three years. \textsuperscript{114} The Limerick-Tulla car may have disappeared by 1845 when the newly established Ennis-Kildysart Mail Car\textsuperscript{115} became the latest addition to the relatively intricate local post-office communications network, both mails and public transport, which had developed by then.

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Turning to the final part of the examination, we find that our first real glimpse of public transport services on the local level is provided by a national directory which was published in 1824. According to this, a mail car departed every day for Newcastle West from the G.P.O., Limerick, while a day car travelled from Glenn’s Hotel, William Street, to Newcastle. Pallaskenry had a mail car three days a week from Sheehy’s of Roches Street, while an ordinary day car served Pallaskenry from John Hanley’s, also in Roches Street. These were the only local services in 1824, as the other Co. Limerick towns which were served were those on the routes of vehicles which went outside the county boundary and which have been dealt with above. An instance of the relatively undeveloped state of public transport facilities at the time is obvious from the fact that Rathkeale was the nearest point to Tarbert where public transport services would be had in 1824, while public transport was virtually unknown in County Clare in the 1820s. Apart from the mail coach and caravan to Limerick, no other service appears to have issued from Ennis which seems to have acted rather as a receiving-point for Limerick city-derived traffic rather than developing as a transport focus in its own right. Even Kilrush seems to have been more important in this regard, for not only did it have its previously-mentioned boat links with Limerick but boasted of two hotels, one more than Ennis had, one of them, the Kilrush Bathing Hotel, being singled out as “the establishment of most notice . . . . which for situation, elegance and accommodation may vie with any in this or the sister kingdom.” \textsuperscript{116}

Bianconi’s success which was almost entirely based on the jaunting-car and the variants of it which the proprietor developed, together with the advent of the mail car which was also centered on the jaunting car, contributed to herald the widespread use of the car in the 1830s when it was accepted as the vehicle most appropriate to the transport requirements, economic circumstances, and physical terrain of much of the countryside. The growing popularity of the jaunting car is evident in the increase in the number of new car services which were established on the local scene during the years before 1835. These included daily-except-Sunday cars from Limerick to Ballingarry (a six-seater which had an average of four passengers on board), Croom (three ten-seaters each of which averaged six passengers), Garryspillane, i.e. Garryspillane(?), a ten-seater which averaged seven passengers), Kilfinnan (an eight-seater which averaged five passengers), Newcastle West (a sixteen-seater, the average

\textsuperscript{114} Number, Names and Wages of Mail Guards employed by the Post-Office, Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1841 (431), XXVI, pp. 16-18.
\textsuperscript{115} Slater, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 235, 279 and 314.
\textsuperscript{116} Pigot, \textit{op. cit.}, 1824.
load on which was thirteen passengers), Newport (a ten-seater which averaged six passengers), Pallaskenry (a twelve-seater which was generally two-thirds full); and Rathkeale (a twelve-seater which was three-quarters full on average and a six-seater which averaged four passengers). Cars also linked Limerick with some of the larger Munster towns in 1833, viz.—Cork (an eleven-seater which averaged eight passengers), Tipperary (two six-seaters, each of which averaged five passengers), Tralee (a six-seater which was half-full on average), Killarney (an eleven-seater which averaged five passengers), and Waterford (a ten-seater which had an average passenger load of six). The cars which serviced Cork, Killarney, Tralee, Tipperary and Waterford were Bianconi-run enterprises. In addition to all these, Limerick also had a twelve-seater car to Killaloe via Castleconnell which was timed to suit the arrival and departure of the Steam Boats which plied between Killaloe and Shannon Harbour, a boat being substituted for the car during the summer months. A fifteen-seater coach which had an average passenger load of six also ran between Limerick and Killaloe. The only outstanding public transport conveyance which ran from Limerick in 1835 was the caravan to Shanagolden; this was a sixteen-seater vehicle and carried an average of nine passengers on board. The only transport service which originated from anywhere in Limerick other than the city at this time, appears to have been the Rathkeale—Cork eight-seater car which was normally about half-full.\(^{117}\)

The only car, apart from the mail cars, which ran from Ennis in 1835 was the daily six-seater to Killenora. Killaloe appears to have had a cross-country caravan service to Milltown-Malbay, in addition to the car and coach which linked the town with Limerick and the mail car to Ennis. The caravan had fourteen seats, two less than the Limerick-Shanagolden caravan, then the only other vehicle of its kind in the area. The charge on both was 1d. per mile. Although this was for inside accommodation it was ½d. per mile less than the average fares of the mail and day cars on the same routes;\(^{118}\) the compensation may have been in the greater speed at which the car travelled.

It is unfortunate that the scope of a locally published directory of 1838 was limited to Limerick city only. Its list of public transport services, if reliable, makes no mention of the Ballingarry, Garryspillane, Killinane, Newcastle West, Newport and Pallaskenry cars from Limerick, nor of the car and coach to Killaloe, all of which have been noted as operating three years before. The Shanagolden caravan is also missing from the list, though this may have been superseded by or grown into the car services to Glin and Shanagolden (from Limerick) which appear in the 1838 directory. It seems that Limerick had then two daily cars to Croom, two to Rathkeale, as well as a car each to Shanagolden and Glin in addition to the mail coaches, the three Ennis-bound coaches, and the various Bianconi-owned cars.\(^{119}\)

Another locally-published directory of two years later names even fewer public transport services with a Limerick city origin. While the mail coaches and the Bianconi cars were listed unchanged, the number of coaches between Limerick and Ennis appears to have been reduced from three to two by 1840, one of the Rathkeale cars seems to have been extended to Newcastle West, and the Shanagolden car is not to be found in the list. While the compiler, Kinder, included the two Croom cars and


\(^{118}\) ibid., p. 34.

the Tulla mail car from Limerick, the absence from his list of any car to Tipperary,\textsuperscript{120} which was almost certainly an omission in the light of the evidence of 1838 and 1846, seriously questions the reliability of the whole work. It seems that the compilers of local directories, Deane and Kinder, did not attend to the accuracy and exhaustiveness of their lists of coach and car services with the care of the Railway Commissioners of 1835 or of Sleater’s directory of 1846. In this light, it is, perhaps, prudent to regard the coaches and cars in their lists as being operative while at the same time not accepting their omission of certain services as unequivocal evidence that all of these had been taken off the road.

Sleater’s exhaustive compilation of 1846 provides a final and revealing account of the horse-drawn public transport services which operated in North Munster on the eve of the arrival of the railway in Limerick. Apart from separate mail coaches to Dublin, Cork, Galway, Tralee, and Waterford, and individual stage coaches to Ennis and Nenagh (known as the ‘company’s Coach’), all of which started from Cruise’s Hotel, Limerick had a caravan service to Ennis as well as mail cars to Clonmel and Listowel. The network of jaunting-cars from Limerick was as comprehensive in 1846 as it had been in 1835, indicating that the inferred reductions in these services, as published by Deane and Kinder in 1838 and 1840 respectively, can hardly have been real. Cars left Limerick every day, except Sunday, for Adare, Broadford-Tulla, Castleconnell (2), Charleville, Cork (2), Croom-Ballingarry, Ennis (2), Kilkenny-Waterford, Loughill, Newcastle West (2), Newport, Pallaskenry, Tipperary and Waterford, which shows that the city was not only linked with its own county towns but with the larger towns of Munster as well.

Newcastle West appears to be the only town in Co. Limerick which originated a public transport service to a centre outside the county boundary in 1846. This was a daily car which linked it with Cork and which recalls the Rathkeale-Cork car of 1835. It was also mentioned in a Cork-published directory of 1844 which included a Cork-Drumcolliher car\textsuperscript{131} which was either short-lived and had been taken off the road by 1846 or did not come to Sleater’s notice.

By 1846 Ennis had fully developed as the hub of what was by then a fairly active network of transport services in Co. Clare. It had cars to Corofin (2), Limerick (2), and Loughrea, the latter recalling Ennis’ old link with South Galway in the days of Copperthwaite and Company seventy years earlier. Mail cars to Milltown-Mulbay, Kilrush and Kildysart also issued from Ennis at this time, as did a daily coach and van to Limerick. Bianconi’s Ennis office was in Jail Street, from which started the Loughrea, Kildysart and Kilrush cars. Kilrush continued in its capacity as the transport disseminating focus of West Clare. As well as receiving a mail car from Ennis every day and sending daily cars to nearby Kilkee, it was the terminus of steamer services which plied along the Shannon estuary from Limerick. Killaloe was the third Co. Clare town to have developed as a significant transport focus by the middle of the 1840s. It had two packets to Limerick every day, except Sunday,

\textsuperscript{120} Kinder, \textit{op. cit.}, 1840, pp. 77-78.

\textsuperscript{131} Alexander Aldwell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 8. The extra value of this work is that, unlike Sleater, it sets out fares. The full fares from Cork to Drumcolliher and Newcastle West were 6/- and 7/- respectively. These compare with the 7/6 which charged for the full journey on the two Limerick-Cork cars at the time, one of which was Bianconi owned. The inside and outside fares on the Limerick-Cork coach were 15/- and 8/6, the latter showing the almost universal approximation of the outside coach fare to that of the jaunting car.
and a steamer to Portumna which was timed to meet the packet for Dublin.\(^{122}\)

It is always important to remember that it was not only the drivers of the various coaches and cars who were involved in the operation of public transport. There were also in the background numerous trades, services, and institutions, without which the maintenance of the services and the vehicles would have been impossible. Some of the occupations which were obviously involved include drivers and carmen, while many who were less directly concerned include hotel and inn keepers, livery-stable keepers, post-masters, turnpike-tollgate keepers, road-workers, blacksmiths, fodder-purveyors, coach and carmakers, wheelwrights, saddlers and harnessmakers, and the even less numerous trades such as those of ropemaker, whipmaker and lampmaker.

In 1841, 3.29\% (617 persons) of Limerick city’s adult working population of 18,776 were engaged in one or other of these businesses. The ratio of the population involved in similar occupations in Co. Limerick was 1.3\% or 1,480 of an adult working population of 109,810. Showing that the impact of public transport was greater in urban than in rural milieux, the Co. Clare figure of 1.12\% (i.e. 1,266 persons) out of a possible 112,891 much more closely parallels that of the county than the city of Limerick. The most numerous of all the trades involved was that of blacksmith; of the 24,882 blacksmiths in the Ireland of 1841, 1,059 (i.e. 4.3\%) operated in Limerick city and county while 800, or 3.2\% of the national total, lived and worked in Co. Clare. 10.03\% (329) of the country’s carmen were then based in Limerick, the Clare total being 4.8\% (159). Only 32 coach and car drivers worked in Limerick while Clare had 9 involved in these occupations. Clare had a high number of cartmakers, 6.1\% or 47 of the 717 then in Ireland; only 3.3\% worked in Limerick. Conversely, Limerick had a higher proportion of the county’s 1,965 wheelwrights, 2.4\%, as against Clare’s 1.6\% of the total. Limerick had 44 or 3.1\% of the country’s 1,399 coach and car makers while Clare had 21 or 1.5\%. 29 (1.6\%) of the country’s 1,735 hotel and innkeepers were based in Limerick and 17 or 1\% lived in Co. Clare.\(^{123}\) Not only was the proportion of worker-participation in trades and occupations connected with public transport much higher in urban (which includes large towns such as Ennis for present purposes) areas, but certain trades and occupations among those which have been reviewed tend to establish themselves as having a rural or urban bias, in which cases it is clear that those which are numerically higher in the city and large towns tend to be more closely involved with public transport than those in the countryside. Contrast in this regard the higher proportion of drivers, carmen, coach and carmakers, and hotel keepers who operated in Limerick city with the higher proportion of cartmakers and blacksmiths who worked in Co. Clare and in the rural areas of Co. Limerick.

While the foregoing census figures are useful general indices of those engaged in the occupations with which the student of public transport history is interested, they are only available for counties in general and do not indicate the number of establishments in which various groups of these tradesmen were employed. Despite their drawbacks and inaccuracies, it is only the directorial accounts which give indications of the numbers of the various establishments as well as valuable breakdowns of the numbers of these in some of the smaller towns. It should be emphasised that statistics gleaned from directories are no more than general indications of patterns and cannot generally be taken as fully reliable.

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\(^{122}\) Slater, *op. cit.*, passim.

\(^{123}\) *Report of the Commissioners appointed to take the Census of Ireland for the Year 1841*, Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1843 (503), XXIV. pp. 164, 210, 224 and 440.
Pigot found four coachmaking businesses, seven hotels, a wheelwright and a harnessmaker in Limerick in 1820.\textsuperscript{124} Four years later he noted twice as many coachmakers but no change in the numbers of the other occupations. The inclusion of a "coach proprietor" at 54 William Street is noteworthy, though the exact nature of the business remains a mystery.\textsuperscript{125} The 1841 Census found fifteen hotels, Dean (1838) sixteen, Kinder (1840) nine, and Sleater (1846) thirteen, which probably means that the number of hotels in Limerick varied between thirteen and sixteen. While Deane found seven coachbuilders, Kinder listed only two and Sleater nine. The Census figure totalled thirty-nine, which included carmakers and which is hardly a guide to the number of factories engaged in the business of coachbuilding, the Dean and Sleater numbers being probably much closer to the number of factories. Similarly with saddlers and harnessmakers, of whom Pigot found eight in 1824, Dean seven, Kinder seven saddlers and five harnessmakers, and Sleater thirteen saddlers and harnessmakers—the 1841 Census, however, found twenty-seven saddlers and forty-one harnessmakers (including one woman!) in Limerick city, which reinforces our suspicion that the directories tend to list the number of establishments which conducted certain businesses and accommodated specific trades, rather than providing a head-count of all the personnel involved in these trades as was the case with the Census returns. The same conclusion emerges from the fact that though the Census found twenty-one coach and car drivers, Sleater listed only six car owners and posting establishments. The close relationship of the hotel and livery-stable businesses was evident in 1846, when five of Limerick's hoteliers were among the city's fourteen livery-stable keepers.\textsuperscript{126}

In 1824 Pigot found that Kilmallock's "consequence and trade are now annihilated, the shops few and very small . . . . all that remains to it are a good inn where every convenience and accommodation may be obtained."\textsuperscript{127} The prosperity of the inn may have been due in large measure to the patronage conferred upon it by travellers on the Limerick-Cork mail and stage coaches which had a stop in the town. Twenty years later, when Thomas Hussey was Bianconi's agent in the town, Kilmallock still maintained a "respectable inn," the Freemason's Arms Hotel, kept by the Gilbertson family; that it continued to be the town's "principal business establishment"\textsuperscript{128} appears to testify to the beneficial effect which passing traffic contributed in at least one poor town which originated no public transport services of its own. Nearby at Bruff, the Carrery Arms Hotel was another calling point along this route. This building also housed the local post-office,\textsuperscript{129} which was a further convenience to travellers and which made it the undoubted communications nerve-centre of the locality.

Rathkeale had three hotels in 1824, James Delahunt's King's Arms Hotel (and livery stables), Samuel Lawrence's Inn (and livery stables), and William Mulcahy's Inn; it also had a coachmaker, Thomas Walsh, as well as a wheelwright and saddler. Despite suggestions of vigorous transport activity which these places and occupations

\textsuperscript{124} Pigot, \textit{op. cit.}, 1820, pp. 204-8.
\textsuperscript{125} Pigot, \textit{op. cit.}, 1824, p. 291.
\textsuperscript{127} Pigot, \textit{op. cit.}, 1824, pp. 276-7.
\textsuperscript{128} Sleater, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 251.
\textsuperscript{129} \textit{Ibid.}
might give, the only public transport conveyance which Rathkeale had in 1824 was the Limerick-Newcastle West mail car which passed through it. On the other hand, Rathkeale must have been a relatively prosperous centre through which passengers filtered to Newcastle and places west, and north-west to the Glin-Tarbert area, as even Tarbert, which had two hotels of its own in 1824, had “no regular conveyance nearer than Rathkeale.” Rathkeale appears to have retained the various trades and establishments which derived portion of their incomes from the public transport industry until well into the 1840s when it had two hotels, Lawrence’s, and William Mulcahy’s King’s Arms (he, presumably, having bought out Delahunty), two saddlers and collarmakers, five wheelwrights and six blacksmiths; this was at a time when the town had two car services to Limerick and when the Limerick-Tralee and Limerick-Newcastle West vehicles went through the town.

While Newcastle West acted as mail despatch centre from Abbeyfeale in 1824, when it had a mail car connection with Limerick, it appears to have had fewer of the occupations and trades associated with public transport than had Rathkeale, a town which originated no service of its own. Apart from Robert Cussen’s Courtney Arms Hotel and livery stables, Pigot credits it with three saddlers, and these appear to be the only others in the town whose income was affected by public transport. Even though it had cars to Cork and Limerick, and road freight carrier services to Limerick as well as conducting Tralee-Limerick traffic through its streets, the only additional relevant occupation which Sleator found in the town twenty years later was that of a wheelwright. Some of the other Co. Limerick towns for which we have trade statistics for 1846 include Adare, which had Margaret Dowlings’s Dunraven Arms Inn and Posting House, and Croom which is an example of a town where transport industries were based on rural needs rather than being connected directly with public transport—it had a cartwright, two wheelwrights and a blacksmith. Though in Co. Kerry, Tarbert in 1846 continued to serve the transport needs of a wide hinterland, including much of North-West Co. Limerick, when it had two hotels, two wheelwrights and four blacksmiths, as well as “a commodious road and harbour.” We are told that “it enjoys some advantages from the visits of tourists and travellers” as it was “the landing place for passengers from Dublin and Limerick to Tralee and the Lakes of Killarney to the latter places.” Castleconnell was probably the only town in Co. Limerick which in any way benefited from the infant tourist trade in the 1820s, when it had John Dundon’s Hotel, though the importance of its spa as a pleasure and health resort was in decline since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, Sleator found two hotels, Dowling’s and the Spa, in the town in 1846.

Ennis’ one hotel (Stammer’s) and three saddlers appear to be the only evidences

130 Pigot, *op. cit.* 1824, p. 305.
134 Sleater, *op. cit.*, p. 298.
that some of its citizens gained because of its mail coach and two caravan links with Limerick in 1824.\textsuperscript{141} Its three coachbuilders, four hotels, six livery-stable keepers (including two of the hoteliers), seven saddlers and harnessmakers, fifteen blacksmiths and five wheelwrights twenty years later are almost certainly connected with its having developed into a very important transport generating focus at that time, for by 1846, in addition to road freight transport to Limerick, the town had separate public transport links with Limerick, Loughrea, Galway, Corofin, Kildysart, Miltown-Malbay and Kilrush.\textsuperscript{142} Even Kilrush had more outward sign of transport activity in 1824, with its two hotels (the Kilrush Bathing Hotel and the Vandelouer Arms),\textsuperscript{143} than had Ennis. That the pace of transport development was not as intense in the ensuing years as it was in Ennis is shown by Kilrush's having a mail car to Ennis and day cars to Kilkee, in addition to acting as terminus for the steamers which plied along the Shannon estuary, which may be connected with its still having the same number of hotels in 1846 as well as an extra saddler and harnessmaker, and ten blacksmiths who were probably only marginally affected by public transport.\textsuperscript{144} Among other Co. Clare towns included by Sleater is Kilkee, with its four hotels and daily cars to the local transport focus which was Kilrush,\textsuperscript{145} the hotels tend to show that tourism was already making inroads into the West Clare economy. Kilkeeloo had Gibbon's Hotel ("a remarkably well-conducted house") as well as three blacksmiths and two saddlers in the mid 1840s,\textsuperscript{146} when the main volume of traffic appears to have shifted from the road to being water-borne.

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Great advances occurred in transport conditions in the century or so before 1859. The journey from Dublin to Limerick by road was reduced from days to hours in this period. Areas of the countryside in general, including large tracts of counties Limerick and Clare, were opened up and brought into closer contact with other parts of Ireland and, \textit{ipso facto}, with the world at large. The network of mail and day cars which traversed the countryside in increasing numbers from the late 1820s onwards not only facilitated public transport into hitherto cut-off regions but also disseminated the mail. More than that, it broadened men's horizons and probably rang the death-knell for many of the time-worn customs, pastimes and traditions which flourished in an agrarian society which had been for long insulated from external contact through the lack of roads and transport services but which was now vulnerable to alien influence. The development of public transport coupled with the provision of better roads also hastened the advent of many nineteenth century administrative and political changes. It should be appreciated that many of the changes are inseparable; for instance, the Board of Works engineers were enabled to make their tours of inspection and surveys of requirements which resulted in the construction of roads and piers in certain areas because some of the Grand Jury roads were already relatively far-reaching, while the new roads opened up the country still more by providing the mail car with an

\textsuperscript{141} Pigot, \textit{op. cit.}, 1824, p. 266.
\textsuperscript{142} Sleater, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 254.
\textsuperscript{143} Pigot, \textit{op. cit.}, 1824, p. 277.
\textsuperscript{144} Sleater, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 252-253.
\textsuperscript{145} Ibid., p. 244.
\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., p. 245.
enlarged stage. The building of roads not only provided famine relief but enabled Board of Health doctors to make quicker reports about the distressed state of the country at various times. Improved communications made the Ordnance Survey possible, while the task of the police was likewise made easier. The infant tourist industry based on an ever increasing number of foreign travellers and a more leisured middle class would have been impossible without the revolution which had occurred in communications, thanks to better roads and more frequent and farflung transport services. The beginnings of modern political electioneering and agitation which came with the rapid spread of news and information about meetings was due largely to the mixing of passengers on public transport conveyances. Much of the success of Daniel O’Connell’s ‘Monster Meetings’ had its origin in the rapid spread of news over a wide area; the culmination of this came in August 1864 when an estimated half a million people filled Dublin’s O’Connell Street for the unveiling of the O’Connell Memorial—a high percentage of these had travelled to Dublin from the country. This would have been impossible less than a century or even a half century before. It should be remembered that despite all these advances North Munster sustained some of the severest of the many famines and hardships of the early half of the nineteenth century,147 and that while the world had become much ‘smaller’ the majority continued to exist in their time honoured ways,148 being only marginally affected by what could be termed the transport revolution.

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