

# Limerick Tokens of the 17th Century

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*During the second half of the 17th century there were 13, perhaps 14, traders issuing tokens in Limerick. An attempt is made here to identify those issuers, and the 19 known tokens are described; also the only known issuer from Co. Clare, a trader with probably Limerick connections.*

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After the upheavals of the middle of the 17th century there was a dearth of small change in circulation in Ireland, a scarcity which the government of Cromwell did little or nothing to relieve. In many towns merchants and traders began minting their own tokens, taking into their hands what had been a royal prerogative. These private pieces had no official status, but they were normally exchanged for coin of the realm on demand to the issuer.<sup>1</sup> In addition to traders' tokens, small change was issued by some local authorities. These latter coins seemed to have enjoyed a certain standing and in some cases regulations as to their use and rate of exchange were made by municipal ordinance.<sup>2</sup> The first of the traders' tokens appeared in Dublin in 1653 and similar coins were issued in several towns in Ireland during the period of the Commonwealth.

On the restoration of Charles II in 1660, a monopoly was granted to Sir Thomas Armstrong, for a term of twenty-one years, for the coining of official Irish farthings. In the following year the issue of tokens was prohibited by proclamation. There was considerable opposition to Armstrong's farthings, however, and comparatively few were issued. This meant that the need for small change had not been satisfactorily met by the government and, consequently, the tokens made their reappearance in 1663. During the following ten years large numbers of traders' tokens were put into circulation in many towns all over Ireland. In 1773 another proclamation forbade the issue of tokens without royal licence. This prohibition seems to have been more successful than the earlier and the issuing of tokens was greatly reduced. From 1674 to 1679 only twenty-three dated tokens are known; three of these were issued at Limerick. In 1680 Irish regal halfpennies were issued under a new patent granted to Sir Thomas Armstrong and Colonel George Legg, for a term of twenty-one years;<sup>3</sup> the issue of tokens was completely forbidden, but it is clear from the very worn condition of many of the pieces which have survived that they must have continued in circulation for many years after 1679.<sup>4</sup>

From 1653 to 1679 more than 800 different tokens were issued by more than 750 different issuers in 170 cities and towns throughout Ireland. Nor surprisingly, Dublin had the greatest number, with 145 issuers and over 170 varieties of token. What is surprising is that some of the other principal cities and towns produced very low numbers of tokens. Thus, while Galway is known to have had 32 issuers, Kilkenny had 19, Cork had only 10 and the city

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<sup>1</sup>Peter Seaby, *Coins and Tokens of Ireland*, London 1970, pp. 107-108.

<sup>2</sup>Maurice Lenihan, *Limerick, Its History and Antiquities*, Limerick 1866 (reprinted 1967), p. 200; John G. A. Prim, "Tradesmen's Tokens in Kilkenny", *J. Roy. Soc. Antiq. Ireland*, 2(1852), 172-173.

<sup>3</sup>Peter Seaby, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 108.

which is of most concern to us, Limerick, had only 13 or, at the most, 14 issuers of tokens, with five or possibly six issued in the county.<sup>5</sup>

For many years 'tradesmen's tokens' received little attention from numismatists or historians. In 1745 Walter Harris in his edition of *Ware's Antiquities of Ireland* noted that small change had been issued by merchants in Dublin and elsewhere during the Cromwellian period.<sup>6</sup> Four years later James Simon published an account of Irish coins in which he refers to the use of copper tokens in Ireland during the Commonwealth and under Charles II.<sup>7</sup> However, he seems to have accorded little importance to them and refers to nine issuers only, seven in Dublin, one in Kilkenny and one in Kinsale. A supplement to Simon's work, by Thomas Snelling, was published in 1776.<sup>8</sup> This gives some additional information on the 17th century small change but it is apparent that Snelling, like Simon, did not consider the humble tokens worthy of serious study by numismatists.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, many collectors would not include them in their cabinets.

It was not until the 19th century that the tokens were studied seriously and the results of that study published. In 1839 John Lindsay, a Cork numismatist, published a list of Irish tokens and included in this list were 178 belonging to the 17th century.<sup>10</sup> Ten years later Aquilla Smith, the most renowned Irish numismatist of the 19th century, published his own list in the *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*. This new list, together with a supplement published in a subsequent volume, brought the number of known 17th century tokens up to 624.<sup>11</sup> In 1858 William Boyne published *Trade Tokens Issued in the Seventeenth Century*, which included a section on Ireland. Boyne's work was revised by George C. Williamson and published in two volumes in 1889-1891. Williamson's revised version contains biographical details of some of the issuers but, unfortunately, he seems to have done little research on Limerick. The work was reprinted in three volumes in 1967; the Irish section is in the third volume. In 1931 R. A. S. Macalister published "A Catalogue of the Irish Traders' Tokens in the Collection of the Royal Irish Academy"; this includes a large selection on the 17th century pieces.<sup>12</sup> *Seaby's Coins and Tokens of Ireland*, published in 1970, lists all the then known 17th century Irish tokens.

## Limerick

One of the earliest local historians to show interest in the tokens was John Ferrar of Limerick. In his second *History of Limerick*, published in 1787, he refers to the issuing of tokens in Limerick during the reign of Charles II and includes a plate with engravings of the tokens of ten different issuers.<sup>13</sup> FitzGerald and McGregor refer to the need for small change which was responsible for the appearance of the tokens and they give

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 107-109, 114, 118-121, 122 and 126-127.

<sup>6</sup>Aquilla Smith, "Kilkenny Tradesmen's Tokens", *J. Roy. Soc. Antiq. Ireland*, 2(1852), 156.

<sup>7</sup>James Simon, *An Essay Toward an Historical Account of Irish Coins and the Currency of Foreign Monies in Ireland*, Dublin 1749 (reprinted, with "Supplement" (see fn. 9) Dublin 1810).

<sup>8</sup>Michael Dolley, *Medieval Anglo-Irish Coins*, London 1972, p. 75.

<sup>9</sup>Thomas Snelling, *Supplement to Mr. Simon's Essay on Irish Coins*, London 1776 (included in the reprint of Simon's work, 1810).

<sup>10</sup>Aquilla Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

<sup>11</sup>Aquilla Smith, (a) "Catalogue of the Tradesmen's Tokens Current in Ireland between the years 1637 and 1679", *Proc. Roy. Irish Acad.*, 4(1847-50), Appendix IV, pp. xxvii-liv.; (b) "Supplement" to that catalogue, *Proc. Roy. Irish Acad.*, 5(1850-53), Appendix VII, pp. lxxix-lxxxviii.

<sup>12</sup>R. A. S. Macalister, "A Catalogue of the Irish Traders' Tokens in the Collection of the Royal Irish Academy", *Proc. Roy. Irish Acad.*, 40,C(1931).

<sup>13</sup>John Ferrar, *The History of Limerick*, Limerick 1787, pp. 121-122.

descriptions of two of them, those of Thomas Linch and Edward Wight.<sup>14</sup> Maurice Lenihan, in his *History*, publishes a list, supplied by Aquilla Smith, of all the known Limerick tokens of the period. Lenihan also includes a plate with drawings of the tokens of the same ten issuers included by Ferrar.<sup>15</sup>

## THE LIMERICK TOKENS AND THEIR ISSUERS

In attempting to identify the issuers I have found the names of several of them among those who were prominent in the civic and commercial life of the city during that period. One cannot, however, be certain that those citizens of Limerick whose names appear in the contemporary records were, in all cases, the same persons who issued the tokens. On this cautious note I approach the examination of the individual coins.

(The coin illustrations are adapted from those in Lenihan and Ferrar, and based on descriptions in Macalister.)

### 1. Clare-Limerick



On the one side of the token is inscribed 'CLARE' and on the other side 'LIMERICK'. There are four known varieties, all of which are described by Williamson<sup>16</sup> and illustrated in Lenihan's *History*. The most interesting one has 'CLARE' on the Obverse around a representation of three tall separate towers while on the Reverse is depicted a castle or

castle gatehouse surrounded by the inscription 'LIMERICK'. The castle on the Reverse almost certainly represents the Arms of the City of Limerick. Could the three towers on the Obverse have any connection with the three towers which are said to be a representation of Mungret Gate Tower which was erected in 1642 or 1643? These are reproduced by Lenihan (see illustration) who is at pains to point out that they did not represent the ancient arms of the city.<sup>17</sup> It is possible that the token had semi-official status and that it was issued for use in Limerick and Clare during the Commonwealth. There is an example on display in the Limerick City Museum where the suggested date is c.1660.



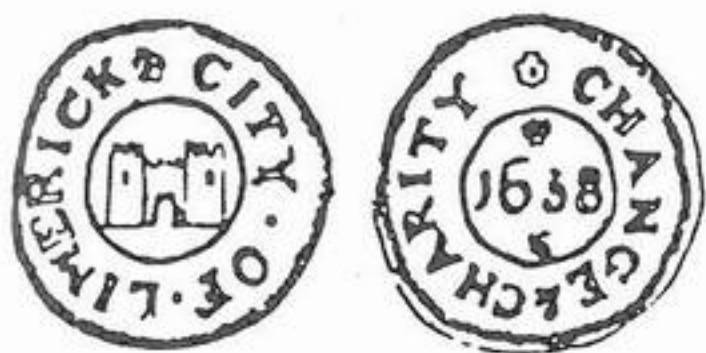
<sup>14</sup>The Rev. P. FitzGerald and J. J. McGregor, *The History &c. of Limerick*, Vol. 2, 1827, Appendix V, pp. xxiv-xxv.

<sup>15</sup>Maurice Lenihan, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

<sup>16</sup>George C. Williamson, *Trade Tokens Issued in the Seventeenth Century, 1889-91* (reprinted in three volumes, 1967), Vol. 3, p. 1399.

<sup>17</sup>Maurice Lenihan, *op. cit.*, p. 756.

## 2. Change and Charity



On the Obverse of this token the inscription 'CITY OF LIMERICK' surrounds a castle with two towers. The Reverse is inscribed 'CHANGE & CHARITY' with the date 1658 in the centre. There is a variant which has 'CITY OF LIMERICK' on the Obverse and 'CHANG. & CHARITY' on the Reverse. The legend would indicate that the token was issued

to alleviate the hardship caused to the poor by the lack of small change. As in the case of the previous coin there is no denomination, but the size suggests a value of a farthing. This is confirmed by Lenihan, who refers to these tokens in his *History*:

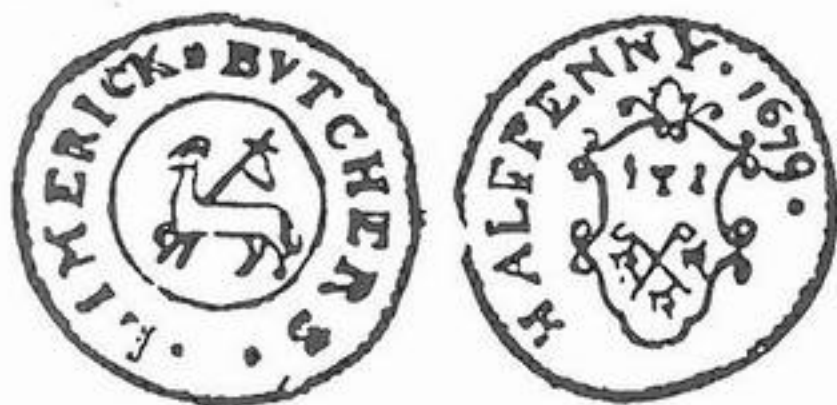
"...at a meeting of the Corporation, held in 1673, it was ordered that the Corporation farthings, stamped in 1658, should pass current in the City and Liberties, at the rate of 20s. for 18s. . . . on the 23rd October, 1673, these farthings were called in by the Corporation and reissued at par."

Lenihan had got his information from a Corporation Book in the British Museum.<sup>18</sup> We know, therefore, that the tokens were issued under the authority of the Corporation and that they were still in circulation fifteen years later with the consent of that body. It is reasonable to assume that the castle on the Obverse of the coin represents the Arms of the city.

Limerick had been under military rule until 1656, when the Puritans elected "twelve English aldermen" who in turn elected Colonel Henry Ingoldsby as Mayor. In 1657 the mayor was another soldier, Captain Ralf Wilson. William Yarwell was mayor in 1658.

A specimen of this token is in the Limerick Museum.

## 3. Limerick Butchers



On the Obverse of the token the words 'LIMERICK BUTCHERS' are inscribed around a paschal lamb holding a cross with pennon. The Reverse has the Butchers' Arms on a shield, surrounded by 'HALFPENNY' and the date 1679. Macalister says that the arms are those of the London Butchers' Company.<sup>19</sup> However, the arms of the Limerick

Victuallers' Company in 1731, as described by Lenihan, are very similar.<sup>20</sup> It is likely that the Limerick Butchers' Company had received its charter before 1678 and used its own arms on its token.<sup>21</sup> Ferrar notes that halfpence were coined by the Butchers' Company in 1679.<sup>22</sup>

Limerick Museum has a specimen of this token on display.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 200 and p. 200, fn. 1.

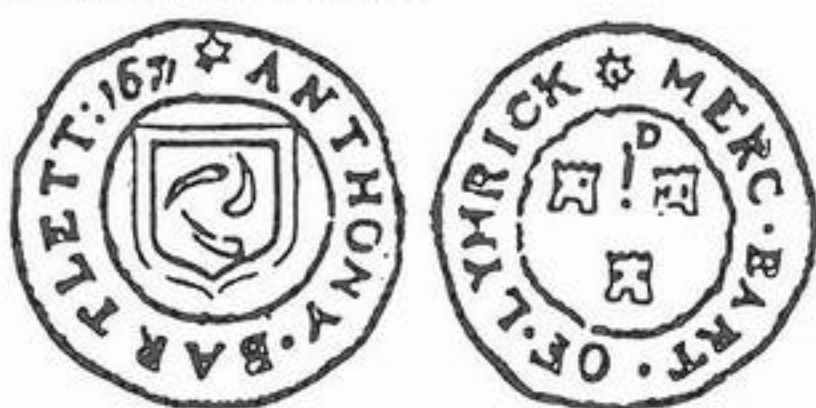
<sup>19</sup>R. A. S. Macalister, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>20</sup>Maurice Lenihan, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

<sup>21</sup>Robert Herbert, "The Trade Guilds of Limerick", *Nth. Munster Antiq. J.*, 2(1940-41), 125.

<sup>22</sup>John Ferrar, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

#### 4. Anthony Bartlett



On the Obverse of Bartlett's token are the words 'ANTHONY BARTLETT' and the date 1671, all surrounding a shield bearing three fish forming a triangle. The inscription on the Reverse reads 'MERC. BART. OF LYMRICK' (should it be read as 'BART. OF LYMRICK MERC.'?). In the centre of the Reverse are three castles, two above and one below.

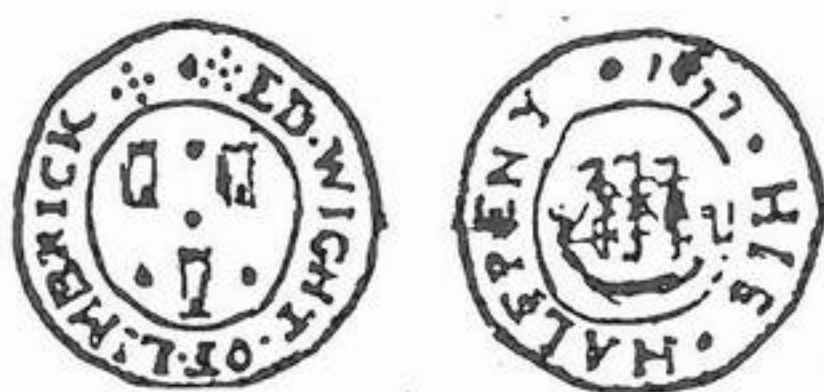
Between the two upper castles is the value 1d. There is a variant which is smaller, with no date on the Obverse, no value on the Reverse, and the inscription on the latter reading 'MERCHANT OF LYMRICK'.

In 1654 a Mr. Bartlett occupied a house, with yard, in St. Mary's Parish.<sup>23</sup> In 1659 Anthony Bartless (*sic*) is listed as a merchant in "Midle Ward on Ye East Side".<sup>24</sup> In 1667 Anthony Bartlett was Sheriff of the city and in that capacity signed a warrant authorizing certain fishermen to fish with nets in the River Shannon within the Liberties of Limerick.<sup>25</sup> In 1680 Bartlett succeeded Sir William King as Mayor of Limerick. Thomas Dineley, who wrote about Limerick in that year, had the following to say about its Mayor: "The present Mayor is Captain Anthony Bartlett a Citizen who can neither write nor read."<sup>26</sup> Maurice Lenihan took issue with Dineley on this. He wrote:

"Anthony Bartlett was Mayor of Limerick in 1680. Whether he was able to read or write, I know not; but were I to offer an opinion, I should say that Dineley's account of his literary poverty is rather apocryphal; for I find that in 1671, nine years before, and very likely the same person, Anthony Bartlett, merchant, issued a penny token, of which I have a very perfect specimen before me. . . . A man who did not know how to read or write might issue a token, and be captain in a Militia regiment, or in the Line, before now. . . . There have been mayors at times in all cities, too, whose education was neglected; but it is not probable that a wholly uneducated person should be chosen as chief magistrate in succession to Sir William King, who admittedly, was one of the best informed men of his time. . . ."<sup>27</sup>

An example of Bartlett's token can be seen at the Limerick Museum.

#### 5. Edward Wight



The Obverse of the token has the inscription 'ED. WIGHT OF LIMBRICK' around three castles, two above and one below. On the Reverse is inscribed, 'HIS HALFPENY' and the date 1677, surrounding a ship. A variant has 'LIMBRIK' spelt thus, without the C, on the Obverse.

According to Williamson, Edward Wight came from near Guildford, in Surrey. He was a soldier in Ireton's army and after the capture of the city and the end of the campaign he settled down in Limerick. In 1676, the year

<sup>23</sup>*The Civil Survey*, Vol. IV: Limerick, p. 431.

<sup>24</sup>Seamus Pender (Editor), *A Census of Ireland Circa 1659*, p. 263.

<sup>25</sup>A collection of documents relating to the Limerick Fisheries, printed and bound together and available in the Limerick City Reference Library [= *Limerick Fishery Book*], p. 192.

<sup>26</sup>"Extracts from the Journal of Thomas Dineley", *J. Roy. Soc. Antiq. Ireland*, 9(1867), 431.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, fn. 4.

before he issued his token, he was Sheriff.<sup>28</sup> In 1685 he was a witness to a lease involving the Corporation<sup>29</sup> and he was a member of the Common Council of Limerick in 1687.<sup>30</sup> He was Mayor of Limerick in 1694 and held that office again in 1711.<sup>31</sup> Edward Wight was married three times. His first wife was a Miss Hoare of Limerick. Their eldest son was Rice Wight. His second wife was a daughter of Alderman Henry Bindon. There were no children of this marriage. His third wife was a Miss Hawkesworth.<sup>32</sup> He was a prominent merchant and civic figure in Limerick for over fifty years, and his name (sometimes spelt 'Waight') appears in several documents and records of the period. He died in 1723. Several of his tokens were still in the possession of members of his family in the eighteenth century. The eldest son of his third marriage, John Wight, was admitted to the Common Council of Limerick in 1727 and was Mayor of the city in 1741; he died in 1782.<sup>33</sup>

There is a specimen of the token in the Limerick Museum.

#### 6. Edward Clarke



Clarke issued two tokens in 1670. On the Obverse of his penny token is the inscription 'EDWARD CLARKE' surrounding the value, 1d., and the letters 'EC'. The Reverse has the inscription 'OF LYMERICK' and the date 1670, around the representation of a cock. On the halfpenny token, which is smaller, the inscriptions are similar but the cock is on the

Obverse while the value, ½d., and the letters 'EC' are on the Reverse.

The Mayor of Limerick in 1675 was Edward Clarke while one of the Sheriffs in 1682 was Edward Clark.<sup>34</sup>

#### 7. John Bell

The Obverse of this token has the inscription 'IOHN BELL. MERCHT.' with a horse in the centre, while the Reverse has the inscription 'IN LIMRICK' and a tree. There is neither date nor value on the coin.<sup>35</sup> The name John Bell appears in a list of Lord Orrery's Limerick tenants in 1679.<sup>36</sup>

#### 8. John Bennet

The Obverse of the token has the words 'IOHN BENNET MERC' inscribed around the letters 'IMB' and the date 1668. On the Reverse is the inscription, 'LYMRICK PENNY' with a castle in the centre.<sup>37</sup> Seaby, in *Coins and Tokens of Ireland* (p. 127) attributes two other tokens to this issuer, one in 1663 and another, a halfpenny, in 1668.

<sup>28</sup>George C. Williamson, *op. cit.*, p. 1400.

<sup>29</sup>*Limerick Fishery Book*, pp. 220-223.

<sup>30</sup>Maurice Lenihan, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

<sup>31</sup>John Ferrar, *op. cit.*, pp. 283-284.

<sup>32</sup>George C. Williamson, *op. cit.*, pp. 1401-1402.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*; John Ferrar, *Limerick Directory*, 1769, p. 20.

<sup>34</sup>John Ferrar, *op. cit.* (1787), p. 282.

<sup>35</sup>George C. Williamson, *op. cit.*, p. 1399.

<sup>36</sup>*Calendar of the Orrery Papers*, p. 220.

<sup>37</sup>R. A. S. Macalister, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

There was a Mr. Benett in St. John's Parish in 1654.<sup>38</sup> In 1659 Alderman Bennet was among the chief citizens of Limerick in "Midle Ward on Ye West Side".<sup>39</sup> In 1668 John Bennet was Sheriff of the city.<sup>40</sup> In 1670 he appended his name as a witness to a lease granted by the Corporation to a Limerick merchant. The name appears in Corporation Rent Rolls for 1674, 1677 and 1678. The entry for 1677 reads thus: "John Bennet, for halfe a yrs. Rt. of ye duties of St. John's Gate, 78L."<sup>41</sup> The name also appears in the list of Lord Orrery's Limerick tenants in 1679.<sup>42</sup>

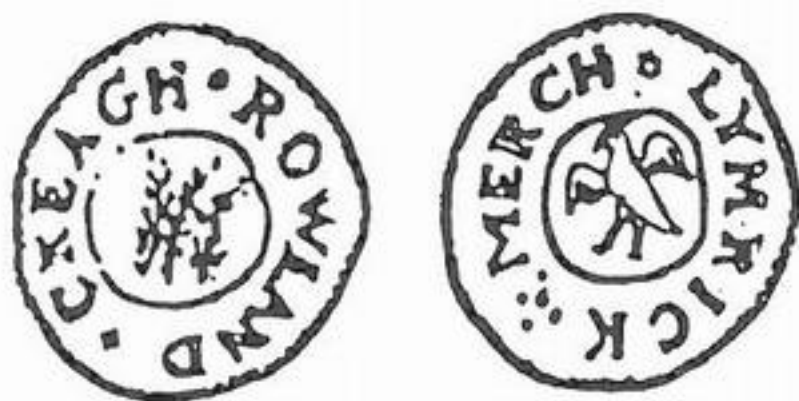
## 9. Richard Pearce

The Obverse of the token has the inscription, 'RICHARD PEARCE OF' surrounding a mortar and pestle on a stand. On the Reverse is written, 'LIMRICK APOTHECAR' around the letters, 'RPM' and the date 1668. There is no denomination. There is at least one variant.

The issuer was probably a Quaker. According to an old Quaker manuscript, "Richard Pearce had taken from him for priests maintenance (called poundage money) a brass mortar and pestle."<sup>43</sup> That was in 1672. In the same year Richard Pierce of Limerick received a consignment of tobacco from Antigua.<sup>44</sup> Richard Pierce's house in Limerick was valued at £18 a year in 1673.<sup>45</sup>

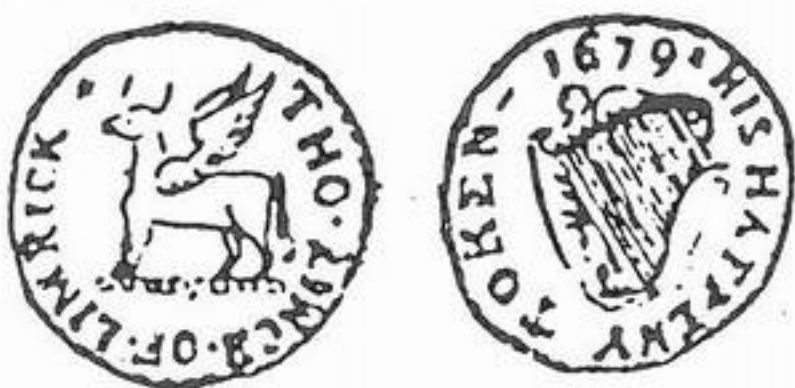
A specimen is displayed in Limerick Museum.

## 10. Rowland Creagh



'ROWLAND CREAGH' is inscribed around three lillies on the Obverse of the token. On the Reverse is 'LYMRICK MERCH' surrounding a dove bearing an olive-branch. The coin has neither date nor denomination.

## 11. Thomas Linch



On the Obverse is the inscription, 'THO. LINCH OF LIMRICK' around a winged bull. 'HIS HALFPENY TOKEN' and the date 1679 are inscribed around a harp on the Reverse. The issuer was probably a butcher.

There is a specimen of the token in the Limerick Museum.

<sup>38</sup>*The Civil Survey*, Vol. IV: Limerick, p. 415.

<sup>39</sup>Pender, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

<sup>40</sup>Maurice Lenihan, *op. cit.*, p. 703.

<sup>41</sup>*Limerick Fishery Book*, pp. 191, 199, 201 and 202.

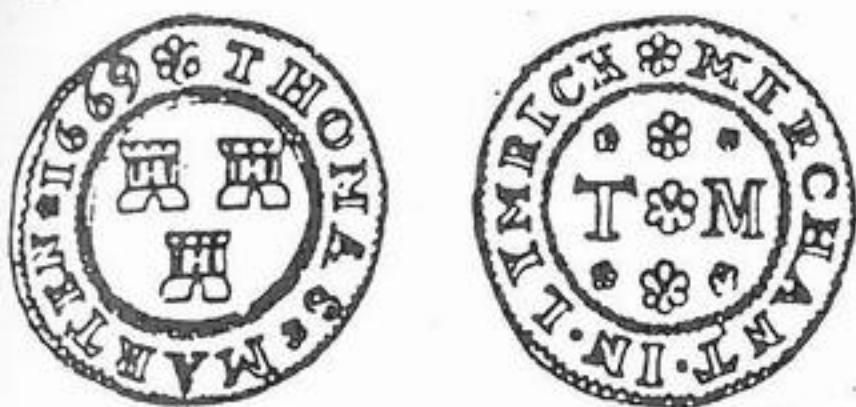
<sup>42</sup>*Orrery Papers*, p. 220.

<sup>43</sup>Robert Herbert, "The City of Limerick Public Library and Museum", *Nth. Munster Antiq. J.*, 2(1940-41), 88.

<sup>44</sup>Maurice Lenihan, *op. cit.*, p. 703.

<sup>45</sup>*Orrery Papers*, p. 118.

## 12. Thomas Marten



The Obverse has the inscription, 'THOMAS MARTEN' and the date 1669 surrounding three castles, two above and one below. The Reverse has 'MERCHANT IN LYMRICK' with the letters 'TM' in the centre. There is a variant with 'LIMERICK' spelt thus. In 1654 Mr. Martin occupied a house, valued at £40, in St. Mary's Parish.<sup>46</sup> In 1659 Tho : Martin

was a merchant in "Midle Ward on Ye East Side". Thomas Martin was among those entrusted with the task of carrying out the directives of the Poll Money Ordinance of 1660, in Limerick City.<sup>47</sup> One of the Sheriffs in 1663 was Thomas Martin and in the same year the name Thomas Marten appears on an agreement between Thomas Yarwell, Clerk of the Stores and Edward Kempe of Limerick, tiler and bricklayer, "for repairing the roof of the great store house in the King's Castle, Limerick."<sup>49</sup>

One of these tokens is displayed in Limerick Museum.

## 13. William Rimpland

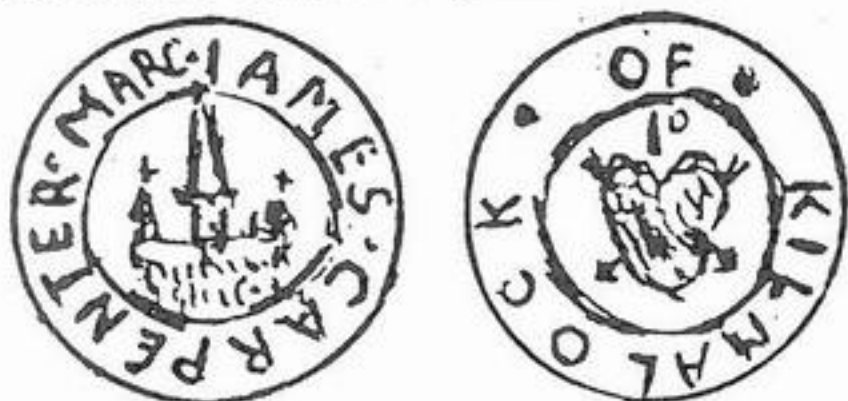
Two tokens are attributed to this issuer who was probably a chandler.

- (a) The Obverse has the inscription 'WILLIAM RIMPLAND' around a man making candles. The Reverse has 'IN LIMBRICKE. HIS HALF . PENY' and the date 1679.
- (b) 'WILLIAM RIMPLAND' is inscribed around a man at a still on the Obverse, while the Reverse has 'IN LIMBRICK. HIS HAL. PENY' and a different date: 1669.<sup>50</sup>

## 14. B G.

The Obverse of the token has the inscription, 'OF LIMERICK' and the letters 'B.G.' On the Reverse is written, 'NEAR KEY LANE' and the date 1668.<sup>51</sup>

## 15. James Carpenter (Kilmallock)



The Obverse of the token has the inscription 'JAMES CARPENTER MARC' surrounding a church. The Reverse is inscribed 'OF KILMALOCK' with the value, 1d, over a heart pierced by two arrows.

The church is thought to represent the Dominican Friary at Kilmallock.<sup>52</sup>

## 16. Mathew Meade (Kilmallock)

The Obverse has 'MATHEW MEADE MERCHAN' inscribed around a shield with the Arms of the Meade family. The Reverse has the inscription 'KILMALOCK' and the date 1673, the letters 'M.M.' and the denomination 1d.

A specimen of this token is displayed in Limerick Museum.

<sup>46</sup>The Civil Survey, Vol. IV: Limerick, p. 436.

<sup>47</sup>Pender, *op. cit.*, pp. 263 and 703.

<sup>48</sup>John Ferrar, *op. cit.* (1787), p. 281.

<sup>49</sup>Orrery Papers, p. 90.

<sup>50</sup>George C. Williamson, *op. cit.*, p. 1400.

<sup>51</sup>Maurice Lenihan *op. cit.*, p. 200.

<sup>52</sup>R. A. S. Macalister, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

### 17. John Godsell (Kilfinane)

There are two tokens attributed to this issuer.

- (a) The Obverse has IOHN GODSELL OF', with the value 1d, in the centre. The Reverse has 'KILFENA' and the letters 'I. G.'
- (b) The Obverse of Godsell's second token has the inscription, 'IOHN GODSELL OF' surrounding a fleur-de-lys (or 1d). The Reverse has the name 'KILLFINAN' and the date 1667, with the letters 'I. G.' in the centre.

There is a specimen of this latter token in the Limerick Museum.

### 18. Patrick Creagh (Newcastle West)

The Obverse of the coin has the inscription 'PATRICK CREAGH' around a tree flanked by the letters 'P. C.' On the Reverse is the legend 'IN NEWCASTL: MAR' around two castles, with the value 1d between them.

Macalister suggests that this token might belong to Newcastle, County Down. Both Williamson and Seaby place it in County Limerick and the surname, Creagh, would support this.<sup>53</sup>

### 19. William Brudenell (Newcastle West)

The Obverse of the token has 'WILLIAM BRUDENELL OF' inscribed around a shield. The Reverse is inscribed 'NEWCASTLE MERCHANT' with the date [16]68, and the value 1d between the letters 'W. B.'<sup>54</sup> In 1659 "George Bruttnell gent" lived at Ballygeel, south of Newcastle West.<sup>55</sup>

### 20. David White (Ennis, County Clare)

The Obverse of the token has the inscription 'DAVID WHITE IN' around a crowned harp. On the Reverse is inscribed 'ENNIS HAPENY' around a cross. There are at least two other variants: (a) This one has the cross on the Obverse, surrounded by the inscription 'DA. WHITE. OF. ENNIS'. The crowned harp is on the Reverse and the inscription reads 'HIS HALPENNY. MARC' (*sic*). (b) The Obverse has the inscription 'DA. WHITE. OF. ENNIS' surrounding a cross. The Reverse has the inscription 'MARCH. HIS. HALFPENNY' around a crowned harp, with, probably, the date, [16]79.<sup>56</sup>

David White is the only known issuer of a 17th century token in County Clare.<sup>57</sup> He is included here because of possible Limerick connections. In the decades after the Cromwellian Settlement many of the leading merchants in Ennis were Limerickmen who had been expelled from their own city and had settled in the Clare town where they had prospered. In 1687 a new corporation was established for Ennis and the merchant, David White, was created Portreeve, or chief official of the town.<sup>58</sup> The name of David White appears among those transplanted from Limerick during the Cromwellian Plantation.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>53</sup>(a) *Ibid.*, p. 106; (b) George C. Williamson, *op. cit.*, p. 1409; (c) Peter Seaby, *op. cit.*, p. 127; (d) E. MacLysaght, *Irish Families*, 3rd ed., Dublin 1972, pp. 98-99.

<sup>54</sup>*J. Roy. Soc. Antiq. Ireland*, 47(1917), 81.

<sup>55</sup>Pender, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

<sup>56</sup>George C. Williamson, *op. cit.*, p. 1387.

<sup>57</sup>Paul Duffy, "An Ennis Merchant's Token", *Nth. Munster Antiq. J.*, 19(1977), 73, Pl. VI: 3 and 4.

<sup>58</sup>James Frost, *The History and Topography of the County of Clare*, Dublin 1893 (reprinted 1973), p. 605.

<sup>59</sup>John O'Hart, *The Irish and Anglo-Irish Landed Gentry*, Dublin 1884 (reprinted 1968-69), p. 331.