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would-be emigrants managed to raise the "passage money", somehow, to take themselves and their families away from Ireland, many dying *en route* in the coffin ships. In 1841 Limerick, city and county, had a total population of 330,029 people. By 1851 the population had fallen to 262,132, as death and emigration had reduced the total by 67,897. Limerick City and the North Liberties, however, had an increase in population, from 49,593 to 57,854, an increase of 8,261, as people fled to the apparent safety of the city. The North Liberties contained a workhouse, had a population of 1,202 in 1841, and had increased its population to 4,406 by 1851.

Villier's Schools were founded soon after the will of Mrs. Hannah Villier was established in the Court of King's Bench on 12 December, 1815. Samuel Lewis reported that very large schools for males and females were being constructed in 1837. In 1866 Maurice Lenihan stated that £7,507.90 had been spent by Mrs. Villier's trustees on acquiring a site, building schoolhouses in Henry Street and Nicholas Street, and on the Villier's Alms Houses. There were 50 boys and 44 girls in attendance in the Henry Street school in 1866, but fewer attended the Nicholas Street School, which was run in connection with the National Board of Education. In more recent times, Villiers School's were relocated in the North Liberties, off the North Circular Road.

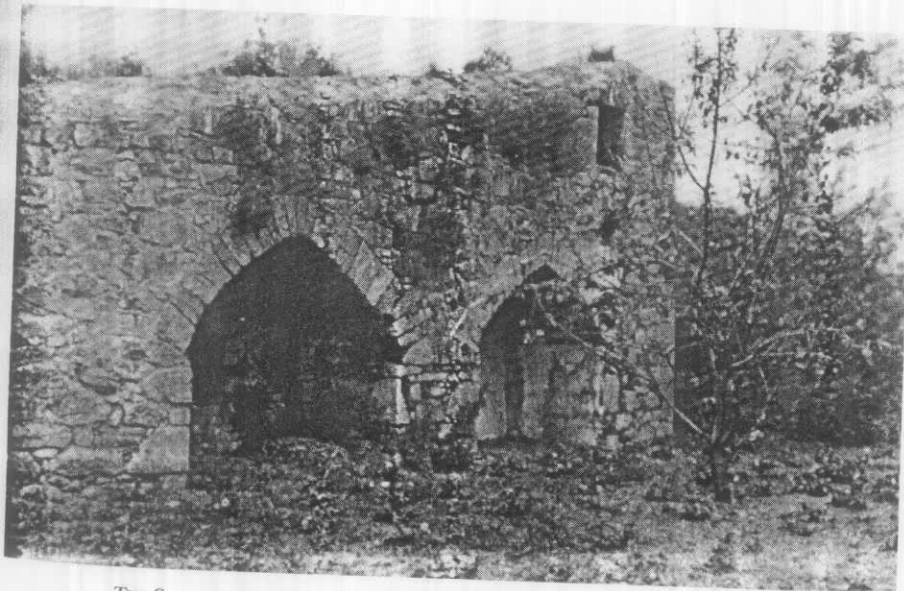


VILLIERS SCHOOLS, LATER THE SHANNON ARMS HOTEL, ON HENRY STREET. Limerick City Museum.



The Villier's Alms Houses, and schools, were endowed by Mrs. Hannah Villiers in her will which was established in the court of King's Bench in 1815. In 1826 an Elizabethan style building, designed by the Pain brothers, was erected in the bishop's garden by Mrs. Villiers' trustees. The structure "consists of a centre and two projecting wings, the former being surrounded by a cupola; it contains apartments for twelve poor widows, each of whom receives £24 Irish per annum; and there are two school-rooms". Despite some modernisation the building remains basically unchanged. The garden wall in front of the alms houses is part of the old city wall.

The Parade extends southwards from Church Street to where Nicholas Street joins Convent Street, opposite the "new" entrance to King John's Castle. It derives its name from its former use as a military parade ground. Methodism was introduced into the city by Robert Swindells who preached his first sermon here in 1748 or 1749. Soon afterwards John Wesley visited him. They formed the Methodist Society of Ireland and rented the old church of St. Francis's Abbey, where the Methodists remained until they spent £600 on erecting "a handsome edifice near the city court-house". In 1812 they built a new Wesleyan Chapel in George's Street, but in 1815 a religious controversy split the congregation in two. The Wesleyan Methodists kept possession of the George's Street preaching house and the Primitive Wesleyan Methodists retained the old one. The dispute arose concerning the expediency of the original group's preachers administering the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.



THE SALLYPORT, IN THE GROUNDS OF ST. MARY'S CONVENT. Limerick City Museum.