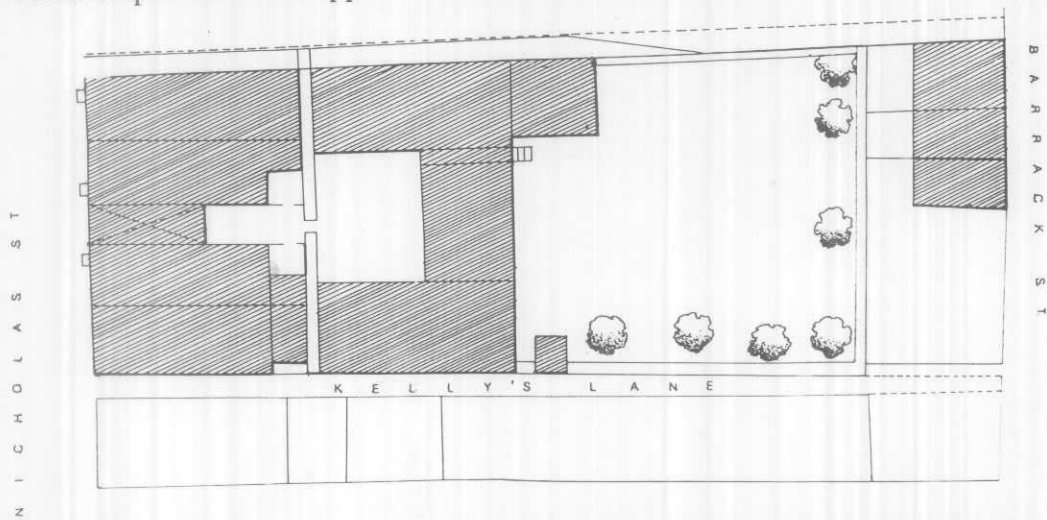


## THE BUILDING OF LIMERICK

The regular pattern of streets leading from the main street of the Irish Town still survives. Narrow lanes separated the houses. The pattern was retained in the nineteenth century when terraces of small houses were built along the lanes. It is very clearly shown on the 1840 map of Limerick but was largely obliterated when the houses were demolished in the 1980s to make way for new development. However, it is still possible to walk down Flag Lane and Sullivan's Lane at the top of Broad Street with tall, dense building on either side much as they seem to have done in the seventeenth century when, for example, a stone house, 20 feet by 151 feet owned by Geoffrey Galway completely filled one plot. At the junction of Broad Street and Mungret Street it is possible to see one of these lanes bisected by an open drain.

✕ Jeremy Hall<sup>23</sup> purchased two plots of ground on King's Island for his school and almshouses in 1687. The pattern he established was still evident in the maps drawn up in 1842 for the sale of this property, which also included other sites scattered about the city. The land was divided into four different uses from front to back. At the front were stone houses which faced the main street and probably contained the school. An arched opening gave access to a courtyard behind. Around the courtyard stood the buildings which housed the poor widows and widowers. Behind these houses was a garden or yard in 1842, and beyond that a row of smaller buildings and waste plots. Kelly's Lane, which still exists, ran the length of the property between the two roads. It allowed access along the length of the plot and the wall to Kelly's Lane was once punctuated by doorways which are now blocked.

The extent to which the buildings immediately behind the front street and possibly the front houses themselves were accessible from a courtyard linked to the street by a vaulted passage way is difficult to tell. The ground floor arches of the maps would suggest such entrances. The Rothe house in Kilkenny was built around a succession of courtyards and the houses of Galway had courtyards with external steps leading to the domestic quarters on the upper floors. However, we have no evidence of external stairs



Jeremy Hall's school and almshouses taken from a survey made in 1842. The plot was about 60 feet wide and 200 feet long and was divided into four parts: (1) Houses facing Nicholas Street (the school) with an arched opening to a courtyard, (2) the buildings behind (the almshouses), (3) a garden and (4) buildings facing Barrack Street. Houses, single-storeyed, thatched and ruined remain, probably nineteenth century, they replaced older houses, stables or workshops (Based on OS permit No 5461).

## THE BUILDING OF LIMERICK

8. H. G. Leask prepared a map of the walls in 1941 and published a description based on currently existing lengths and historical and cartographical sources in 'The ancient walls of Limerick', *NMAJ*, vol. 2 no. 3, Spring 1941. Recently Celie O'Rahilly, archaeologist to Limerick Corporation, has used archaeological findings to revise Leask's work.
9. Quoted in Wyse-Jackson, *op.cit.*, p. 23.
10. Lenihan, *op. cit.*, p. 348.
11. Lenihan, *op.cit.*, p. 89.
12. Mumford, *op. cit.*, p. 350.
13. An inscription carved on the fireplace is dated. It is illustrated in Lenihan, *op. cit.*, p. 362.
14. M. Lloyd and E. O'Flaherty, 'A descriptive poem on Limerick in 1690', in *OLJ*, No.28, Winter, 1990, pp. 34-36.
15. Colm Ó Lochlainn, 'Roadways in Ancient Ireland', in Rev. J. Ryan (ed.) *Essays and Studies Presented to Professor Eoin MacNeill, At the Sign of the Three Candles*, Dublin 1940.
16. Louis Cullen, *Life in Ireland*, Batsford, London, 1968.
17. Thomas Crofton Croker, *Researches in the south of Ireland*, IUP, 1969, (first ed., London, 1824), p.63.
18. Lenihan, *op. cit.*, p. 357.
19. OPW, from *The Urban Archaeology Survey: (unpublished) Limerick City*,
20. *The Civil Survey of the County of Limerick*, vol. IV, 1654-56, Dublin Stationary Office, 1938.
21. G. D. Rourke, Report from the OPW (unpublished).
22. Colin Platt, *The English Mediaeval Town*, Granada, 1979. The English mediaeval period has been more extensively researched than the Irish and this book provides a good background for the period rather than an accurate account of the Irish experience.
23. Jeremy Hall was an Englishman who came to Ireland to study in Dublin and later worked in Limerick as a steward for the Governor of Munster, the Earl of Orrery. He acquired property and sites in the city and in 1687 made a will in which he left property on the Island for an almshouse and a school. These institutions survived until the early nineteenth century when they were superseded by state provision. A survey made in 1842 shows the extent of his property on the Island. See M. Quane, 'Dr. Jeremy Hall Endowed Schools, Limerick', *NMAJ*, vol. XI, 1968, pp. 47-56.
24. Arthur Mss., Lenihan, *op. cit.*, p. 186. referring to his house in Broad Street in the Irish Town:
1. Bras kitle, weighing four hundred weight, able to contain a whole hogsed of liquor ...
  2. Another bras kitle, a little smaller than the former, both for brewing.
  - 3, 4. Brass destelling pots, wherof one is bigger than the other, with their hurdles, pipes and necessarie accomodations.
  5. A deep, large, brass pan to boil meate in as a quarter of beefe ....
  - 8 Big brass candlesticks ...
- A coper cauderon capable of a barrel.  
Brass mortors with iron pestills.'

Dr. Thomas Arthur was born in 1593. A catholic but not a confederate he had leading English officials as his patients and was driven out of the city walls in the insurrection of 1642.

25. Lenihan, *op. cit.*, chapter 8.
26. John Ferrar, *History of Limerick, Ecclesiastical, Civil and Military from the Earliest Records to the Year 1787*, Watson, 1787. John Ferrar (1743-1785) was a bookseller and printer with a shop in Quay Lane where he also sold (as was the custom) patent medicines and insurance. He edited *The Limerick Chronicle* from 1768-1781. His *History*, published in two editions in 1767, was the first history of the city. An enlarged edition, including maps and engravings, was published in 1787. His personal support for religious toleration emerges in his measured account.
27. P. Fitzgerald and J. J. M'Gregor, *The History, Topography and Antiquities of the County and City of Limerick*, in two volumes, Dublin, vol. 1-1826, vol. 2-1827.
28. Ferrar, *op.cit.*, pp.200-3. John O'Keefe, the playwright, included this description of Limerick in his recollections published in 1826: 'An ample Piazza under the Exchange was a thoroughfare: in the centre stood a pillar about four feet high, upon it a circular plate of copper about three feet in diametre: this was called "The Nail", and on it was paid the earnest for any commercial bargain made, which is the origin of the saying "paid down on the nail".' The appearance of The Nail indicates a regularising and formalising of commercial relations.

### Chapter 3

1. R. F. Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600-1972*, Allen Lane, London, 1988, pp 150-163. The Treaty of Limerick that was signed on 3 October 1691 gave catholics the same religious liberties they enjoyed under Charles II but the free