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2 pages

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rine. To printing and stationery they added the sale of
the 'new festal matches., warranted to light a candle in-
stantaneously'. It must have been truly festal to throw
away the tinder-box, make paperweight of the flint, and
flock to Bank Place to buy the miracle we take for granted
today.

Then one day I was met on the doorstep with: "Are you
the lady from England that wrote that book?"

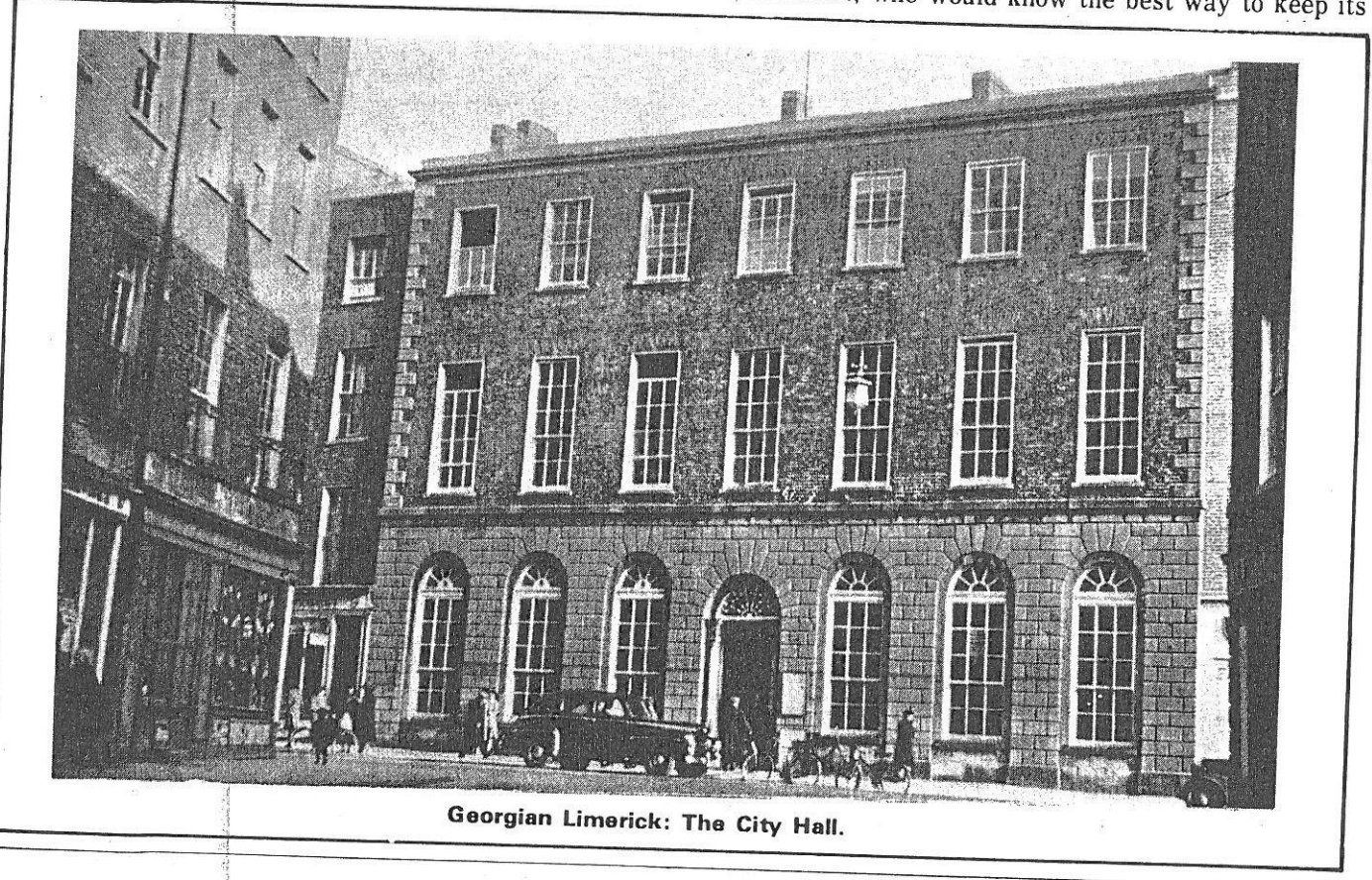
It seemed a copy of a magazine for which I had written
an article on my father's childhood in Limerick had been
handed round the town, and that his worship, the judge,
would like to see me.

His worship did even more. He invited me to sit in glory
beside him on the Bench to watch the administration of
justice. The atmosphere was serious, but there were
some light moments; for instance when argument raged
as to whether a human body was a soft substance.

'Some are. Some are not,' decided the judge.
'Was ye perfectly sober when ye started?' the
defending counsel asked a witness. A list of drinks con-
sumed, though alarming to me, then convinced even the
prosecuting counsel that his sobriety must have been en-
tirely beyond question. Anyway the accused was acquit-

And outside, another clock thoughtfully broke off its
chimes for the night watches, to begin them an hour to
the good next morning, an hour mysteriously replaced
during the day! For these things alone it is worth going to
Ireland, not to mention the amazing and sustaining con-
versation that flows on and on like the majestic Shannon
while the clocks do their fancy turns! A mere listener at
first, I found myself before long drawn into the magnetic
circle, my drop of Irish blood expanding in the climate
and leading me to heights of conversational prowess of
which I had never dreamed. Men and women of every
county and class met me there, turned my opinions inside
out, invited me to their homes and their friends' homes,
to share their drinks and their friends' drinks, looked up
my ancestors, offered me cuttings for my garden, and
horses for my non-existent stable, or any other odd thing
that would please. We never had to make conversation.
We simply could not exhaust all the engrossing topics ly-
ing around.

Another night it was a green rose I had been given
which started brisk discussion in the lounge. One was for
carrying it to England in damp moss, to strike ten days
later. Another sat down to write to the head gardener at
Powerscourt, who would know the best way to keep it



Georgian Limerick: The City Hall.

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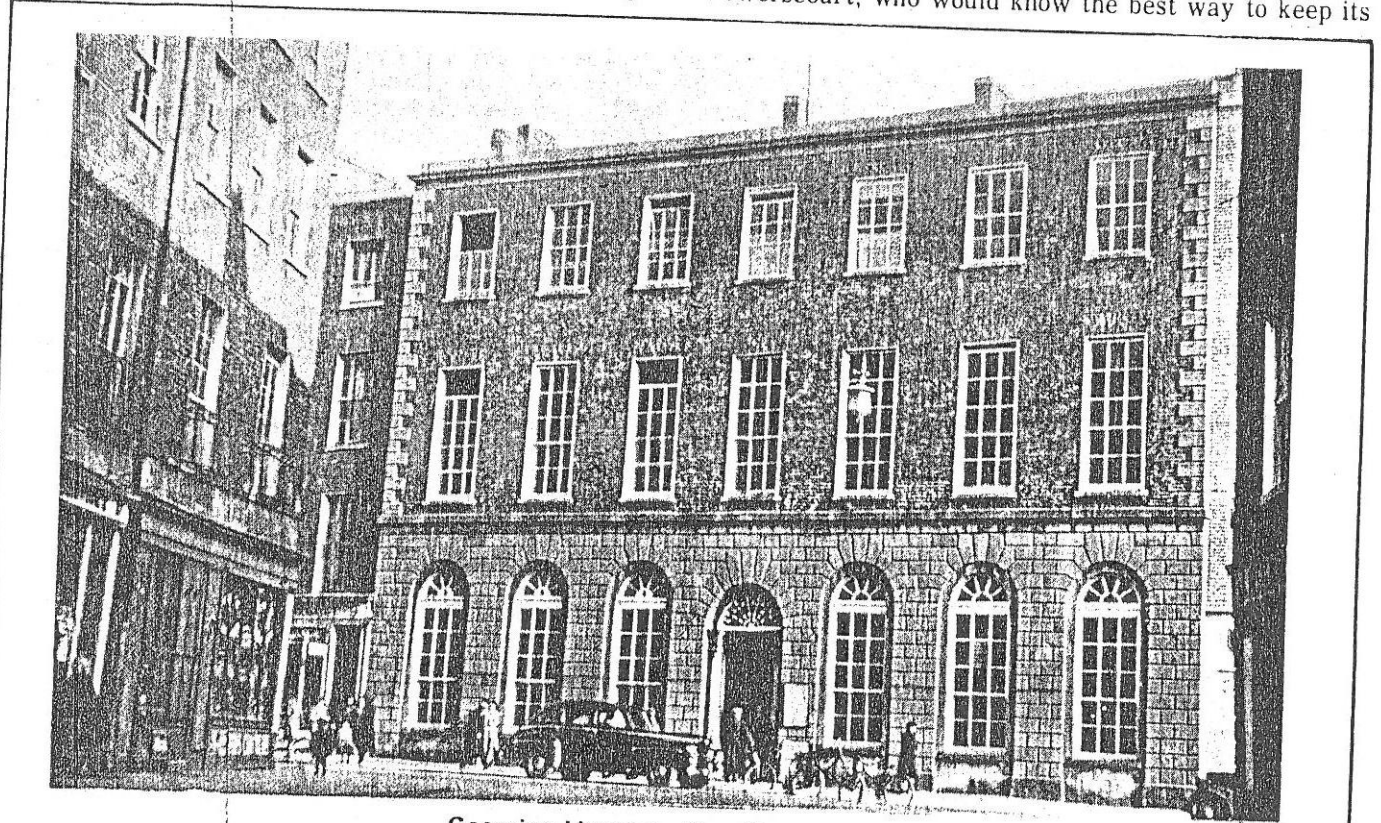
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