

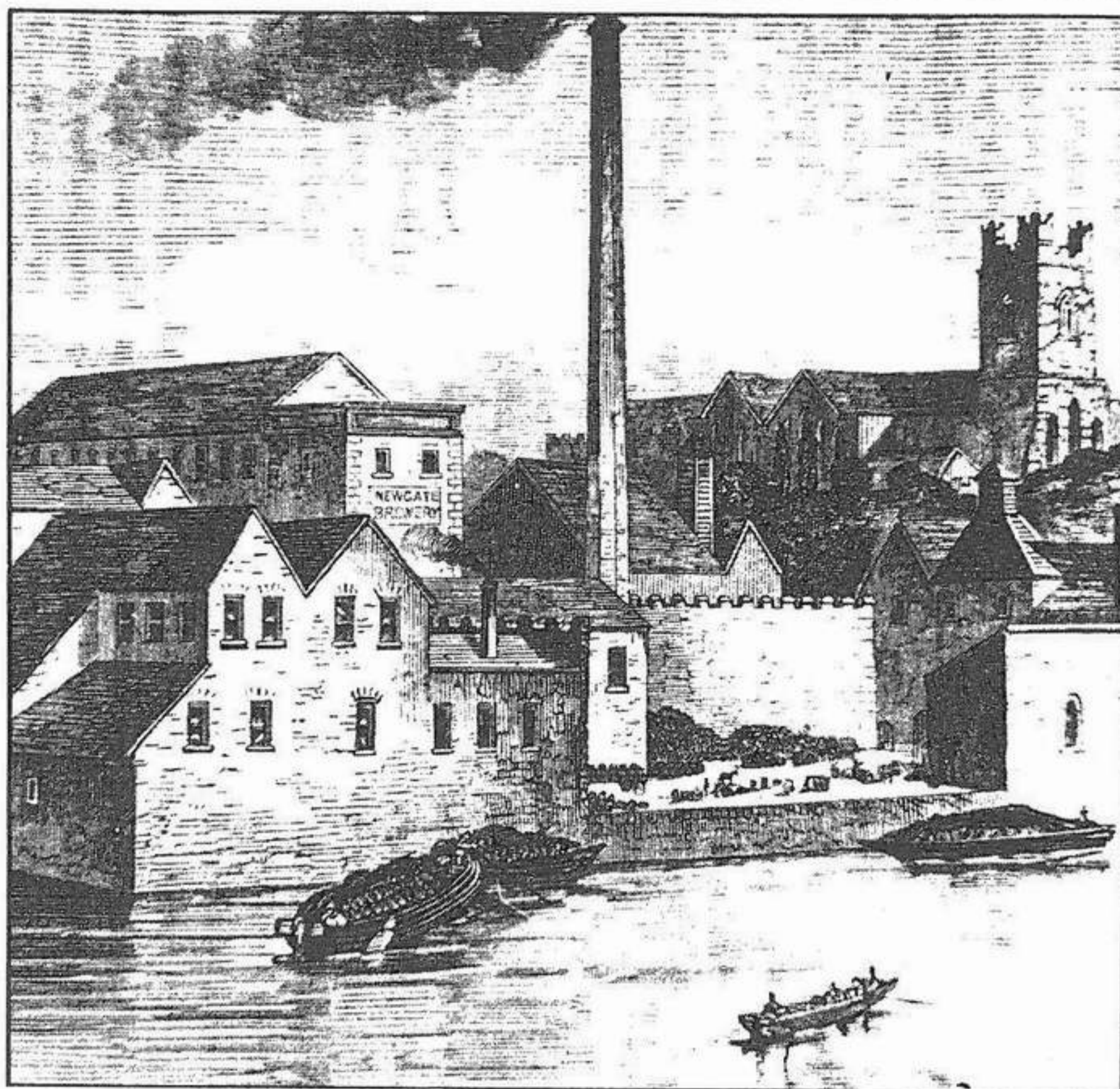
Allen's wife, Catherine, became the first matron, at a salary of £30 a year. An account was next opened with the Provincial Bank of Ireland.⁽²⁸⁾

The first medical staff were appointed at a committee meeting held on 1 August, 1831. Physicians: James F. Carroll, Wm. J. Geary and Michael Brodie. Surgeons: Richard Franklin, John Thwaites and Thomas Kane.⁽²⁹⁾ The doctors attended the hospital without a salary, and all except J.F. Carroll served more than one term of office. They were all distinguished men in their own profession, but also very publicly spirited. Three of them served as mayors: Richard Franklin, 1839-40, Wm. J. Geary, 1844-45, Thomas Kane, 1854-55. Dr. Carroll resigned in 1832 and was replaced by another physician, Dr. Fitzgerald, who served the hospital until his death in 1834. On the death of Dr. Fitzgerald in 1834, it was decided not to replace him. By this time, only one-third of the hospital's accommodation was being used for medical patients, and, therefore, two physicians were considered adequate to deal with all medical matters.⁽³⁰⁾

At this same meeting of 1 August, 1831, Margaret Ryan and Ellen O'Dea were appointed nursetenders, at a salary of four guineas a year plus board.⁽³¹⁾ Neither of the nursetenders remained very long. Margaret Ryan resigned as early as January, 1832, and Ellen O'Dea had to be discharged from her duties following 'frequent instances of intoxication'.⁽³²⁾

The next problem was to equip the hospital with beds, medical appliances, surgical instruments etc. Colgan and Sons of Limerick made 30 iron beds; Irish blankets were bought at 10/- per pair. Other items bought were: furniture, linen, flannel, coarse linen, pewter ware, night caps, frieze floor cloths, candlesticks, sconces, quills by 100, and a kack-line to dry clothes upon.⁽³³⁾ Gaslight was not introduced until 1836, and cost between £10 and £12 for one year. Prior to the opening of the hospital, the Limerick Night Watchmen were paid 6d per week to keep an eye on the building.

The committee's main concern, before actually opening Barrington's to the public, was to assure a regular income for the hospital. To this end, a memorial was sent to the Lord Lieutenant, the Marquis of Angelsey, asking for an annual grant for Barrington's Hospital, pointing out that the Meath Hospital in Dublin was already in receipt of £100 per annum.⁽³⁴⁾ However, it took several letters to and from Dublin



A mid-19th century view of King's Island.

be entitled to the financial support provided in both Acts of Parliament, once the hospital was opened for the reception of patients. In order to qualify for these grants, Barrington's was opened to the public on 5 November, 1831, with accommodation for thirty patients. However, the official opening was arranged for 1 December, 1831, when the doors were opened 'for the reception of the Poor and victims of accidents'.

The hospital also qualified for a grant each year from the Limerick Grand Jury. The sum agreed on for this presentment came to £200. However, it was agreed by the committee that they required more funds to run the hospital efficiently. An appeal made by the Catholic Bishop of Limerick, Dr. Ryan, 'to all persons possessing property within the City and Liberties to afford their effectual support to this valuable institution', brought in £400, as well as several generous bequests. Over the next few years, curious items of income helped to keep the hospital finances going: the sale of a silver watch; a gift of ale from Mr. J.B. Boyd to the value of £21; gift from the stewards of Limerick Races, 1835, worth £5; Thomas King of Spike Island, to send £1 annually, and so on.

housekeepers, nurses, porter, intern patients. Under the heading, 'intern patients', the following rules were laid down:

- Sect. 4: No patient to play at cards, dice or any other game in the Infirmary.*
- Sect. 6: No patient to spit upon or otherwise to soil or abuse the beds, wards or floors, nor to introduce tobacco, or chew tobacco.*
- Sect. 8: Any patient who shall introduce spiritous or malt liquors of any kind or accept same, shall be immediately discharged.*
- Sect. 10: All patients to wash their faces and hands and comb their hair every morning before breakfast, and to wash his or her feet every second day, and he to be shaved every Sunday and Thursday. When the Patient is unable these are to be done by the Nurses and House Barber.*
Each Patient who is not