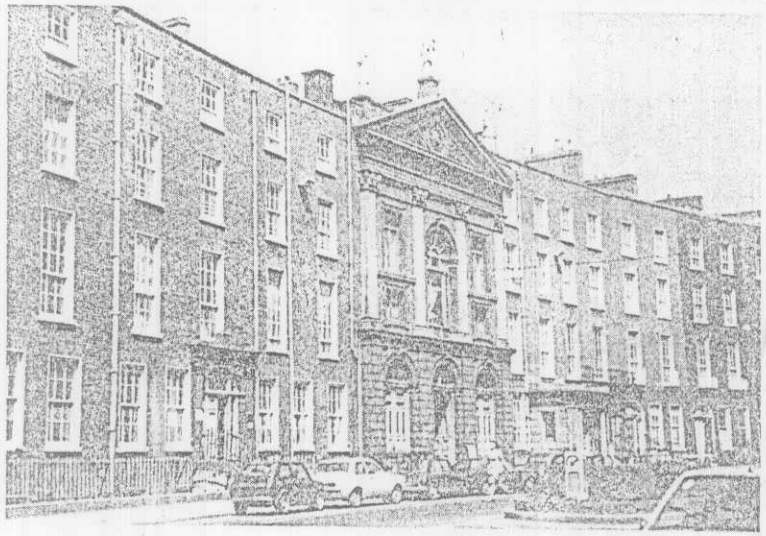
1.

cottages along its left-hand side. If we descend here for a moment until we come to Bishop St, which parallels Nicholas St, we have a reminder of the severe housing need in the area at the turn of the century in a neat two-storey row of redbrick houses erected by the Thomond Artisans' Dwellings Company in 1904. The side trip also shows us two

City walls

sections of the ancient walls of Englishtown, one now straddling a playground, and with concrete and brick patching. Grass grows on both these remnants. They survived the dismantling of the town wall which took place in the eighteenth century, when it was felt that the bastions



The Crescent and Jesuit church.

had outlived their use and impeded urban development. The sections we see stand between Bishop St and Island Rd.

Back to Nicholas St and continuing along its far side, away from the castle, a section of wall with a blind arcade is reached. These six arches are all that remain of the former City Exchange, in which the Corporation met. It was built in 1673 by an Alderman York and rebuilt in 1702 and in 1777. The first rebuilding seems remarkably soon, until we recall that the building was between the sites of the sieges of 1690 and 1691. The Corporation moved to Rutland St in 1843. The remnant of the exchange forms part of the boundary of the churchyard of St.

"The nail"

Mary's Cathedral, and is also the site of the copper "nail" on which payments were made. This "nail" is now in the care of the city museum. A few paces further on we turn right into Bridge St where the gate of St. Mary's churchyard is reached, but first look across the road at the Gerald Griffin memorial school. The first storey of this limestone building survives from the former city courthouse on the site, in which was held a murder trial which inspired a novel, a play and an opera. Gerald Griffin was a young journalist with the Limerick Evening Post when he reported here the trial of John Scanlan and Stephen Sullivan

for the murder of Ellen Hanly in 1820. Ellen, from Garryowen, had been induced by Scanlan, a former naval officer, to rob her father, who owned a ropewalk, of about £50. She then eloped with Scanlan and he purported to marry her, engaging a bogus priest. Tiring of her when the money was gone, he drowned her, with the help of Sullivan, off Scattery Island, a stone being tied about her neck. When her body was washed ashore and identified to two crooked teeth, emotion ran high in Limerick. Ellen had been only sixteen years old. Scanlan and Sullivan were convicted and hanged at the Fair Green, which we will see in due course. Griffin based his novel, "The Collegians", on the affair but this gained a wider audience when Dion Boucicault dramatised it as "The Colleen Bawn". Later Benedict's romantic opera, "The Lily of Killarney", with a change of locale, was based on the same story. Gerald Griffin, who was born in 1803 in Bow Lane near the court-turned-school, later joined the Irish Christian Brothers, but died in Cork of typhus in 1840.

Colleen Bawn

Scattery Island turns up often in Limerick's story and it is interesting to recall that in 1609, under a new Limerick charter, a "county of the city of Limerick" was established "distinct and separate from the counties of Limerick and Clare and embracing the utmost limits of the ancient suburbs, liberties and franchises into the counties of Limerick and Clare and the island of Inniscattery". From time to time Mayors of Limerick have symbolised their authority as admirals of the Shannon by throwing silver darts into the river near this island, a habit darkly frowned upon by Clare people.

This old court, which is partly embodied in the present school, was built in 1763-64 to replace one erected in 1640. Before entering the cathedral grounds look back along Bridge St to where it crosses the junction of Nicholas St and Mary St and becomes Athlunkard St, running past the Catholic neo-Romanesque St. Mary's Church to O' Dwyer Bridge, built over another part of the meandering Abbey stream at the top of Sir Harry's Mall in 1931, in memory of Bishop E. T. O'Dwyer. The curving Athlunkard St has near its Nicholas St corner the ruin of part of a house which was occupied by Alderman John Bourke in 1641. From 1730 to 1780 it was a secret friary of Franciscans, and it was cut through for street alignment in 1824. This ruin is sometimes called O'Brien's Castle, and is thought to be on part of the site of the palace of Donal Mor O'Brien, though tradition says that the main part of the palace site is that occupied now by St. Mary's Cathedral. At the Athlunkard St site is an attractive marble drinking fountain of 1860. Donal Mor O'Brien not only donated the site of St. Mary's Cathedral,

St. Mary's Cathedral

but began the building. The date is variously given as 1168 and 1180. This prince also made grants of land, built two Augustinian abbeys in Limerick, built abbeys at Holy Cross and Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, and elsewhere, and repaired the metropolitan church of Cashel.

His claim to notoriety did not end there. Having surrendered the city of Limerick to Henry II, he again took up arms against the Normans, but was forced to submit a second time. On the death of Strongbow the garrison of Limerick was withdrawn by Raymond le Gros, who felt that the troops might be needed elsewhere to secure the Government, lest Strongbow's death should lead to widespread revolt. He entrusted

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