

**BYRNES  
ON TUESDAY**



79,137

LET there be no fear of Limerick falling behind Galway in population.

According to the National Economic and Social Council, Limerick County Borough (the Corporation area) and the suburbs had a population of 79,137 in 1996, and is growing in line with the general national expansion.

Galway, it is true, doubled in size in the last forty years, but Limerick has grown by about 60 per cent in the same period, and still has a population more than once-and-a-half that of Galway.

Emigration had been a problem afflicting this country until quite lately. The national numbers had fallen to a mere 2.8 million by 1961.

Today there are probably 3.7 million.

I came across these statistics while I was doing something on rural decline. And I was quite surprised at what I found:

In 1971, a total of 47.6 per cent of Limerick people (city and county) lived in villages or in rural areas.

Today, that figure is only slightly changed to 49.0.

That doesn't make sense, because we have the evidence of our eyes that Limerick is becoming more and more urbanised.

## But hold on . . .

WHAT is a village? When does a village become a town?

At population 1,500, that's when, according to the NESC.

That means that the commuter villages of Castleconnell, Annacotty, Patrickswell, Adare, Clarina, Kildimo, Fedamore, etc, are not towns, so the aggregate number of urban workers who live in these places are lumped in with the village postmaster, the local curate, and the doughty sons of the soil.

It has always been policy in Limerick to keep the villages going, and not have any towns of the size of, say, Ennis, which has greatly outgrown its infrastructure.

I therefore submit that Limerick is far more urbanised than the NESC suggests.

We are probably nearer the Waterford and Cork figures, each of which are above 60 per cent.

## See here

THERE were about nine seconds of normal time remaining at Murrayfield.

The score was 30-13 against Ireland.

Jim Sherwin must be the world's ultimate optimist.

He said (I believe that I heard him correctly): "It's hard to see how Ireland can come back now."

Half an hour earlier, his colleague, Fred Cogley, had told listeners to RTE Radio 1 something like: "As you see, the Scots went in over the top."

See? On radio?

As to the match itself . . .

# Mullock's are in the Dock!

ABOUT the time of the establishment of the Limerick Chronicle, Limerick was extremely dependent on its interaction with its rural hinterland.

The principal employers were those who cured bacon, milled grain, or served the retail needs of the farmer or peasant.

Of course, for all of this to succeed, Limerick needed to export its wares, and to import that which it could not itself produce.

In the absence of regular communications by road (the road to Dublin went by Parteen, Clonlara and Killaloe, and the journey took four days), and seventy years before the arrival of rail, the developing port was essential for the local economy.

The quays were along where now are Custom House Park, Sarsfield House and Arthur's Quay. The quays downriver from Sarsfield (Wellesley) Bridge, including the bridge itself, were also seventy years down the line, and the present docks were to be built some years later again.

So, in the 1760s, as the Limerick Chronicle was being founded, Limerick took down much of its old walls and began an unparalleled expansion in both size and commercial prosperity.

The quays were to be central to all this. And shipping needed managing.

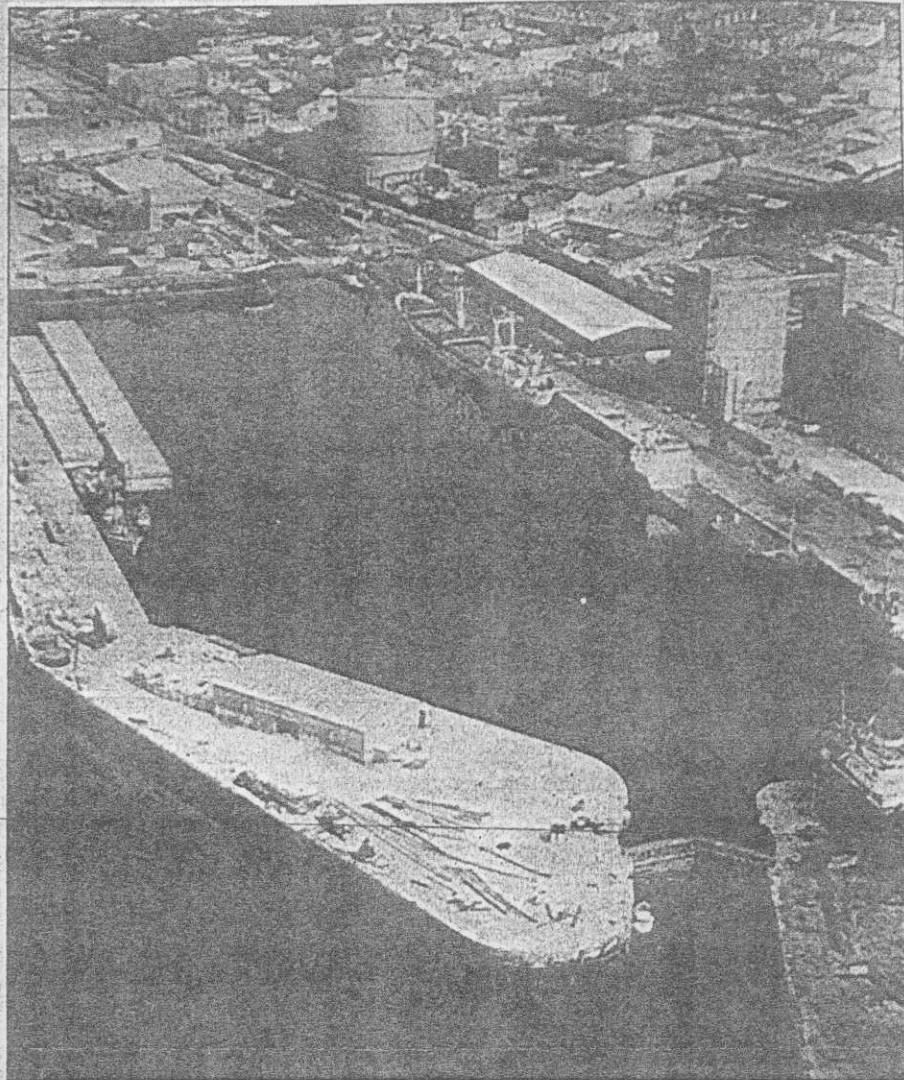
This was already being done to an extent by such measures as the establishment in 1760 of the international society known to this day as Lloyd's Register of Shipping, which keeps details of anything that floats which has an unladen displacement of 100 tons or upward.

Enter one Mr Mullock.

And Sons.

In the year of Our Lord 1778, there came into existence in Limerick that splendid organisation Mullock & Sons, now Mullock & Sons (Shipbrokers) Ltd.

After all these years, Mullock's are still on the go. They have been part of the development of the Port of Limerick throughout the intervening cen-



turies. They embody the continuity of the development of Limerick from the spiritless squalor which followed the Treaty of Limerick of 1691, and which gloom had lasted for nigh on seven dark decades.

Would it be true to say that, with the exception of the Limerick Chronicle itself, Mullock's are the oldest Limerick business in continuous trade?

In their half-page advert in (of all things) the 1985 Reference Book and List of Members of The Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers, Mullock's describe themselves as: shipping agents for leading companies, chartering brokers, serving all Shannon Estuary terminals, bulk cargo specialists, B.I.M.C.O. bro-

ker members, stevedores and Lloyd's agents.

It was my accidentally finding that entry as I was clearing a shelf which prompted me to think about Mullock & Sons in the first place.

Of course, when we mention the Port of Limerick these days, we mean a great deal more than just the present Ted Russell Dock in Limerick City, which contains a surface area of some eight acres, and which is under-utilised owing to the developments in road, rail and air communications since it was first opened in 1853.

Mullock's have been involved with the jetties at Foynes (coal, oil, ores, feedstuffs, fertilizers, molasses, timber, even

cruise liners), at ESB Tarbert (oil), ESB Money-point (coal), at Shannon Airport's Derrish-jetty (aviation fuel), at Aughinish (bauxite, fuel oil and caustic soda inward, alumina outward), and at the oil jetty on Foynes Island.

Doubtless, should the Estuary grow further as a port to its full potential, with the development, for example, of trans-shipment facilities downstream, the graceful old firm of Mullock & Son, which pre-dates the establishment of the United States by fully a decade, will yet be there to serve the needs of a new generation of customer.

So, from one old survivor of Limerick business to another, greetings.

—MARTIN BYRNES

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