

JOHN F. KENNEDY—FREEMAN

PROOF OF LIMERICK ANCESTRY

There are at least four good reasons for believing that President Kennedy's maternal great-grandfather came from Loughgur, Bruin, Co. Limerick.

The first is a statement made to a Limerick Leader reporter this week by an 80-year-old woman who had no less authority for the story than a daughter of Catherine Fitzgerald, who was the sister of the President's great-grandfather. She is Mrs. Richard Hogan, Gortnagrou, Adare. Her husband, the late Richard Hogan, was the son of Mrs. Margaret Hogan (nee Sheehan), who was daughter of Mrs. Catherine Sheehan (nee Fitzgerald), a sister of Thomas Fitzgerald, the man who went to America and was the President's great-grandfather.

Mrs. Hogan told our reporter that Mrs. Margaret Hogan (her mother-in-law) often spoke about the Fitzgerald family in the States and of "Honey Fitz," who was later to be Mayor of Boston. This was long before the marriage with the Kennedy family took place. Mrs. Hogan used to say that her mother, Catherine Fitzgerald, would be addressed thus in her school-going days by other pupils: "Catherine, you have a very long name to write in your copy-book; Catherine Fitzgerald is a very long name."

This proves that Catherine Fitzgerald was, in fact, the ancestor of the Limerick families claiming relationship with President Kennedy.

A second good reason is the resemblance in among members of the Limerick families to the Kennedys and the Fitzgeralds. A fourth cousin of the President's children, 11-year-old Henry Morgan, of Clounanna, bears a striking resemblance to the Kennedys. Mr. Edmund Fitzgerald, Loughgur, a third cousin of the President and who was reared in the Fitzgerald family homestead, where the President's great-grandfather was born, is very like the American Fitzgeralds. The late Mr. Phillip Fitzgerald, of Meanus, is said to have been the drawn image of "Honey Fitz," the President's grandfather.

Another reason is the visit to Loughgur and Adare in 1938 by "Honey Fitz." When he went to Hogan's of Adare (descendants of the Fitzgeralds) he was astonished to see a picture of his own brother, who was a priest, hanging on the wall in the Hogan home.

Perhaps more remarkable still is the fact that in the course of his visit here he went alone to the site of the old family homestead at Loughgur, from which his father emigrated. He had been there before and this was his second visit. Where could he have heard of Loughgur but from his father?

During his visit he was driven to Loughgur by Mr. Denis Conway, now aged 67 years and in retirement. Mr. Conway told our reporter that "Honey Fitz" gave him a photograph of himself about which he developed a very interesting story, about which there is more in these pages. Mr. Conway showed our reporter the photograph.

Perhaps one of the strongest reasons for believing that the President's ancestors came from the Bruin area is the following letter written to an Irish newspaper in 1961 by Mrs. N. S. Hogan, of Mountcollins, Co. Limerick: "Senator John F. Kennedy's great-grandfather came from Bruin, Co. Limerick. I have this from his grandfather, Johnny Fitzgerald. I

LIMERICK WILL HONOUR A GREAT PRESIDENT

ON to-morrow (Saturday), June 29, Mr. John F. Kennedy, President of the United States of America, will be made an Honorary Freeman of Limerick. He will be similarly honoured by Dublin, Wexford, Cork and Galway, and although the distinction so conferred does not in modern times carry any rights or privileges, at one time it was of great value to the recipients.

The first person admitted an Honorary Freeman of the City of Limerick was Isaac Butt on January 1, 1877, and the most recent was, of course, his Eminence, Cardinal Michael Browne, O.P.

But the history of the rights to Freedom goes back several hundred years, and has its roots in strict legal procedure. And, in 1812 a prolonged legal battle, costing the litigants vast sums of money, was fought to uphold the rights to the Freedom of Limerick.

The last hereditary Freeman of Limerick is probably Mr. James Gubbins, Newenham Street, who was admitted by right of birth on April 20, 1927. His father, Robert, received the hereditary Freedom in 1905, and the family name was first entered in the Roll of Freemen in 1858. In the 19th century the title was a coveted one and the decade 1823-1833 had 235 claimants. Of these, only one-third were admitted to the Freedom.

The Corporation was given power to elect honorary Freeman of the City as late as 1876. But the title of Hereditary Freeman has its origins in the ancient Charters of Limerick. The rights to the Freedom were denied or restricted for a period of about 40 years, and they were defined after lengthy legal argument in 1812. The rights of Freedom were that year found by verdict in a case of mandamus at the prosecution of Lord Gwentworth against the Corporation.

According to a report on Municipal Corporations issued in the 1830's, the rights were found to be in—First, every person being of the age of 21 years, and the eldest son of a Freeman; second, every person being of the age of 21 years and married to the daughter of a Freeman; third, every person who should serve as an apprentice within the city "in any art or mystery with any Freeman of the city" for a space of seven years.

This was followed by a resolution of an election committee of the House of Commons in June, 1820, confirmed by a Committee of Appeal under the Grenville Act of 1821. The resolutions of this committee were, that no person should be admitted a Freeman of the City who had not served an apprenticeship therein, or who was not resident therein at the time of his admission; and, "that subject to the foregoing limitation, the sons of Freemen, the sons-in-law of Freemen and persons having served seven years apprenticeship to Freemen of the City are entitled to the Freedom of the said City."

QUALIFICATION

The qualification of residence was enforced in the Limerick Regulation Act and by a resolution of the Common Council of the City of Limerick, passed as long ago as

who assumed, and for many years successfully, the sole discretionary power of admitting whom they pleased to Freedom. Freemen were admitted irrespective of whether they were resident or non-resident, and all claims of Freedom as of right were excluded.

This exclusion dated from 1770. No attempt to enforce the ancient right to Freedom was made until the year 1812, when the mandamus proceedings were commenced. It is very interesting to note that these proceedings were instituted by a body of the citizens of Limerick, known as "The Independents." They were strenuously resisted in every stage by the Common Council at enormous expense to both parties, until the struggle finally terminated in the House of Commons and the enactment of the 4 Geo. IV, C. 126.

The admission of Freemen was made by a select committee appointed by the Council to investigate and report to the Common Council on the titles of those applying for admission. This was a permanent committee, consisting of the Mayor, recorder, four charter justices, and some members of the Council, of whom three formed a quorum.

PROCEEDINGS

The course of proceedings on an application for Freedom followed these lines: The claimant sent to the Council a petition stating his right. This was lodged with the Mayor, and by him submitted to the Council. The committee received on oath the evidence offered in support of the petition and reported to the next Council, by whom the claimant was admitted or rejected.

In those days, the most important branch of the Corporation revenues was the tolls. Freemen were exempted from the payment of tolls, and every Freeman admitted meant a loss to the municipal revenue. Extraordinary strictures, therefore, were enforced by the Committee of Claims as to the degree of evidence necessary to sanction the petition of a potential Freeman.

A claimant had to prove, first of all, that he was the eldest son, son-in-law or apprentice of a Freeman. Then he had to prove that the person from whom he derived his title was actually a Freeman. Not only should the name of the "alleged" Freeman appear on the books, but actual proof should be given of his having been sworn as Freeman. The books prior to 1812 did not show if Freemen were sworn, and so this great difficulty almost invariably arose.

LEGAL PROOF

Having established that the person under whom he claimed was a



Group of the President's third cousins and fourth cousins at Clounanna. Included are: Mrs. Morgan (centre), second cousin, and Mr. Morgan (standing centre); Mrs. Reidy and family; Mr. and Mrs. Ted Morgan and family; Mr. and Mrs. Ted O'Connell; Mrs. P. Lillis and family.

President's cousins will greet him

AMONG the vast throng that will assemble at Greenpark Racecourse on Saturday to honour the President of the United States there will be at least 60 of his known cousins from Limerick County and many more from Limerick City who do not know that they are related to him.

The President's maternal great-grandfather, Thomas Fitzgerald, emigrated to the United States from Loughgur, Bruin, in the famine years, and there are about 60 descendants of Thomas's brother, James, and sister Catherine in various parts of the County Limerick to-day.

When Thomas Fitzgerald went to America he married and his son, John ("Honey Fitz"), who became Mayor of Boston, married a girl named Mary Hannan, who came from Limerick City. Their daughter, Rose, is President Kennedy's mother. Mary Hannan's ancestors in Limerick City have not been traced but the name Hannan is a very plentiful one in the city and some people of that name are cousins of the President but do not know it or cannot prove it.

When Thomas Fitzgerald emigrated from Loughgur, his brother, James, and sister, Catherine, remained in Limerick. Catherine, who was born in 1822, married Patrick Sheehan, a butcher, who lived in Bruin. They had two sons who went to America and two daughters, one of whom became a nun and was attached to a Convent in New Ross, Co. Wexford. Her name was Katie. The other sister, Margaret Sheehan, married David Hogan, of Bruin, and they settled in the village of Adare, where they carried on the butchery business and they also had a public house and a farm.

RELATIONS FROM COUNTY

They had seventeen children, all of whom went to America except James and Celia, who are still living, and Richard David, who are now dead. They are second cousins

in family who are all third cousins of the President. They are: Miss Bridget Hogan, who is living at home in Gortnagrou; Mr. Richard Hogan, who is married and has two small children (fourth cousins of the President's children) and is also living at Gortnagrou; Rev. Cyril Hogan, who is in New Zealand; Rev. Mother Patrick, Shanklin Convent, Isle of Wight; Mr. John Hogan, who is married and living in Rathkeale and also has a young family (who are fourth cousins) of the President's children; Mr. Edward Hogan, now living in Mallow and who bears a striking resemblance to the President; and Mrs. C. Carey, Roscrea.

The late David Hogan, Adare, who was a second cousin of the President, married Mary Hayes of Croagh, and they carried on the family business in Adare. They had two sons and three daughters who are all third cousins of the President. They are: Mr. David Hogan, farmer, Rour, Adare, who is married and has two small children (who are fourth cousins of the President's children); Mr. Michael Hogan, M.R.C.V.S., Kildysart; Mrs. Joe Treacy, Killarney; Mrs. Declan Gleeson, Landscape Park, Dublin; and Mrs. John Barry, Caherconlish.

SECOND LINE

James Fitzgerald, who was born in Loughgur in the 1820's and who was a brother of the President's maternal great-grandfather, and also of Catherine Fitzgerald (Mrs. Sheehan), married and lived at the family homestead in Loughgur. He had a son, James, who had two sons, James and Phillip, who were second cousins of the President's

PRESIDENT'S ONLY SECOND COUSINS



Mr. Jim Hogan, Clin. Co. Limerick.



President Kennedy 42nd Freeman

THE conferring of the Freedom of Limerick on President Kennedy makes him the 42nd person to receive the distinction since it was instituted in 1876, when the Municipal Privileges Act became law in this country.

Sir Isaac Butt, M.P., was the first of the personalities to enjoy the honour on January 1, 1877, and it was in Limerick that the Act was exercised for the first time in this country.

The Freedom of Limerick is reserved for those persons who have won high distinction in some walk of life or conferred some special favour or benefit on the city or the country, or won renown in the arts or other spheres.

The complete list of persons who have been admitted as honorary Freemen of City of Limerick is:— Isaac Butt, M.P., January 1, 1877; Mayor at the time—James Spaight; Richard O'Shaughnessy, M.P. January 1, 1877—(do.); Charles Stewart Parnell, M.P., July 14, 1880—(Michael O'Gorman); Michael Davitt, April 14, 1884—(Maurice Lenihan); Edward Dwyer Gray, M.P., for Co. Carlow, April 14, 1884—(do.); Charles Dawson, M.P., for Carlow, April 14, 1884—(do.); The Right Hon. William E. Gladstone, M.P., for Midlothian, October 4, 1886—(Stephen O'Mara); William O'Brien, M.P., for the South-East Division of Cork, June 13, 1887 (Francis A. O'Keefe); The Most Noble Geo. Fredk. Samuel, Marquis of Ripon, K.G., February 3, 1888—(do.); The Right Hon. John Morley, M.P., for Newcastle-on-Tyne, February 3, 1888—(do.); The Right Revd. James F. Corbett, D.D., Roman Catholic Bishop of Sale, Australia, December 23, 1889—(do.); The Hon. Ishbel Maria Countess of Aberdeen, wife of his Excellency the Earl of Aberdeen, Governor-General of Canada, June 8, 1894—(Bryan O'Donnell); His Eminence Cardinal Logue, Cardinal Bishop of Armagh, Primate of All-Ireland, June 14, 1894—(do.); Thomas J. Clarke, March 2, 1889—(John Daly); James F. Egan, May 10, 1900—(do.); Thomas Myles, M.D., F.R.S.I., President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, June 16, 1900—(do.); Miss Maude Gonpe, December 13, 1900—(do.); Andrew Carnegie, October 20, 1903—(M. Donnell); Joseph O'Mara, October 2, 1908—(T. Donnellan); Douglas Hyde, LL.D., D.R.L.I.T., President of Gaelic League, June 5, 1909—(do.); Capt. Edward O'Meagher-Condon, September 13, 1909—(do.); Most Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer, Lord Bishop of Limerick, August 3, 1916 (Stephen Quin); Mrs. Thomas Clarke, Eoin MacNeill, E. de Valera, September 5, 1918—(A. O'Meadhra); Michael P. Ryan, Edward S. Dunne, Frank P. Walsh (members of Irish-American Delegation to Peace Conference), May 7, 1919—(do.); His Grace Most Rev. Dr. Mannix, Archbishop of Melbourne, August 5, 1925—Paul A. O'Brien; His Eminence Cardinal Van Rossum, C.S.S.R., Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda, Rome, July 21, 1928—M. J. Keyes; The Superior General of Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, Rome, Most Rev. Dr. Patrick Murray, July 21, 1928—do.; His Excellency Most Rev. Monsignor Paschal Robinson, O.F.M., Nuncio Apostolic, Irish Free State, Dublin, July 21, 1928—do.; His Grace Most Revd. Dr. Richard Downey, Ph.D., Lord Archbishop of Liverpool, England, April 21, 1932—P. Donnellan; Dermot O'Brien, Esq., Hon. President, Royal Hibernian Academy, February 27, 1936—J. M. Casey; William Griffin, Editor and Publisher of the New York Enquiry, January 14, 1937—Dan Bourke, T.D.; Joseph Mary Flood, B.L., March 23, 1948—Patrick O'Connell; John Keating, R.H.A., March 22, 1948—do.; His Excellency Sean T. O'Ceallaigh, Uachtaran na h-Eireann, March 24, 1948—do.; His Eminence John Cardinal Dalton, D.D., Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All-Ireland—September 25, 1953—John Carew; His Excellency Most Revd. Gerald Patrick O'Hara, D.D., J.U.D., Archbishop, Bishop of Savannah, Atlanta, U.S.A. Apostolic Nuncio, June 25, 1954—do.; His Eminence Cardinal Michael Browne, O.P., of the Roman Curia, August 15, 1962—Mrs. Condell.

County Council to join

Limerick. I have this from his grandfather, Johnny Fitzgerald. I got the letter and March with him in the Limerick Club in Charlestown, Mass., in 1906."

Limerick man with a letter from President Kennedy

One of the proudest men in Limerick to-day is 67-year-old Mr. Denis Conway, of Bruff. He has a letter which he got from President Kennedy shortly after his election to the Presidency.

The story of how Denis got the letter is very interesting. When "Honey Fitz," the President's grandfather, came to Bruff to see the old family homestead in 1938, Denis, who was a local taxi-driver, drove him to the site of the homestead at Loughgur. The two men sat as they motored along and on the return journey, Mr. John Fitzgerald (which was "Honey Fitz's" name) gave Denis a photograph of himself and autographed it.

Shortly after the election of President Kennedy, Denis wrote to him congratulating him and enclosed the photograph. Denis received the following letter in reply:

"White House, Washington, May 17, 1961.

Dear Mr. Conway, It was very kind of you to let the President know you met his grandfather when he visited Ireland many years ago. He is pleased to have the picture you enclosed and has asked me to express his deep appreciation. Your message of congratulation was most gratifying to him.

With the President's best wishes, Sincerely yours, Signed: Evelyn Lincoln."

Common Council of the City of Limerick, passed as long ago as 1707. By this it was declared that no person whatever "not living and residing within the said City should be thereafter made free of the Corporation, and that said resolution should be a standing rule of the said Court . . . no person whatsoever should be elected or admitted to the freedom of the said city, or the freedom thereof granted to him, unless he shall be resident within the County of the said City at the time of his admission to his freedom."

The resolutions of the Committee of 1820 mentions the "sons" of Freeman without distinction, as entitled to the Freedom. But the right was limited by the verdict above stated to the eldest sons, and the right claimed for the petitioners before the Committee was so restricted.

The resolution of the Committee of Appeal confers the right to the eldest son, and in practice the right is considered only to extend as such. Readers with a legal bent can refer for further information to the 18th section of 4 Geo. IV. C. 128.

Freemen were also, until probably 1876, admitted by "Grace Especial." Furthermore, the Mayor for the time being had formerly the liberty of naming two Freemen. This privilege was rarely exercised after 1820. At one time, too, Freedom was given to foreigners who were merchants, traders, artisans or seamen and residing in the City of Limerick, for £20.

RIGHTS. The Rights to Freedom outlined above were so found and established on the authority of numerous entries in the ancient books of the Corporation. They were referred to in the minutes of evidence placed before the Committee of the House of Lords and Commons in 1820 and 1821. And they clearly show the early and long-continued existence of these rights.

However, for a number of years prior to the institution of the mandamus proceedings of 1812 these rights had been denied and restricted by the Common Council,

established that the person under whom he claimed was a Freeman and sworn as such, the claimant by right of marriage had to prove his relationship. And legal proof was necessary to complete the title and show the identity of the parties. A claimant by right of service had even greater difficulty. A bye-law of the Corporation, passed prior to 1680, required that the indentures of apprenticeship should be enrolled within six months. Proof of this enrolment was required. But, as the bye-law was observed more often in the breach, proof was seldom forthcoming.

Consequently, in the decade from 1823 to 1833, 140 applicants gave the whole thing up in despair, and did not bother to appear before the Committee. Of the total number of applicants for Freedom in the same period since the passing of the Regulation Act, only one-third, or 89, were admitted. Forty-seven were rejected on grounds of insufficient evidence.

For many years now the Oath of a Freeman has been abolished, and understandably so; it opened by swearing allegiance to the Sovereign for the time being of England.

Fees payable by Freemen for admission were: To the Mayor for affixing the city seal, 10/6; to the Town Clerk, 10/6, and to the Deputy Town Clerk, 2/6. To these fees was added the stamp duty, which, for admission by right was £1, and by Grace Especial, £3.

When President Kennedy signs the roll of Honorary Freemen of the City of Limerick to-morrow, his name will be added to those of Charles Stewart Parnell, Michael Davitt, W. E. Gladstone, Maude Gonne, Andrew Carnegie, Douglas Hyde, Eamonn de Valera and Most Rev. Dr. Mannix, to mention but a few of the forty-one so honoured since 1877.

Mr. Ned Fitzgerald stands on the spot on which stood the house, in which Tom Fitzgerald was born near the shores of Lough Gur, Co. Limerick.

ing, and Richard David, who are now dead. They are second cousins of President Kennedy's mother. Cella is now Mrs. Henry Morgan, Clounanna, Co. Limerick. She is 74 years of age. Her husband is also hale and hearty and they have six in family, who are the President's third cousins. They are: Mrs. J. Reidy, farmer's wife, of Greenmount, Patrickswell, who has six children; Mrs. James O'Connell, farmer's wife, of Manister, and they have eleven children; Mrs. P. Lillis, farmer's wife, of Lisaleen, Clounanna, who has ten children; Mrs. J. McCloskey, Fyfe, Scotland; Mr. Ted Morgan, farmer, of Clounanna, who has seven children; and Mrs. Bill Donnelly, farmer's wife, of Amigan, who has three children. These children are all fourth cousins of President Kennedy's children.

It is considered that Mr. Ted Morgan's 11-year-old son, Henry, bears a striking resemblance to the Kennedy family.

Mr. James Hogan, the second and only other surviving second cousin of President Kennedy's mother in Ireland, lives at Glin. He is married and has reached an advanced age. He has one son, David, who is in America (and was home last year), and two daughters, Chrissie and Madge, who are the President's third cousins.

Chrissie is now Mrs. Edward Mangan, and living in Glin. She has two sons, who are fourth cousins of President Kennedy's children. One son, David, is at home, and the other, James, is in America. Madge is now Mrs. John Acton, Glin, and she has six children, who are also fourth cousins of President Kennedy's children.

The late Richard Hogan, Gortnagrour, Adare, who was a second cousin of the President's mother, married Anne Gleeson, who is now 80 years of age. They had seven

sons: James and Phillip, who were second cousins of the President's mother.

Phillip married Catherine Moore, of Loughgur, and they had ten children who are the President's third cousins.

Five of these went to America. Edmund, now aged 74 years, was born at the family homestead in Loughgur, but the family later moved to a house nearby and the old homestead was demolished. Edmund married Catherine Flordan of Knocklong and they now live at the new house to which the family moved.

Edmund's sister, Ellen, married Patrick O'Halloran, and they lived at Kilballyowen. They had a large family who are fourth cousins of the President's children.

The late Bridget Fitzgerald, Edmund's second sister, married Patrick Russell. They lived near Loughgur and also had a fairly large family, one of whom, Phillip is at the home place. He is also a fourth cousin of the President's children.

Another sister of Edmund, Catherine, married Patrick Hurley, Kilculane. There is another brother, John Fitzgerald, a returned Yank, living in Knocklong.

James Fitzgerald, Edmund's uncle, married Margaret Dooley of Loughgur. They had ten children, all of whom went to America except John, who married Bridget Bresnahan of Herbertstown. They had one son, James, and two daughters who are nuns — one in Dublin and the other in Africa. They are the President's fourth cousins.

Another member of the Fitzgerald clan, Phillip, returned from America and married Hannah Walsh, Knockaney. They lived at Meanus. Phillip was said to bear a striking resemblance of "Honey Fitz."



Mrs. Cella Morgan, Clounanna.



He resembles the President—11-year-old Henry Morgan, a fourth cousin.

KENNEDY HOMESTEAD IN CO. LIMERICK

MR. JOHN ("Honey Fitz") FITZGERALD, former Mayor of Boston, visited the birthplace of his father at Loughgur, Bruff, Co. Limerick, in 1938, and little did he think, as he gazed thoughtfully at the ruins of the old homestead there, that his grandson, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, would be visiting Limerick 25 years later as President of the United States.

Many people in County Limerick recall this visit of Mr. John Fitzgerald to his ancestral home and to his relations in other parts of the county and the visit would indicate in itself that Thomas Fitzgerald, "Honey Fitz's" father, came from Loughgur.

"Honey Fitz" arrived in Bruff in 1938. He was alone. He went to a local taxi-driver, Mr. Denis Conway, still hale and hearty, though retired, and asked him to drive him to nearby Loughgur. Denis told our reporter that he thought the man was an ordinary American who just wanted to drive around for a while. However, when they had proceeded some distance on the way to Loughgur, the American said that he was the Mayor of Boston and that he was going to visit the birthplace of his father at Loughgur.

The American, of course, was none other than "Honey Fitz" and as they came within about a quarter of a mile of Loughgur he told Mr. Conway to stop the car and getting out, he told him to wait until he returned. "Honey Fitz" then walked to a place beside

the lake in Loughgur and gazed thoughtfully at where the old homestead once stood. Nothing remained except a few piles of stones and some foundations. This was his second visit to the old homestead according to local people.

When he returned to rejoin Mr. Conway he chatted about his ancestors and about his relations and told of how his daughter, Rose Fitzgerald, was married to Mr. Joseph Kennedy, the American Ambassador to Great Britain.

Mr. Conway did not think much more about the matter at the time but when Mr. John Fitzgerald Kennedy was spoken of as a candidate for the United States Presidency many years later and people started talking about his grandfather, "Honey Fitz," Mr. Conway remembered the distinguished visitor whom he had driven to Loughgur.

The Fitzgerald homestead at Loughgur was demolished about sixty years ago and the family moved to a house nearby, where Mr. Edmund Fitzgerald, a third cousin of President Kennedy, lives.

The first Fitzgerald that old people in the Loughgur locality speak of was James Fitzgerald, father of the man who emigrated to the States (and was the President's great-grandfather). James was the local ranger. This means that he was the gamekeeper on the lands of the then Count de Salis.

The Hogan family at Gortnagrour, Adare. Seated (l. to r.): Mrs. Richard Hogan and baby; Mrs. John Hogan and children, and Mrs. Anne Hogan. Standing at back are Mr. John and Mr. Richard Hogan and family and Miss Brigid Hogan.



To join in welcome

LIMERICK CO. COUNCIL has decided to join in the official welcome to President Kennedy when he arrives in the city on Saturday.

The decision was unanimously arrived at at the annual general meeting of the Council on Monday when a sub-committee was appointed to prepare details of a brief programme and arrange for a formal expression of welcome and appreciation to the U.S. President on behalf of the people of the county.

The matter was raised by Senator Patrick Ryan who referred to the arrangements for the civic reception and said the Council should offer congratulations to the Mayor on the success of her efforts to have Limerick included in the President's itinerary.

Officially, of course, the County Council would not be in the same category as the Corporation in the arrangements made for the welcome, but at the same time he felt they could be represented at the ceremony for conferring the Freedom of the City on the distinguished visitor.

In this connection he suggested calling a special meeting of the Council on Saturday so that the Council could then proceed as a body to join the welcome as it was most unlikely that they would ever again have an opportunity of taking part in such an historic ceremony.

The function would be a very important one and the officials should be present with the members of the Council to participate in the ceremony particularly in view of the fact that some of President Kennedy's relatives had connections with the county.

The occasion would probably be a public holiday in the city and the staff should be also given the day off so that they could share in the ceremony. He suggested that the Council should be officially represented by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Co. Manager.

EXCEPTIONAL Mr. J. C. Daly supported the proposal and said the official visit of a President of the United States was a very exceptional occasion for the Irish people and for Catholics and if at all possible arrangements should be made to have the Council represented officially at the ceremony.

Mr. Con Ryan said the county

would have a particular interest in the visit as the Fitzgerald ancestors of the family were natives of Lough Gur and his information was that they played a big part in the building up of the Kennedy fortunes.

The Chairman (Mr. Denis Naughton) said he was sure the proposal would receive the unanimous and enthusiastic approval of the Council.

The Co. Manager (Mr. T. M. O'Connor) suggested that a small committee be appointed to prepare details of an arrangement for either an address of welcome or a suitable presentation to the President on behalf of the Council.

He doubted in view of the limited time available if there would be sufficient time for the preparation and reading of an appropriate address of welcome. The Council might consider participating in the official reception in some other way.

PRESENTATION

They could, for instance, consider making a presentation which could be done in a very short time but obviously such a presentation would have to be substantial and appropriate. He would like to have the feelings of the Council on the matter but he thought the best course to adopt would be to refer the matter to a sub-committee.

Mr. J. J. Collins, T.D., said he thought some suitable arrangement could be made if the Manager were invited to attend the special meeting of the Corporation that night when the final details of the ceremony would be arranged. The proposal was certainly a very laudable one but consideration would have to be given to the very limited time allowed in the reception programme.

After some further discussion the Chairman, Vice-Chairman (Mr. Sean Hayes), Mr. J. C. Barrett (Chairman, Limerick Health Authority), Mr. M. Herbert (Chairman, Co. Vocational Committee) and Mr. Patrick Maguire (Chairman, Agricultural Committee) were appointed to act with the Co. Manager on a sub-committee to arrange details of an official welcome for President Kennedy.