

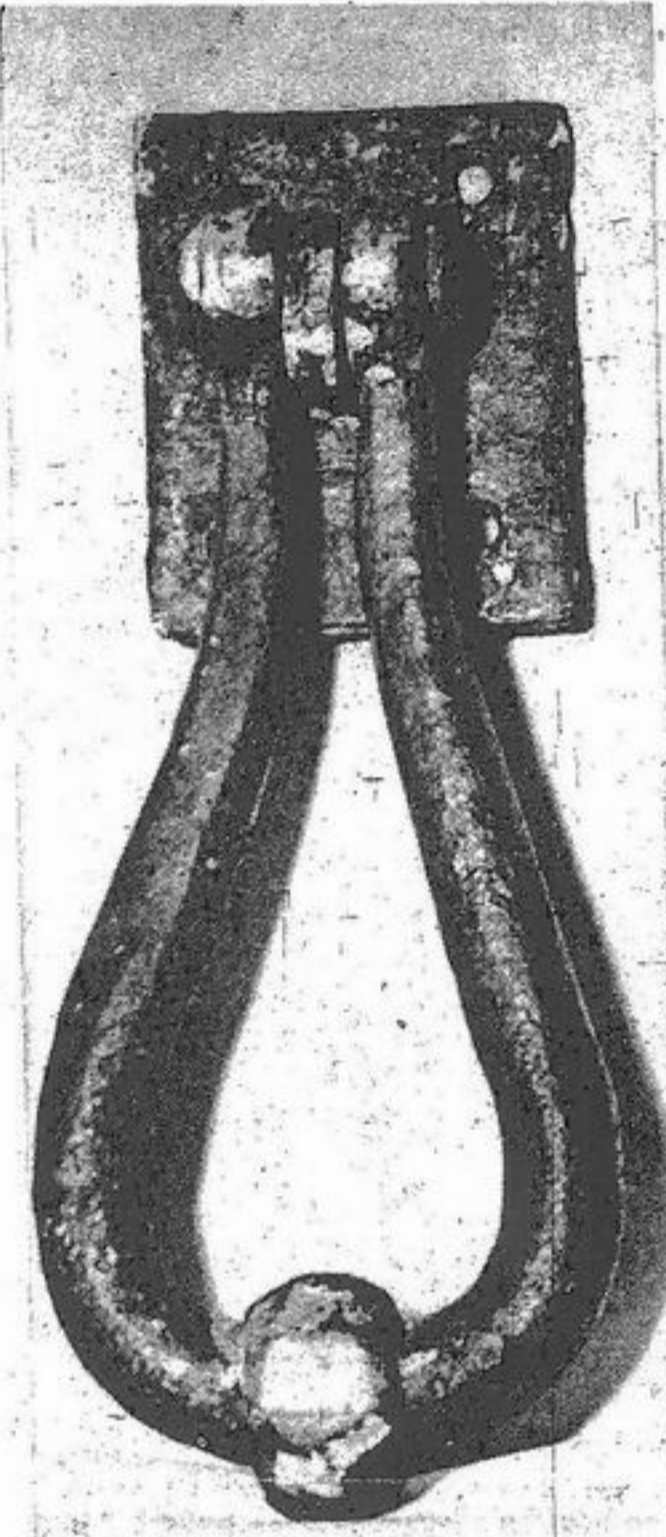
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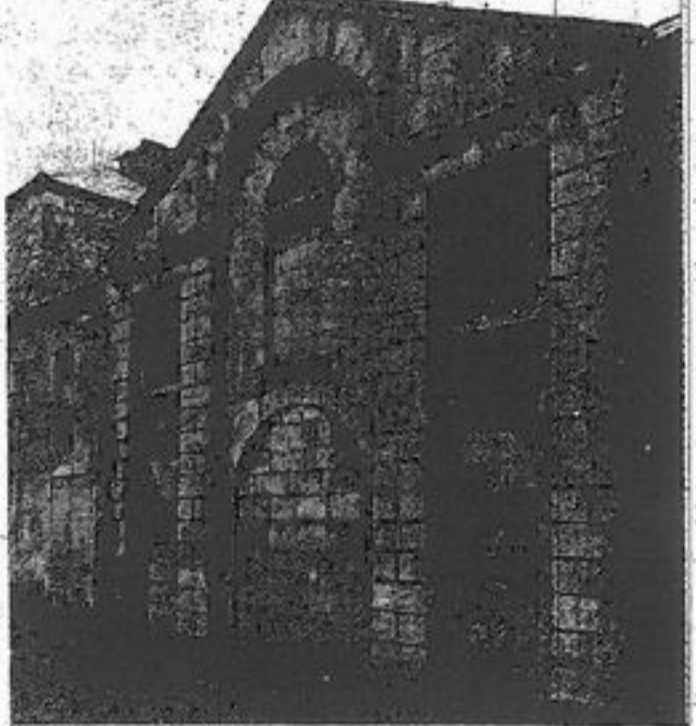
The SKAL Club of Shannon recently celebrated its 10th anniversary with a dinner/dance at Shannon Airport. Founder members and past presidents photographed, left to right: Messrs. R. I. Joyce, A. W. Gibney, J. E. McElgunn, J. J. Horan, Steve Foley (current president), P. Murphy, K. H. Gibney and P. E. Rafferty.

Old Knocker of County Gaol Opens a Door on History

INTERESTING FACETS OF TWO LIMERICK PRISONS



The massive cast iron door knocker of the Limerick County Gaol.



The forbidding exterior of the old Limerick City Gaol.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

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Accordions — Button key — Paolo Soprani make Double Row, 2 coupler, 69 gns. Double Row, 9 coupler, 85 gns. Accordions — Piano Key Student, 2, 12 bass (Hohner) £25 Student 32, 32 bass (Martini) £22 Student 5, 48 bass (Hohner) £42 Arietta 1, 72 bass (Hohner) £60 Arietta 4, 120 bass (Hohner) £85 Verdi 5, 120 bass, 11 coupler, (Hohner) £120

Shannon 12 string, 66 gns. Washers 6 string, 85 gns. Atlantic bass, 85 gns. Fender, Zenta, Tasty, Gibson, Eko guitars always in stock.

Amplifiers — Elicop, 29 watt—ideal for bar or lounge, takes 3 mikes also tape recorder. Very reliable, only 34 gns. Scala, 6 watt—just the job for the beginner guitarist at 21 gns. Scala, 19 watt—A big amplifier at only 24 gns. Ranger, 15 watt—2 10" Goodman speakers, Tremelo, 2 inputs, fabulous value at 35 gns. Dynacoord—Bass King, two inputs, Best selling bass amp. in Ireland, now 75 gns. Favorit II—Four inputs, 80 watts 115 gns. Mod I—Four inputs, 60 watts, 2 speakers, reverb, tremelo on wheels 165 gns. Framus I—De luxe amplifiers, with built in treble boost, reverb, etc. 135 and 150 gns. Sound City—Used by world's leading groups including Rolling Stones, 50 watt 6 inputs, 95 gns. 100 watt 6 inputs 135 gns. Speakers—All sizes in stock. Mikes—Full range of stereo mikes from 18-12-6. Echo Units—Zank, 2 inputs, only 29 gns. Sound City, 4 inputs, 75 gns.

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Tin whistles—3/6, 5/6, and up to £11.5 Indian flutes—3/6. Recorders—8/6, 15/6, 22/6, 17/8. Melodians—75/6, 85/6, 126/6. Mouthorgans—5/6, 8/6, 14/6, 17/8, 18/8, 22/8, 32/8, 45/8, 53/8. Jaws harp—3/6. Razooos—2/6. Tambourines—12/6 with fancy colours, 35/6, 45/6, 55/6, 75/6. Bongo drums—3 gns. and 5 gns. a set. Maracas—12/6 a pair. Castanets—Spanish, 7/6 and 15/6 a set. Tape recorders, record players, radios at all prices. Record racks, tapes, needles, batteries, record stands and cabinets. Ukuleles—3 gns. Banjos—10 gns, 15 gns, 21 gns, 33 and 60 gns. Mandolins—15-15-0, 13 gns, 14 gns, 35 gns. Concertinas—£7-15-0 and £12-15-0. Violins—£8-15-0, £11-15-0, 20, 22, 25 and up to 60 gns. with case. Guitar straps—3/6, 12/6, 17/6, 20/6, 22/6, 30/6, 35/6, 55/6, 65/6. Stylophone organs—only £5-15-0. Accordion pick-ups—12 gns. Piano pick-ups—12 gns. Violin pick-ups—7 gns. Guitar pick-ups—3 gns. Harmonica pick-ups—£7-15-0.

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Reed models—Ideal for children, 15, 25, 38, 45, 55, 65, 75 gns.; all are electric and portable. Electric models—Beautiful for home large or small. Mini Gem I—In grey and black leather, its own amplifier. Price 31/6 gns. Mini Gem II—As above but finished in teak. 125 gns. Jumbo I—Grey and black colour with volume pedal, 8 octave range. 185 gns. Jumbo II—As above, finished in teak. 195 gns. All above models produce up to 20 watts volume. Parfisa compact, percussion and reverb included, 298 gns. Gemini De Luxe—2 keyboard, all effects, 17 note pedal, finished beautifully in teak. A fabulous organ, 498 gns.

A grim piece of Limerick's history is in the care of Mr. Tadhg Snalle, P.C., chairman of the visiting committee to Limerick Prison. It is the massive, cast-iron door-knocker of the County Gaol, and for almost a century and a half it heralded the entry of miscreants and patriots to imprisonment and, in some unfortunate cases, death.

The knocker opens the door, too, to some interesting facets of Limerick's criminal history. In 1750, a prison was built in the middle of Mary Street. It was a forbidding-looking structure, four storeys high, with nine barred windows in the frontage and some fewer in the rear. It had a dungeon underneath the ground floor, and this was crowded almost to suffocation immediately after the insurrection of 1798.

City Gaol

This building was declared unfit for its purpose in 1811. In that year, a sum of £6,143, 4/3d. was voted for a new city prison which would be situated at Dean's Cipe. The location was quite near St. Mary's Cathedral in Boy Lane, and the building was bounded by the Shannon on the north and west sides.

It was completed, with a stage for executions at its front and opened for the reception of State guests in November, 1813.

Up to that time, Gallows Green had been in use for public executions and in certain cases was still in use for a number of years afterwards. There Thomas Sullivan, John Cooney and Thomas Halloran executed on March 26, 1810, for the murder of John O'Neill on October 21, 1809. The then Mayor, Francis Lloyd, was awarded £60 (£20 for each man) to cover expenses.

On March 15, 1820, John Scanlan (aged 23) was executed at the City Gaol for the murder of his wife, Ellen Hanley (18). The murder had been committed on July 4, 1819.

This was, perhaps, the most sensational event in the criminal history of Limerick during the 19th century, and although the story is well known, it will bear repetition.

Briefly, Stephen Sullivan and Scanlan, in company with Ellen, set out by boat for Tabbert. The men took off her outer clothes, jewellery, etc., bound her hand and foot, and threw her overboard. The motive was to free Scanlan (then an army lieutenant) to marry another woman. This latter, who lived in Ballymacelligott, is said to have engineered the murder, and some of the dead woman's clothes and valuables were afterwards found in her possession.

Scanlan was defended by Daniel O'Connell and George Bennett.

County Gaol

In 1817 a decision was made to erect a new gaol—the present County Gaol—at a cost of £21,500. The site was near the then Cork Road (now the Roxboro' Road) and the work was completed in 1821. The building included 22 apartments for debtors, 103 ordinary cells and five condemned cells; a thread-mill, kitchen, laundry, etc. The final cost was £23,000.

Executions

The following list of executions at the County Gaol is probably incomplete, but, such as it is, it is an interesting record.

3 August, 1822, William Walsh, Edward Doherty and William Martin, executed at the new County Gaol for the murder of Thomas Harkins, Esq. On June 27, 1821.

4 August, 1822, Daniel O'Connell, executed in front of the new County Gaol for the murder of Denis Morrissey, on February 12, 1822.

5 August, 1822, Five men (names not given) executed in front of the new County Gaol for the murder of Henry Sheeha Post Boy, on March 1, 1822.

August 10, 1822—Jeremiah Rourke executed in front of the new County Gaol for firing at Robert H. Ivers, a magistrate.

August 17, 1822—Two men (no names given) executed in front of the new County Gaol for burglary and taking arms.

August 18, 1822—Patrick Ivis executed at New Gaol.

August 22, 1822—James Connell and John Dundon executed at the New Gaol.

Sept. 9, 1822—Thomas Halpin, John Deegan, Patrick Hennessy and Edmund Hennessy executed in front of the New County Gaol for the murder of one Buckley.

March 14, 1823—Patrick Neville and James Fitzgibbon executed at the New Gaol for the murder of Richard Going, Esq. Defended by Daniel O'Connell.

August 7, 1837—Mary Cooney hanged for murder, by knife in neck, of Mrs. Anne Anderson on March 6, 1837.

February 7, 1848—William Ryan (Ryan Puck) hanged in the new County Gaol for the murder (in September, 1847) of John Kelly, Knockentry. Date fixed for 6th, but changed as this was a Sunday. (Associate, William Frewer transported for life).

Hynes, 23 years, 6' 2", hanged for the murder of John de Loughrey.

Hynes was the last man hanged in Limerick.

In July, 1875, a suggestion was made by William H. O'Sullivan, M.P. that the county and city gaols be amalgamated.

A Look Inside

What were conditions like in the old Limerick City Gaol. The following report of Dr. Lentaigne, Inspector General on the state of Limerick Prison in 1872, gives us a good idea. Extracts read: Highest number of prisoners in August and September last, 60. I found on the day of my last inspection 34 male and 24 female inmates, of all classes in custody, including three master debtors. I found one young female with 48 convictions recorded against her; another with 27 convictions—she is only 19 years of age and habitually, when discharged, at once returns to crime. Her father is an inmate of a lunatic asylum. Another female has been 24 times in custody.

Lunatics are sometimes committed to this gaol on remand for criminal offences. One in March, 1871; another in June following was sentenced to imprisonment for two months at a time when it was stated he was notoriously insane and very violent. In July he knocked another prisoner insensible with the handle of a brush, and was then sent to the Asylum.

Hard labour is enforced in the gaol by the treadwheel for males; besides, male prisoners work at stonebreaking, ship-fender making, mat-making and picking oakum. When an artisan is in the gaol he is usually employed at his own trade. I found a shoemaker in his own doing good work. Shoemaker-making is a new branch of industry in Irish prisons, and is fairly remunerative.

All the prison clothing, including the shoes are now made by prisoners, and industrial employment is now carried on with more vigour than hitherto. By means of a suitable mat board one man can weave mats at which in some other prisons two men are employed. Two pounds of oakum are picked by the hard labour prisoners in a day. Eight hours in summer and four hours in winter are occupied in industrial labour and two hours in spiritual labour, with a relaxation of about 40 minutes.

The females wash, sew, pick oakum, make mats, close shoes and quilt flannels in their cells. During the winter the cells of the prisoners are artificially lighted by gas. It is extinguished at 7 p.m., when lock-up is held. The prison is unlocked at 6 a.m. in summer days, 7.30 a.m. in winter.

The prison keys are kept by the Governor in his bedroom. The Governor attends locking up and sees each male prisoner in his cell. Prisoners are locked up by class turnkeys. Suitable gratings, through which the prisoners can see their friends, have been put up at the entrance of both prisons.

No secular instruction is afforded to the prisoners in the gaol. The Sisters of Mercy give religious and moral instruction to the Roman Catholic females once a week, and to both male and female patients of the creed in the hospital.

The prison now has a tidy appearance, and the frames of the cell doors are painted as in Mountjoy prison. Every prisoner cleans and sweeps his own cell and is responsible for the order in which it is kept. The baths in both prisons are now in order and every prisoner is bathed on reception, and fortnightly afterwards. The cells are heated by hot water pipes.

The escape of a 12-year-old prisoner last August by climbing over the cookhouse and across other buildings of the prison yard from the exercise yard showed the utter insecurity of that yard.



Miss Ann Tierney, Roxboro Rd., Limerick, and Miss Linda McMahon, Thomondgate, were at the Fine Gael dinner, at Cruise's Hotel Limerick.