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Some old Limerick shops

THE PROPRIETORS of many of the shops and other business premises of 18th and 19th century Limerick city gave their premises expressive and romantic names.

Illustrations of these expressive and romantic business names appeared on signs outside their premises.

Metalwork

In 1784, for instance, William End, a pewterer, in the Irishtown, called his premises the "Seven Plates and Worm".

There; he sold "good English pewter, brass and copper work".

A grocer named Michael Flannery (also in the Irishtown) called his premises the "Yellow Bottle", in 1782.

In 1809, in Mary Street (in the Englishtown), Thomas Murphy, a grocer, called his shop the "Sugar Loaf".

Some proprietors went in for dramatic advertising of their goods. For example, Francis Yeomans, a wine merchant, at the "Golden Bottle" (Irishtown), announced in 1789: "Right genuine sack from the Canaries, taken by an English privateer and carried into London, wherein it was canted and brought to Cork".

The English privateer was a pirate ship, and canted meant auctioned.

Wines

Among the wines sold by the Yeomans were Lisbon, Madeira, Malaga and cognac and brandy and North Country Whiskey.

George Henchy, an apothecary (chemist) at the Main Guard in the Englishtown, in 1785, chose an appropriate name for his shop — the "Golden Pill".

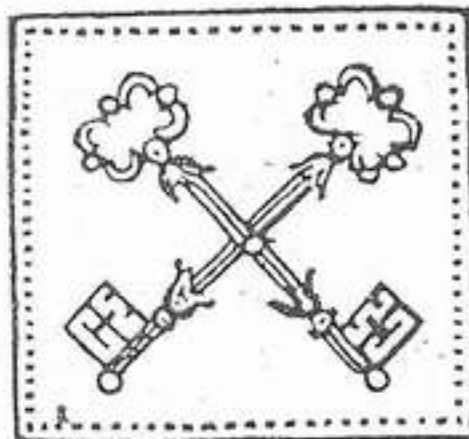
Henchy was also a seedsman, selling seeds for Early Milan Cabbage, Sweden's Famous Broccoli, Two Year Onions and Cluster Beans.

These, he mentioned, weren't to be had from any other shop in the city!

At the sign of the "Hand and Pen", at the Meat Shambles in the Englishtown, in 1765, Edmund Casey, a scrivener, announced that, "as a Writing Clerk and accomptant", he would be available for "ingrossing and other writing", which would be "carefully and expeditiously done for such attornies and other Gentlemen as are pleased to employ him".

Prosperity

Edmund Casey seemed to



THE sign of the "Cross Keys" which hung outside Susanna Harrison's White Smith's shop, near the Market House (in the Irishtown) in 1741. Mrs. Harrison—the widow of George Harrison—with the help of her son, Charles, "continued her late husband's business of making all manners of locks, gates, etc." A white smith was a woodworker.

have prospered and became in 1769 a warden of the Guild of Brewers and secretary of the Deputy Grand Lodge of the Freemasons.

Horse-drawn carriages were the chief means of land travel in 18th century Limerick.

So, at the "Springs and Axle-Tree", inside St. John's Gate (Irishtown), Cornelius Quill, a coachsmith, announced that he "engages to make all kinds of springs, together with axle-trees and all kinds of coach and post chaise work in the iron way... none engage in this branch of work nearer than Dublin".

In 1804, Henry Buchanan — whose impressive residence, a fine cut-stone mansion, still survives at the entrance to the New Road in Thomondgate — was the proprietor of the Limerick and Ennis and Balloon Coach Service.

Tavern

In 1804, Buchanan bought the "King's Head" tavern, opposite the Exchange, Mary Street (Englishtown), from the widow of its late proprietor, Michael Dwyer. Buchanan changed its name to "The Balloon Hotel and Tavern".

Fares on Buchanan's Limerick and Ennis coaches were: inside, 9 shillings and 4 shillings and 10½ pence outside!

Craftsmen often used some of the 18th century taverns as accommodation venues to meet prospective clients.

For example, in 1791, at the "Woolpack Inn", Matthew Carmody was available to make banks, put down sluices and prevent inundations effectually, for the

farmers and landed gentry of Limerick city's extensive rural hinterland.

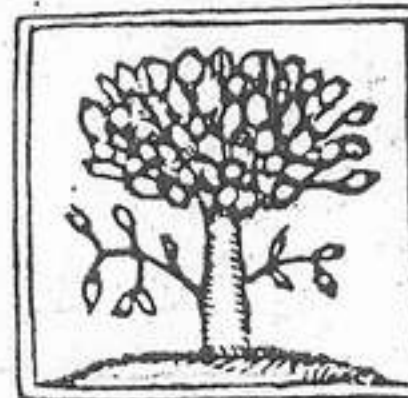
At Daniel Shea's "Cock Inn", Quay Lane (Englishtown), an Italian, Alexander Feron, who arrived from Dublin in 1760, announced that he "makes all kinds of thermometers and barometers for physicians and brewers, etc."

Repairs

Alexander Feron also mentioned that he repaired spy glasses and spectacles, etc.

Fashionable ladies and gentlemen were excellently catered for by drapers like Richard Franklin, opposite the Main Guard (Englishtown), in 1790.

Mr. Franklin sold "plain



THE sign of the "Big Tree," a 1786 lodging house in Boherbuoy, where Mrs. Glynn, a midwife, was available for maternity cases.

and flowered cambrics, cotton Hollands, silk gingham, silk jeans, Turkey quilts, cotton handkerchiefs, silk thread, with a variety of other goods too tedious to mention."

This brief anthology of shop signs of 18th and 19th century Limerick city and the proprietors, goods and services mentioned, give a glimpse of a romantic commercial era in our city's long history.

—Seamus O Cinneide.

Parents told: take an interest

"TAKE an interest in your children's leisure time"—that is the message from the Wembley Rovers Football Club, one of the best known and most successful in the country.

Wembley, who field several schoolboy teams each week, are alarmed at the lack of interest shown by some parents in their children.

"We try to provide a worthwhile service by giving youngsters a worthwhile outlet", said a spokesman. "but unfortunately we find it difficult to get

a response from parents". From their experience they even find it difficult to get mums and dads to lend financial support. It takes a huge sum of money each year to keep a club like Wembley Rovers on the field.

The spokesman for the club told the "Chronicle" that leaving the financial aspect aside, parents were reluctant to attend fixtures in which their children were involved.

"If the parents don't show a lead, then what can one expect?" he asked.

THE LABOUR PARTY



Frank Prendergast

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